

## UW Dean of Students Sends Message to Students

April 25, 2013 -- Following is a message from University of Wyoming Dean of Students David Cozzens sent to UW students today (Thursday):

“Two weeks ago a student brought a Facebook page (UW Crushes) to my attention and expressed concern about the uncivil and inappropriate posts on it by University of Wyoming students. He asked if I would intervene by admonishing our students not to post. However, in light of freedom of speech rights, I chose not to intervene in hopes that thoughtful students would push back on their peers regarding these divisive and acrimonious messages. Unfortunately, a recent post on this site was not only out of the bounds of good taste and civility but crossed into safety and viciousness by threatening a UW student with violence. At this point I will respond and remind all members of our community that UW is a place where all voices need to be encouraged and heard as long as their words aren’t abusive, threatening or violent.

“Social media can serve as an effective way to connect with other people in positive ways. However, these sites can often become vehicles that permit people to anonymously say/write mean and degrading comments. If students choose not to be civil and resort to threats and terror, I want to remind them of our Student Code of Conduct (<http://www.uwyo.edu/dos/judicial/>) that outlines the rights and responsibilities of UW students Prohibited Conduct V.B.2. ‘Verbal, written or graphic abuse, including threats, intimidation, harassment, coercion or other conduct that creates a climate of fear or which is reasonably expected to cause mental or emotional distress’ and II. Definitions L. Jurisdiction ‘regardless of where such conduct may occur.’

“Facebook pages such as these are not administered by UW, the site ‘UW Crushes’ is not affiliated with the University of Wyoming, and action has been taken regarding the use of the UW trademark seal. In addition, the UW Police Department is investigating whether the threatening post is a criminal violation.”