



University of Delaware

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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NEWARK, DELAWARE 19716

(302) 451-2111

November 22, 1989

Dr. Lawrence P. Nees, Jr., Chair
Faculty Senate Committee on Research

Dear Dr. Nees:

One of our faculty members, Dr. William J. Frawley, Linguistics Department, has written to me to express his concern about the University's acceptance of money from the Pioneer Fund in support of a research project in the College of Education. In his letter of October 31, 1989 (attached), Dr. Frawley charges that the Pioneer Fund is "an organization with a long and continuous history of supporting racism, anti-Semitism, and other discriminatory practices." Dr. Frawley takes the position that the association between the University and the Pioneer Fund "flatly contradicts the expressed educational policy of the University" as one of "the explicit goals of the University of Delaware is the promotion of multi-ethnic, multi-racial, and multi-cultural awareness and sensitivity, but the Pioneer Fund is devoted to - precisely the opposite: prejudice."

The faculty member whose research has been supported by the Pioneer Fund, Dr. Linda Gottfredson, Educational Studies Department, has responded in a letter to me dated November 14, 1989 (attached). Dr. Gottfredson's position is that "the Pioneer Fund is a legitimate research foundation concerned with the study of heredity." Dr. Gottfredson states that "In recent years the fund has supported a range of studies on heredity and health, including research on twins...and more generally on human abilities and disabilities...."

The question at issue in this matter is "has the University compromised its stated position of supporting a multi-cultural and multi-racial environment by acceptance of funding from the Pioneer Fund in support of research by a faculty person?" As a corollary, should the University refuse to accept research funding from the Pioneer Fund in the future? Our efforts to resolve these questions must, of course, recognize the fundamental right of a faculty member to pursue research in a field of the faculty member's choice, even if that research is unpopular.

I believe that the questions posed above should be addressed by a faculty body. I ask that the Senate Committee on Research consider these questions and advise me of the committee's recommendations.

In reviewing this matter in the President's Office, I have collected various items of written material that may be of help in your study. This material is itemized on the attached page and a copy of the various documents is attached.

Also, as you investigate this matter, you might find the need for some support funds. If this need arises, please advise me.

I request your advice on this matter at the earliest date consistent with a thorough study.

Thank you for your assistance in this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "E. A. Trabant".

E. A. Trabant
President

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Attachments

cc: Frank B. Dilley, President, Faculty Senate
Richard B. Murray, Acting Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Robert D. Varrin, Associate Provost for Research
Ronald F. Whittington, The Assistant to the President