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## The Interior Design Protection Council

91 Reserve Place, Concord, New Hampshire 03301 Phone: 603.228.8550 Fax: 603.229.1339 [www.IDPCinfo.org](http://www.IDPCinfo.org)

June 15, 2009

George Pry, President  
Art Institute of Pittsburg  
420 Blvd. of the Allies  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear President Pry,

As you are aware, since IDPC broke the story of alleged student coercion at AIP, there has been a firestorm of outrage. This is a serious issue, not only for AIP, but for interior design colleges and students throughout the country.

In a reply to a concerned designer, you recently made the following statements:

- 1. The item of extra credit was for the student to get involved in legislation that could affect their career.*
- 2. You are only seeing one of a number of options that allowed a student to choose where they stand. Another option was against the piece you saw.*
- 3. Even another option was very different so while it may have appeared to you that there was a direction on our part, the fact was that we were indifferent to that stand.*

We appreciate your efforts to resolve this situation and preserve the academic integrity of AIP, and in order to provide clarification as well as comply with the accepted transparency model embraced by most institutions of higher learning, we would ask for comment and/or documentation for the following:

1. The item in question clearly was not *just* for the student to get involved in legislation. The title of the assignment is IDLCPA **Support**. Not only is the student awarded the opportunity to gain 15 points by lobbying *for* legislation, but they are first presented with a factually incorrect, slanted view *in favor of* legislation which implies, unchallenged, that the legislation will enhance their career when in fact there is empirical evidence supporting the position that it would be detrimental. And, if that's not enough, they are "*strongly recommended*" to use PayPal to financially support the organization behind the regulation effort.
2. Contrary to your statement, it has been alleged that at the time Ms. Musulin's assignment was issued, no other similar, "against" assignment of equal content was offered as an alternative. An equal assignment would have been entitled along the lines of "IDPC Support" or "Liberty for PA Designers Support" and

- would have included an introduction written by a representative from either organization with link to their website, 15 points for lobbying legislators opposing HB 1521, and 5 points for crafting a letter of support to be posted on the IDPC website. And, of course, a “strong recommendation” to join and financially support one of these organizations. Please advise whether such an assignment was ever given to the students. Please provide us with a hard copy of any “against” assignment and the date Ms. Musulin offered it to her students.
3. Subsequent to the IDPC articles written about this issue, “another option,” which you mentioned above was offered (a general assignment in which the student is allowed extra credit to write a 2 page report on this legislation and in which their opinion will not be counted against them). Kindly provide us with the date Ms. Musulin gave this assignment to her students and the date it went up on the student server website. It has been alleged that this assignment went up just a few days ago, “after the fact” and in direct response to the controversy. If that is the case, this “indifferent stand” came long after it should have. Please comment on how fair that is to graduating students who had to have their extra credits in by June 11<sup>th</sup>, as well as how it impacts the fact that they are in all probability walking away from AIP with a one-sided indoctrination to support licensing which could in the long run adversely impact them.

In order to be fair and accurate in our reporting we are *temporarily* holding further public comment on this issue until we hear from you. If you would kindly provide us with your comments and the requested documentation as expediently as possible, we would greatly appreciate it.

There are a number of ways in which the issue involving Ms. Musulin’s inappropriate use of her position can be resolved, to the benefit of AIP, the students, and the greater design community. I would be happy to discuss these with you and assist in correcting both the current situation as well as ensure that it does not recur in the future.

Very sincerely,

*Patti Morrow*

Patti Morrow  
Executive Director