

Hello,

I'm writing in response to the email sent out by the Chick-fil-A campus dialogue committee.

I would like to take a moment to defend the continued existence of Chick-fil-A on campus for a few reasons. I should start by saying that I personally do **NOT** agree with President Dan Cathy's political views or opinions on same-sex marriage. However, I do respect his right to have these opinions - how can people denounce him as being 'intolerant' when they themselves will not tolerate his conservative views? The Cathy family is a deeply religious one: although Chick-fil-A is franchised, the parent company retains ownership of every store and closes them all on Sundays for religious observation. While I believe that espousing his opinions was an insensitive and unwise move by Dan Cathy, the opinions themselves should come as no surprise to the general public; they are on-par with what is traditionally believed by Southern Baptists (the religion with which he openly identifies).

Furthermore, it is unreasonable to judge a company as expansive as Chick-fil-A on the basis of the President's political views. Chick-fil-A has stated that "The Chick-fil-A culture and service tradition in our Restaurants is to treat every person with honor, dignity and respect –regardless of their belief, race, creed, sexual orientation or gender". If the restaurant was actively discriminating against gay customers, this would be a different debate. In reality, the personal sentiments of the Cathy family are not reflected in the day-to-day operations of the chain. If every COO of a company was forced to reveal their political standings, I would be willing to bet that many maintain beliefs that would be poorly received by the public. It is unfortunate luck that Dan Cathy's ideas were exposed, but is it fair to condemn his business based on his honesty? I would say, no.

Additionally, the presence of a Chick-fil-A chain on Wake Forest campus is not harming, directly or indirectly, any member of this school. A recent statement by the company reveals its plans to avoid further conflict: "We are a restaurant company focused on food, service and hospitality; our intent is to leave the policy debate over same-sex marriage to the government and political arena". In addition, Chick-fil-A's charity organization, the WinShape Foundation, has promised that it "will remain true to its stated philosophy of not supporting organizations with political agendas", so there is no argument that Chick-fil-A's profits are harming a particular group of the population. If students are offended by Dan Cathy's statement, they are free to avoid eating at his restaurant. However, it is completely unfair to remove this dining option for the rest of the student body. This is the real world, and it is always possible to find *someone* offended by *something*. That doesn't mean that every student's political beliefs can be catered to.

Finally, removing Chick-fil-A from the Benson Center would diminish the variety of food available to Wake Forest Students. Chick-fil-A is actually one of the healthiest fast food restaurants out there: they serve natural, white-meat hormone-free chicken breast and a variety of nutritious options like salads and whole-wheat buns. A Chargrilled Chicken Sandwich from Chick-fil-A has only 290 calories and 4 grams of fat, but an impressive 28 grams of protein. An 8-count nuggets box from Chick-fil-A contains 260 calories and 12 grams of fat; in comparison, the 8-count nugget equivalent at rival McDonalds has 380 calories and a whopping 24 grams of fat (twice as much!) Speaking as a college student, it can be nearly impossible to find filling food choices on campus that don't come with a hefty fine of high calories and fat. Gone are the days of Mom's plain rotisserie chicken and poached salmon - here, lean, natural meats are difficult to come by (what's in that Fresh Food Company deli meat anyway?) The meats found in the Dining Hall's hot food line are usually served already drenched in sauces and other toppings, making it difficult to procure plain, lean options. The salad bar in the Fresh Food Company is

very respectable, but I much prefer a Chargrilled Chicken Salad from Chick-fil-A: at only 180 calories, it comes with 23 grams of protein to make salad a real meal. In the busy life of a college student, Chick-fil-A can be a saving grace: fast, filling meals on-the-go without the downfalls of high fats and unhealthy additives.

I strongly believe that removing Chick-fil-A from Wake Forest would be detrimental and unfair to the student body. Thank you for taking the time and effort to open up this issue for student opinions, and I hope that the committee will ultimately decide to allow Chick-fil-A to remain here at Wake Forest.

Sincerely,  
Katelyn Bailey  
Class of 2016

References:

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