



Tuesday, 29 March 2016

Professor Barbara Caine,  
Acting Dean of Arts and Social Sciences,  
Room J2.05, Lobby J,  
The Quadrangle, A14,  
The University of Sydney,  
NSW 2006 Australia

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Dear Professor Caine,

On behalf of Australian Quakers I write to express concern at news of the downgrading of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at Sydney University.

At a time when peacemaking is critical to global survival, we believe more attention should be given in Australian universities to issues of conflict prevention and resolution. There is no shortage of research on war-related strategies, and this needs to be balanced by critical thinking about alternatives that support the human capacity for harmony and reconciliation at all levels of society, domestically and internationally.

We recognise that such a Centre can at times be controversial in provoking public debate on difficult matters. Yet a university is the very place where such topics should be able to be raised in an environment of mutual listening and openness. Students deserve more options in their studies than the well-established fields of learning if they are to contribute constructively to solving global problems.

We hope that every effort is made to ensure that the study of peace-related themes and initiatives remains a high priority within the university.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julian Robertson".

Julian Robertson  
Presiding Clerk

**Australia Yearly Meeting**

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