

Encouraging Respect and Civility

A letter from the dean of students

SERIES:

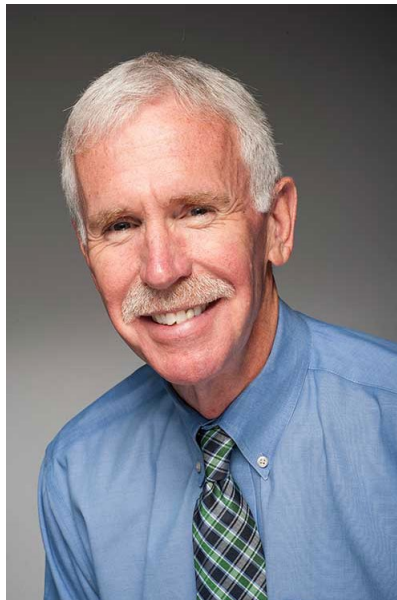
BUILD A BETTER UNH

Thursday, September 13, 2018



Dear Wildcats,

Sometimes events from the past remind us what a special place UNH is and how lucky we are to live and work here. I write now to share a story from our past that illustrates one reason I am so proud to be a Wildcat and let you know about some related events.



JOHN T. KIRKPATRICK

The 1950s were marked by widespread fear of communism across our nation with many believing that only extreme vigilance and prosecution of persons holding “dangerous” beliefs would keep us safe. State officials and local media challenged the right of Gwynn Daggett, a UNH professor of English, to invite speakers to his classes who some regarded as subversive voices. One of those guests was Paul Sweezy, an economist suspected of communist ties. An attempt to force them to explain what they talked about in the classroom was rebuked, and the case went to the U.S. Supreme Court. The court ruled in favor of UNH, and in 1958 the

SUBSCRIBE
TO THE UNH
TODAY
NEWSLETTER

SUBSCRIBE
TO UNH TODAY
RSS

university received a national award, The AAUP's Meiklejohn Award for Academic Freedom, in recognition of its outstanding contribution to academic freedom in higher education. Read more about this case in [UNH Magazine](#).

It is important to honor this crucial part of our heritage, and there are two opportunities next week:

- Monday, Sept. 17, is Constitution Day, the yearly celebration of the signing of the U.S. Constitution in 1787. As a public university receiving federal funds, we are directed by Congress to recognize the importance of that date to the American story. An essay about the Sweezy case written by Sue Siggelakis, a political science professor and constitutional scholar, will be on the UNH homepage all week. Take the time to read it and reflect on its meaning in 2018.
- Wednesday, Sept. 19, at 9:50 a.m. in the Granite State Room of the MUB, UNH will host a naturalization ceremony, celebrating 70 new U.S. citizens in a special session of the U.S. District Court. The ceremony is open to the public.

Academic freedom, freedom of speech and of assembly and inclusion are important topics for us to consider as a community. Let's talk, and when we disagree, let's listen to the opposing voice without diminishing it, to acknowledge without fear wider social problems that compromise freedom and opportunity among some groups and to work with one another to find common ground. It is vital work that awaits us in the coming year. I hope that each of you in your way will join that effort.

With best wishes for the 2018-19 academic year,

John T. Kirkpatrick

Senior Vice Provost for Student Life

and Dean of Students

RELATED ARTICLES



December 15, 2021 | THE COLLEGE LETTER

“Many Thanks for Your Words”



March 22, 2022 | NORTHEAST PASSAGE

At the Top of Their Game



April 20, 2022 | UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Styled Up



University of New Hampshire

UNH Today is produced for the UNH community and for friends of UNH.

The stories are written by the staff of [UNH Communications and Public Affairs](#).

Email us: unhtoday.editor@unh.edu.

[MANAGE YOUR SUBSCRIPTION](#) [CONTACT US](#)



UNH Today • UNH Main Directory: 603-862-1234
Copyright © 2022 • TTY Users: 7-1-1 or 800-735-2964 (Relay NH)

[USNH Privacy Policies](#) • [USNH Terms of Use](#) • [ADA Acknowledgement](#)

