

**Statement of Dr. Ernest M. Zampelli, Emeritus Professor of Economics, to the
Faculty Assembly Regarding the University's Dismissal of
Professor Stephen J. McKenna**

January 23, 2019

In my almost 35 years at CUA as faculty member, department chair, president of the academic senate, and member of a seemingly endless number of senate and university committees, I have never witnessed a more shameful action by the University's administration than its dismissal and deliberate public humiliation of Professor Stephen McKenna. His was not a case of sexual abuse, sexual assault, sexual harassment, or of creating a hostile work environment. This was a consensual relationship, begun in a time of emotional fragility. Yes, it crossed a boundary. That is indisputable. That boundary issue, however, disappeared after several months—the relationship lasted for four years, with plans for marriage in the Catholic Church. This was not “moral turpitude” as President Garvey insistently maintained. And though the committee concluded that the violation was one for which dismissal could be appropriate, it in fact unanimously supported a sanction other than dismissal. The nagging question then is why the President and Provost pushed for the dismissal of Professor McKenna. I do not believe it is hyperbole to suggest that they were motivated in part by the fact that Professor McKenna often, and openly, questioned and criticized University policies, procedures, and decisions. In short, it would be naïve and disingenuous on

anyone's part to dismiss the possibility that the University's actions were retaliatory, plain and simple.

However, whether someone believes the dismissal decision was appropriate punishment or not, no one who values decency can condone, in any way, the deplorable public shaming executed by the University in publishing, on its homepage, the details of the case involving Professor McKenna. It is imperative that the faculty, in the strongest possible unified voice and language, condemn the University's contemptible action and demand that the University President and Provost be held accountable.