

President Reap summons Professor Fagal: March 21, 2006 [see paragraph 3]
[below is from Fagal's initial case submission to FIRE www.thefire.org]

For many years I have regularly hung newspaper clippings or Internet printouts of news stories on my office door. Circa February 20, 2006 I hung on my office door, adjacent to a news clipping about the Danish Mohammed cartoon controversy, the famous "bomb-in-turban" Mohammed cartoon. On February 22 my department chairperson, Sr. Margaret Gannon, told me I must remove the cartoon because "we don't want to offend anybody, and there is a Muslim student in the department." Under verbal protest, I acquiesced, immediately determining to see the president of the university so I could appeal Sr. Margaret's direct order. Sr. Mary Reap is Marywood's president. I took down the cartoon so I could present myself to president Reap as having gone through "official channels."

I met with president Reap that day. She said she supported Sr. Margaret's decision. On March 17 I sent a letter to each faculty member reporting February 22's events; I wrote "Sr. Mary said I did in fact have to remove the cartoon from my door."

President Reap called me into her office on March 21. She said I had lied and misquoted her. She vehemently claimed she never said I had to take down the cartoon! I replied that she had told me she supported Sr. Margaret's decision. Then president Reap said to me "Yes, I did support the decision!" I said something like "Great, so what are we talking about?" She again said I had lied and misquoted her. Finally recalling that my letter had NOT quoted her, I replied "But I didn't quote you!" I explained that when she told me on February 22 that she supported Sr. Margaret's decision she had logically told me that I could not post the cartoons! She then said she is very careful about what she says as president, and that she did not know that I had taken down the cartoon on February 22(!), and that I could in fact have it [the cartoon] up! I said "great!" and suggested we might perhaps issue a joint statement. She nixed that idea, saying she will "defend myself." The conversation was over.

With her March 21 representations I presumed president Reap would contact the faculty and say "although I disagree with Dr. Fagal, the cartoon can hang." In mid-May I asked her to clarify the "hanging policy" (see below).