

Columbia International University's Statement Regarding Allegations

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Submitted By

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Columbia International University provides students with a world-class Christian education while nurturing their spiritual, physical, and emotional well-being.

Recent media reports contained salacious and unproven allegations regarding CIU and its leadership. The first discussed two lawsuits against CIU's President Dr. Mark A. Smith, and his former employer, Ohio Christian University. A federal court in Ohio recently dismissed one of the lawsuits. Dr. Smith has denied the allegations and vigorously is defending the other case. CIU fully supports Dr. Smith.

The second report described allegations of on-campus misconduct at CIU, which supposedly occurred years ago, against eight former students—who never reported or complained about the allegations while they were enrolled as students—targeting former President Bill Jones and others.

CIU's policies always have prohibited all forms of sexual harassment, assault, and misconduct and encouraged students to report all such allegations, without fear of reprisal or retaliation, to the University's designated Title IX Coordinator or any member of CIU's executive management.

On the few occasions when CIU has received a report of misconduct, the University immediately investigated the allegations and promptly acted to ensure a safe environment for students, faculty, staff, and guests.

Neither CIU's Title IX Coordinator nor its executive management was aware of the allegations that these former students recently raised in the newspaper because those students never complained or reported any type of misconduct.

Although these allegations are years old and lack many specific and relevant details, CIU is promptly and seriously addressing them by conducting a formal investigation led by outside legal counsel.

The media's recent accusations against CIU mirror many similar attacks on Christian institutions around the country. CIU has responded by remaining fully committed to the University's mission of educating people from a biblical worldview, with our Christian faith as our foundation. We zealously protect the safety and well-being of our students so that they can receive a Christ-centered education that will last a lifetime. We will never stray from our core values.

CIU has a storied history, is proud of the accomplishments of its students and alumni, and remains fully committed to providing a safe Christian community where students can build friendships and explore creative ways to serve others.