



NORWICH™  
UNIVERSITY

October 14, 2024

A message from the President of Norwich University:

On Thursday, an article was published in VTDigger questioning the suspension of our student newspaper, The Guidon. Prior to the article, I had been monitoring an ongoing debate within Norwich's academic community. It included the Provost and staff, the Faculty Senate, faculty members, and some students. The discussion was around the degree to which the paper's academic advisor should establish and enforce oversight of journalistic ethics before restarting publication. I felt it was a proper and rigorous, albeit often contentious, debate on a critical topic. Importantly, it was occurring within our shared governance construct. Prior to the article, the debate was not ready for Presidential decision, nor was it appropriate to insert the President into the academic discussion. We needed to let our shared governance process play out and, if necessary, come forward with well-formed options after reasonable debate within our academic and student communities.

Unfortunately, that process was disrupted by the article before the debate was ready for decision. To be clear, I am not critical of the VTDigger's decision to publish their article. They were within their right to do so. However, commentary in social media and emails following the article's publication inserted undue influence into our process, exposing the debate, and our university, to misinformation and underinformed criticism by a host of players within and outside of the Norwich community.

To avoid further public rancor and unwarranted criticism against Norwich, I have ended the debate by requesting the Provost reinstate the Guidon's publication as soon as practical. I am also directing a code of ethics grounded in widely established journalism norms be drafted for my approval. We will also document a method of ethics oversight by the Guidon's academic advisors. I sincerely wish the debate could have played out and this decision be made honoring our shared governance process. But in the end, the decision to get back to publishing our Guidon is most important.

Norwich University is justifiably proud of our student run Guidon which has been published for over 100 years. I am personally committed to a student run press, free from Administration influence over content, advised by the faculty, and published with the highest degree of ethical standards. The Guidon is representative of the guiding values of Norwich and our goal to educate and prepare students for the demands placed on citizens of this free republic. It helps reinforce the line in our mission statement that "we will tolerate all opinions as long as reason is free to combat them."

Norwich Forever,

John J Broadmeadow  
LtGen, USMC (Ret)  
25th President, Norwich University

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