



University of Pittsburgh

Division of Student Affairs

738 William Pitt Union
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260
412-648-1006

October 28, 2016

Dear Pitt Students,

Much of the energy and vibrancy of our campus stems from the intersection of so many unique experiences and viewpoints among our students, faculty, and staff. This diversity is what brings richness to our community and depth to the educational experience we offer. At Pitt, we encourage the free exchange of ideas in a setting that is intended to be safe, respectful, and tolerant – at a minimum. We are often reminded, however, that presidential elections have the unique ability to intensify our emotions and heighten our passions. Indeed, the 2016 presidential election has proven to be particularly provocative for some. Our responsibility as an institution is to encourage our students to engage in the political process—while cultivating an environment that allows them to do so within the standards of our democracy.

As members of the Pitt community, we are encouraged through our Pitt Promise, to uphold the values of mutual respect, civility, and self-restraint. During the remaining days leading to our national election and beyond, we will all hear opinions that may challenge our own viewpoints and test our sensibilities. Reacting in ways that violate other people's rights, threaten the well-being of others, or detract from a civil campus environment, will not help to advance your—or your candidate's—cause. Rather, I encourage you to channel your energy and viewpoints constructively, and allow them to fuel your determination to cast your vote on November 8! (Find your [on-campus](#) or [off-campus](#) polling place.) Exercising your right to vote is one of the most powerful ways to make your voice heard. As always, please take care of yourselves, take care of each other, and take care of our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kenyon R. Bonner", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kenyon R. Bonner

Vice Provost and Dean of Students