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Community group wants UA to fire doctor over homophobic letter

A Tucson group wants the University of Arizona to fire a doctor over homophobic comments he made in 2004 that were published in a Utah newspaper.

The Queers United Coalition, which says it includes students, staff members, professors and Tucson community members, wants the UA to fire Dr. Randal Dull, who is a tenured professor of anesthesiology at the UA, and a physician who practices at Banner University Medical Center-Tucson, which is the UA's teaching hospital.

His annual salary is $589,000, UA officials said Tuesday, declining further comment.

The Queers United Coalition announced in a news release that it plans to protest Dull's employment in the UA's free speech zone Wednesday morning.

Dull stepped down as chair of the UA's anesthesiology department earlier this summer after a January 2004 letter he wrote to The Park Record of Park City, Utah, resurfaced. In the letter, which was shared on social media and reported on in the Arizona Daily Star, he calls people who are LGBTQ+ "perverts" and "degenerates."

(LGBTQ+ is an umbrella term for people who have gender identities or sexual orientations that differ from the heterosexual and cisgender majority.)

After Dull stepped down as chair, Dr. Michael Dake, who is the UA's senior vice president for health sciences, and Dr. Irving Kron, the interim dean of the UA College of Medicine-Tucson, issued a joint statement about Dull. It said that a change in administrative leadership in the department of anesthesiology took place "to preserve unity in the pursuit of our mission."

Queers United Coalition says the UA should fire Dr. Randal Dull

https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/arizona-health/2019/09/03/q...
Dake and Kron said that they had been made aware of "growing concerns" within the anesthesiology department about its ability to remain unified and focused on supporting its mission.

"When issues and concerns arise that could be detrimental to our mission of providing cutting-edge health education, research, patient care and community outreach services, it impacts our ability to best serve our students, our patients and the community at large," the statement says.


"To preserve the unity of the department and its success, and to help the department move past potential distractions from the mission, Dr. Randal Dull decided this week it was best that he step down from his duties as chair. He will continue to serve as a tenured professor and physician in the department."

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The group planning to protest wants Dull fired. They call his continued status as tenured faculty and practicing doctor and professor "alarming."

"The fact that Dr. Dull remains in the hospital and the classroom is a threat, and we are calling on President (Robert) Robbins to remove him from both," the news release says. "We can say with confidence that we would not feel safe handing our medical care or the care of our loved ones over to this man."

Dull issued a statement Tuesday, apologizing "unequivocally for the hurtful way I addressed an issue 15 years ago about which people have very
sincerely held thoughts and feelings."

"I recognize that it's an honor and a privilege to serve as an educator and physician, and I am committed to the values and vision of the University of Arizona and Banner University Medical Center," the statement says. "I always have and will continue to train medical students and residents to provide equitable, compassionate care, and to serve every person and every patient I encounter with dignity and respect."

Dull's LinkedIn profile (https://www.linkedin.com/in/randal-dull-md-ph-d-a90b961a/) says he became head of the anesthesiology department at the UA in July 2018. He earned his medical degree from the University of Illinois at Chicago in 1995 and did his residency at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, records from the Arizona Medical Board show. He has no record of disciplinary actions with the board.

The 2004 letter to The Park Record, which ran under the headline, "Keep the Queers off the Front Page," was written in reaction to a front-page story about what was then a new queer networking and gathering site in Park City during the Sundance Film Festival.

"The promotion of homosexuality, bisexual confusion, and other degeneracy cannot be tolerated," wrote Dull, who signed the letter as state vice chair of the Constitution Party of Utah.

"Good people have allowed themselves to be deceived by the brainwashing use of words like ‘tolerance’ and ‘diversity’ — which are nothing more than polite ways of asking us to abandon our principles."

Dull's letter refers to people who wish to "undermine the Christian heritage of our country."

"We have the right and, in fact, we have a duty to support community standards of decency and morality," he wrote. "I would like to remind those who think of Park City as a family community, 'All that evil needs to succeed is for good people to do nothing.'"

The Queens United Coalition says that the UA espouses values of inclusion and safety for the entire community.

"So long as Dr. Dull is an active part of that community, those values are not being upheld," the group said in its news release.

Banner University Medical Center-Tucson is the teaching hospital of the UA, but officials with Banner Health told The Republic on Tuesday that Dull is not a Banner Health employee. A Banner Health spokeswoman provided an emailed statement in response to questions about Dull.

"At Banner Health, we value equity, diversity and inclusion, and provide the very best care to every patient, regardless of their country of origin, race, religious beliefs, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity," says an emailed statement.

"Everyone who walks through our doors is treated with compassion, dignity and respect. This commitment is fundamental to our organization, and we have a non-discrimination policy in place which is strictly enforced to ensure that every member of our staff upholds this commitment."
Queers United Coalition is a new group on campus formed by quiet and trans students who want to resist against the unjust actions of the University administration. We are organizing a protest this Wednesday at 11:45 in the Freedom of Speech Zone against Dr. Dull and the officials at the UofA who refuse to expel him from this institution. Dull is a practicing physician at Banner and a professor at the College of Medicine who made numerous homophobic comments in an article he w... See More

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