

# opinion

## Letter from the editors

Dear Ashland University Faculty, Students and Staff:

On behalf of Ashland University’s Board of Trustees, I write to express our dismay and disappointment upon learning of Brandon Campo’s recent guilty plea and additional concerns that came to light during his sentencing hearing. As an employee of this university until June 2018 and as the son of our president, Brandon’s case left us with many unanswered questions that demand our timely and thorough inquiry.

We are determined to gather all of the facts surrounding this situation and to carefully examine their implications for Ashland University. To this end, we have engaged the law firm of Barnes & Thornburg to conduct an independent review and to report back to the Trustees within 30 days. Barnes & Thornburg’s work will include, but not be limited to, the examination of the University’s hiring practices and our substance abuse policies.

While Ashland University has made great strides in academic excellence and creating a healthy culture for faculty, students and staff, the trustees intend to take appropriate steps, based on the facts, to redouble our efforts where there is a need to do so.

President Campo has assured us that he supports these independent fact-finding efforts and is cooperating fully with the inquiry. As is the Ashland University way, our thoughts and prayers are with the Campo family in this time of personal challenge.

In closing, I extend the Trustees’ appreciation for your understanding, support and patience as we work through this matter.

Sincerely,

Kevin L. Doss  
Chairman, Ashland University Board of Trustees

ASHLAND UNIVERSITY EMAIL

Students received this email from Public Relations on January 23rd.



Ashland University seal.

ASHLAND UNIVERSITY.EDU

COLLEGIAN EDITORS  
@AUCollegian

In regards to the most recent article we posted following Brandon Campo’s sentencing and the letter from the Board, we would like to address the campus and those that lead it. The point of writing this is to not bring more drama or light to this situation, but instead to ask the questions we cannot write in our articles. We are not advised, as journalists, to interject our opinion in our writing because it is then considered biased and untruthful.

We asked ourselves as editors if we have been silent for too long. In this opinion letter, we are going to ask the questions that we know will probably never get answered, but ones we know every single person who has followed this story have asked. In the letter that was emailed to all students, the Board of Trustees said, “To this end, we have engaged the law firm of Barnes & Thornburg to conduct an independent review and to report back to the Trustees within 30 days. Barnes & Thornburg’s work will include but not be limited to, the

examination of the University’s hiring practices and our substance abuse policies.” We as a staff have been following this situation from the beginning and we hope that our questions and concerns are answered by this third party organization. Our hope is that this third party can unbiasedly perform a full investigation on this matter and not let their current work that involves the university influence their findings. We expect Barnes & Thornburg to be transparent in their findings so this can be avoided in the future. After thinking through this entire ordeal, we have come up with several questions we hope are answered. We hope that the leaders in this investigation will sufficiently do their job and dig further than what is initially needed. Looking at this situation as a whole, the first question is how did this happen? How did a convicted felon get a job at an accredited university in admissions? How did he pass a background check? Was one even performed? If not, why? Now is the time when we need to ask questions because we have been presented with misguided points and new information that does not back it up. We have been covering this situation since August of 2018 when we first broke the story of Brandon’s arrest on campus. Since then, we have encountered the magnitude that this has had on the university. We had just

scratched the surface of the situation as a whole and as soon as we released our version, we were hit with questions and the reality of media censorship. While the administration never directly threatened student First Amendment rights, other actions were taken that gave us fear and caused us to second guess our reporting. People were going to find out regardless if we had covered the story or not. People were going to eventually find out the depth that this goes to and how rules and policies were not followed. Everything that the policies were put in place to prevent were shattered when someone with an extensive criminal background was hired. How did someone who committed identity theft, has multiple drug convictions and a prison history, get a job in this campus? Brandon was officially given the title Graduate Admissions Representative and was in charge of recruiting people to come to AU. What was his job? What type of information did he have access to? One of our biggest concerns is not only in the fact that he was hired, but that Brandon was on AU’s campus purchasing drugs from a student dealer. As Judge Good said, he would be concerned if he was a parent of a child on this campus. We are the students on this campus and we are concerned as well. Other concerns include, who else is here working on campus without a background check? If this has happened once, what are the odds that it

has happened before? Ashland University is an accredited university that offers a lot of opportunities to most of its students and it is very disappointing to be writing about a situation like this happening. Something more is to be expected from a university that prides itself on its students success. This situation goes deeper than we are even asking and we hope that in light of this, questions can be answered. This is far from being over and no matter what happens from here on out, we as a staff fully support the ethical covering and reporting of our own and fully stand behind them.

To submit your own opinion article or letter to the editor, email bgannon@ashland.edu

### the Collegian

#### EDITOR’S NOTE

The views expressed in the columns do not necessarily reflect the views of *The Collegian* or Ashland University.

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Every letter must be signed and include contact information. The Collegian reserves the right to edit any letter for content, grammar or length. The Collegian prints letters for university and public interest. Please send letters to:

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