



Dear Presidents:

*Salvador D. Aceves, Ed.D. (University of San Francisco),
Kimo Ah Yun, Ph.D. (Marquette University),
Hubert Benitez, D.D.S., Ph. D. (Saint Peter's University),
Rev. John T. Butler, S.J. (Boston College),
Sandra Cassidy, Ph.D. (Rockhurst University),
Xavier A. Cole, Ed.D. (Loyola University New Orleans),
Edward Feser, Ph.D. (Saint Louis University),
Colleen M. Hanycz, Ph.D. (Xavier University),
Rev. Daniel Hendrickson, S.J. (Creighton University),
Linda M. Le Mura, Ph.D. (Le Moyne College),
Rev. Joseph G. Marina, S. J. (University of Scranton),
Maura B. Mast, Ph.D. (Seattle University),
Cheryl A. McConnell, Ph.D. (Saint Joseph's University),
Mark R. Nemec, Ph.D. (Fairfield University),*

*Katia Passerini, Ph.D. (Gonzaga University),
Eduardo M. Peñalver, J.D. (Georgetown University),
Mirtha Alicia Peralta, Ph.D. (St. John's College),
Thomas Poon, Ph.D. (Loyola Marymount University),
Mark C. Reed, Ed.D. (Loyola University Chicago),
Vincent Rougeau, J.D. (College of the Holy Cross),
Terrence M. Sawyer, J.D. (Loyola University Maryland),
Carolyn Noll Sorg, M.F.A. (John Carroll University),
Steve K. Stoute, J.D. (Canisius University),
Julie Sullivan, Ph.D. (Santa Clara University),
Donald B. Taylor, Ph.D. (University of Detroit Mercy),
Tania Tetlow, J.D. (Fordham University),
Mary H. Van Brunt, Ph.D. (Spring Hill College),
Shawna Cooper Whitehead, Ed.D. (Regis University),*

As Catholics, people educated in the Jesuit tradition, and allies, we know that providing access to contraception on campus is not in contradiction with core Jesuit values. Comprehensive healthcare, including access to contraception, education, and transparency, is an essential part of caring for the whole person. Further, St. Ignatius of Loyola invites us to find God in all things. Each person making informed decisions about their bodies and well-being deserves the support and respect that someone would give Jesus, because God is in each of us.

As current students, alumni, faculty, pro-choice Catholics, and allied community members, we are writing to ask that University administrations at the 28 U.S. Jesuit Catholic Colleges and Universities stop denying students access to contraception. Together, we call on administrators to hear our three demands:



1. **TRANSPARENCY:** Be transparent online about which sexual health services you offer, provide external resources for services you do not offer, and share how relevant policy changes may impact students.

Jesuit Universities welcome and recruit students and faculty of all and no faiths. For their decisions to be fully informed, current and prospective students and staff must be made aware of how reproductive health restrictions might impact them. In cases where services will not be provided on campus, the university is responsible for providing streamlined connections to competent external providers.

2. **EDUCATION:** Permit students, staff, and community members to speak publicly about gender and reproductive justice in all campus locations.

Campuses are places where students come to learn and grow from faculty and one another. Prohibiting education and speech about reproductive justice on campus directly contradicts the university's central purpose.

3. **ACCESS:** Allow students, faculty, and staff to distribute free and accessible contraception for the purposes of preventing pregnancy.

Access to sexual and reproductive healthcare is a basic right of students. Most colleges and universities in the United States provide this care to their students. Not only does providing contraception on campus allow students to make their own reproductive decisions, but it also supports students in preventing STIs and is critical care for survivors of sexual violence.



Time after time, it has been made clear that **the health and well-being of students at Catholic colleges suffer because of a lack of access to basic care.** A Georgetown student had to have an ovary removed because they couldn't afford the out-of-pocket costs of her birth control. A Fordham student lost their campus housing and scholarship when they were unable to afford contraception and became pregnant. A 2016 study found that Marquette University was the least sexually healthy campus in the U.S.

Denial of contraception is a violation of the Catholic value of religious freedom. Restricting reproductive freedom not only runs afoul of the diversity of religious traditions of students and staff, but also the religious freedom of the pro-choice Catholic majority who disagree with church teaching. Freedom of religion does not give Catholic colleges and universities the license to strip students of the fullness of their religious identities.

The Catholic majority agrees. 99% of Catholic women have used birth control. Additionally, 84% of Catholics think the church should allow people to use birth control, and only 8% of Catholics believe that using birth control is morally wrong. Student referendums have also shown it is overwhelmingly popular on campus. **Policies based on a narrowly held belief that endanger the health of students are not what Catholics want and do not reflect Catholic values.**



Catholic colleges must stop allowing their denial of contraception to be what defines them and their vision of the faith. Catholicism is an incredibly rich tradition, as is the Jesuit tradition of social justice. Catholic institutions of higher education must live into the diversity of the Catholic faith and honor the Catholic principles of social justice and the dignity of all people by making contraception accessible.

We ask you to live into the Jesuit value of discernment as you read this. Thank you for hearing our demands, and we look forward to seeing you act on these requests.

Signed,