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Putting our Worldview to Work in All Seasons

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PUTTING OUR WORLDVIEW TO WORK IN ALL SEASONS

In 2020, Dordt University will invite all presidential candidates—Republican or Democrat—to campus. None are likely to be met with enthusiasm by everyone.

Yet, we believe it is good to take advantage of our unusual standing as an early voting state to allow students, alumni, and the broader community who wish to participate meaningfully and up-close in the political process. Sifting through and weighing how a candidate's views and policies best measure up to our understandings of what it means to act as a citizen is an important part of living a life of Christian obedience. As I wrote in my open letter about the political season in 2016, "Our goal is to have Dordt students graduate with a commitment to be politically active and biblically obedient, which I believe can only be achieved by having first-hand access to candidates."



Bringing in speakers has always been part of Dordt's mission to educate and equip students for service in Christ's kingdom.

Throughout our history, Dordt has had speakers as diverse as Jesse Jackson, George Bush, Donald Trump, Chaim Potok, Marilynne Robinson, and Shane Claiborne address audiences from the B.J. Haan Auditorium stage.

There are other instances on campus where students encounter different perspectives. In the classroom, professors take up difficult topics not because they endorse what is covered but because they want to equip students to engage with topics from a Christ-centered perspective. The Hulst Library at Dordt offers access to materials that provide a broad range of ideas and points of view. Including

a text or other resource in our library or in a course does not imply that Dordt endorses the ideas or actions of the authors; instead, Dordt librarians and professors guide students to think biblically about issues they encounter.

We believe students should listen and respond to people who see the world from different perspectives. This helps students to learn not only how to meaningfully engage with people they disagree with but also to sharpen their own understanding and beliefs. If we isolate our students from those we or they might disagree with or from those whose beliefs about specific issues make us uncomfortable, we will have poorly prepared our students for living as Christ-followers in today's world.

Taking this approach is not without tension...But as an institution committed to a Christian, Reformed perspective that holds Scripture high and uses a redemptive-historical method to read and apply God's Word, we need to understand how such people shape us and our world.

Taking this approach is not without tension. We will not always agree with the writers and thinkers, Christian and non-Christian, who are shaping our world. But as an institution committed to a Christian, Reformed perspective that holds Scripture high and uses a redemptive-historical method to read and apply God's Word, we need to understand how such people shape us and our world.

Dordt's *Educational Task and Framework*, hiring processes, and oversight and support of faculty are rooted in the centrality of Scripture, the championing of a Christian worldview,

and a commitment to the Reformed confessions. Our mission statement, "As an institution of higher education committed to the Reformed Christian perspective, Dordt equips students, alumni, and the broader community to work effectively toward Christ-centered renewal in all aspects of contemporary life," captures this commitment. I am convinced that Dordt lives out that mission by making it possible for our students and community to actively engage the beliefs and ideas of the people who are shaping our world so that they become better able to apply, articulate, and own where they stand and what they believe.

I've served as president for seven years, and I wake up every day thinking about how to make this mission statement real

and alive in every activity of the college and in the lives of each of our students. We want the young people we educate to love the Lord with their hearts, souls, minds, and strengths—and to love their neighbors as themselves in a culture seemingly less able or willing to do so in the public square today. In these events, as in all things, we are trying to live out our motto: *Soli Deo Gloria*—"To God Alone Be All the Glory!"

DR. ERIK HOEKSTRA, PRESIDENT