



President Kay Norton's Remarks to Media
July 10, 2009

My name is Kay Norton. I am the president of the University of Northern Colorado. Much speculation has arisen about the arrest of Professor Vance Fulkerson on criminal charges of unlawful sexual conduct.

I must tell you that the specific university personnel matters remain confidential. We will follow our procedures as expeditiously as possible, cognizant of the rights of all persons involved.

I want to reiterate that the conduct described by the police as the basis for the arrest of Mr. Fulkerson is totally unacceptable in our university community. This individual has been suspended in accordance with our policies and is not allowed on campus or to be in contact with our students.

We are, with the assistance of outside legal and human resources professionals, conducting a thorough and complete investigation into this matter.

Let me be clear. The University of Northern Colorado has placed no limits on the investigation. We will fully investigate Mr. Fulkerson's conduct, as well as how the university responded to the conduct over the years.

We will not shrink from the truth, whatever it may be. Given that we are talking about many years and many people, the truth is likely to be complicated and painful. We cannot change the past, but we can and will learn from it.

The University of Northern Colorado community will get through this together by using what we learn as the foundation for moving forward. By doing so, we will honor the thousands of faculty, staff, students, alumni, and others who care about UNC and our students.

This is a great university, and it is great because of the community that we have built based on our commitment to each other. We are responsible, each of us and all of us, if we fail in that commitment.

Our responsibility goes far beyond investigating the facts around one professor's actions. We are responsible for sustaining a healthy campus climate.

Beyond the personnel matter involving Mr. Fulkerson, we are engaging our university community in answering serious questions.

How are we going to treat each other?

What are the obligations of those in positions of power?

What is the connection of personal behavior to professional responsibility?

How are we going to have a welcoming and healthy campus community in which we can rely on each other to say, “that is not who we are,” “we don’t do that here,” if someone behaves inappropriately?

Rules and laws about behavior are important, but they are not enough. They are not effective if we do not commit to them wholly, each of us.

We will improve our rules and processes if need be. And we will do it thoughtfully, together as a campus community.

We are going to learn whatever lessons there are in this sad situation because that is who we are and what we do at the University of Northern Colorado.