

# THE POLITICAL ASSAULT ON AMERICA'S UNIVERSITIES

By David Horowitz

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# The Political Assault on America's Universities

By David Horowitz

What follows in these pages is testimony presented to the Appropriations Committee of the Kansas House on March 15, 2006, concerning the assault on academic freedom by tenured radicals in Kansas' public university system.<sup>1</sup> The examples presented could easily be matched by examples taken from universities in any state in the union. The problem is pervasive, and growing.

The intellectual corruption of our universities by political radicals has been proceeding without interruption since the Vietnam era. It moved into high gear in the 1980s, when the Sixties-era radicals were able to attain tenure rank and institutional power. In the last decade it has become a widespread and destructive fact of our educational life and, in the context of the war on terror, an increasingly dangerous one. Entire university departments and academic fields are no longer devoted to scholarly pursuits, but have become ideological training and recruitment programs for radical causes.

Educational institutions are the cornerstones of our democracy, a fact that should be of particular concern in the midst of a war with totalitarian enemies who are seeking to destroy us. The ability to reason and think for oneself is a crucial attribute of a democratic citizenry. Teaching democratic virtues to emerging generations is a crucial task of our educational system, but it is a vanishing aspect of the educational curriculum today.

**M**y name is David Horowitz. I am a well-known author and media commentator and the President of the Center for the Study of Popular Culture, a non-profit public interest organization supported by the contributions of 40,000 individuals. I am also the author of a recent book, *The Professors*, which profiles more than a hundred academics in universities that are public and private, large and small, secular and religious, and that are distributed across every region of the country. The profiles in my book reveal several disturbing patterns in university governance, including the use of university classrooms to promote agendas that are political and radical, and not academic.

I am the creator of a national organization called Students for Academic Freedom which has chapters on 150 campuses nationwide, whose purpose is to defend academic freedom and promote the Academic Bill of Rights. If adopted by universities, this bill would restore educational and academic values to university curricula, and would strengthen traditions of academic responsibility that have been steadily eroded in recent years. The Academic Bill of Rights has already effected changes in the academic policies of public university systems in Colorado and Ohio, and provided a model for legislation in more than a dozen states.

My Academic Bill of Rights is an attempt to restore principles of academic freedom that played a central role in shaping the modern research university in America and making it the envy of the world. It is principally a codification of existing policies which university administrations are increasingly unable to enforce. I have explained why this is so in my book, but it should be apparent to any observer of recent events at Harvard University, where the most powerful president in the history of the modern research university was forced to resign by a radical faculty that did not approve his expression of politically incorrect ideas.

In authoritarian and totalitarian societies schools exist to indoctrinate students in the orthodoxy of the state. In a democracy, by contrast, we teach students *how* to think, not *what* to think. In other words, in a free society the very purpose of education is to open stu-

dents' minds and encourage future citizens to figure out what conclusions to draw by themselves. It is not the purpose of a democratic education to force-feed students opinions on controversial issues that the teacher deems "politically correct." This is the idea that lies at the heart of the existing academic freedom provisions of virtually every university in America. But these provisions are no longer enforced. That is why I have sponsored an Academic Bill of Rights and why I am here today.

The clearest expression of this crisis in American higher education can be found in the fate of a famous academic freedom clause written in 1934 by University of California president Robert Gordon Sproul for the Academic Personal Manual that governed faculty behavior:

"Essentially the freedom of a university is the freedom of competent persons in the classroom. In order to protect this freedom, the University assumes the right to prevent exploitation of its prestige by unqualified persons or by those who would use it as a platform for propaganda....The function of the university is to seek and to transmit knowledge and to train students in the processes whereby truth is to be made known. To convert, or to make converts, is alien and hostile to this dispassionate duty. Where it becomes necessary in performing this function of a university, to consider political, social, or sectarian movements, they are dissected and examined, not taught, and the conclusion left, with no tipping of the scales, to the logic of the facts...."<sup>2</sup>

On July 3, 2003, the Faculty Senate of the University of California, by vote of 43-3 removed this clause from the university's academic freedom provisions.<sup>3</sup>

## THE CRISIS IN OUR UNIVERSITIES

When the Faculty Senate of the University of California elected to remove the Sproul Clause, it did so because this fundamental principle of academic freedom came into conflict with a specific course offered on the Berkeley campus. The course was given by a political activist, Snehal Shingavi, who had been arrested for conducting illegal demonstrations on the Berkeley campus, but who continued to retain his faculty position. His course was called, "The Politics and Poetics of Palestinian Resistance" and gained national embarrassment for the university when Shingavi inserted a warning into the school catalogue announcement advising conservative students not to take it. Shingavi's course was not even in history or political science or Middle Eastern Studies. It was a course in an English writing program required for all freshmen.

Instead of removing the blatantly political course from the university curriculum because it violated existing academic freedom guidelines, the Faculty Senate decided to remove the guideline itself. In its place, the university substituted a clause to the effect that whatever a teacher might say in a classroom is appropriate and proper if the Faculty Senate says it is.

This episode is but one manifestation of a disturbingly widespread trend in American higher education towards the politicization of the academic curriculum and a university model that is closer to the educational systems in authoritarian societies than to democratic societies like ours. This trend is a product of two major developments that have taken place in the university system over the course of the last twenty-five years.

The first is the abdication by university administrators of oversight of what faculty are saying and doing in the classroom. Administrators, increasingly focused on financial concerns, have turned a blind eye to radical advocacy in the classroom and the substitution of political attitudinizing for scholarly research. Segments of the faculty have now become accustomed to the most irresponsible

conduct in their classrooms and on campus without any repercussions or consequences.

Three examples will illustrate this problem, both at prestigious institutions of higher learning. The first is what happened to Harvard President Lawrence Summers when he demanded that one of his professors, Cornel West, the holder of a prestigious “university professorship,” actually produce real scholarship instead of spending his time recording rap music albums and working as an advisor on political campaigns. West, a professor of “religious studies” and the holder of 20 honorary university degrees, earning more than \$300,000 per year, had not produced a scholarly work in nearly twenty years. West simply brushed aside the president of Harvard’s request, insinuated that Summers was a racist and secured another prestigious and well-paid position at Princeton. In other words, a faculty radical, supported by his political peers, is accountable to no one, even at Harvard.

The second case involves a tenured professor in the Department of Cultural Anthropology at Duke University. During a speech I gave at Duke last week, which was attended by more than 600 students and was sponsored by the Office of the Provost, Anthropology Professor Diane Nelson led a group of students in disruptions of the event. For a faculty member to disrupt an invited speaker to the Duke campus is a specific violation of published faculty guidelines of behavior. In its report on the event, Duke’s student newspaper published an email that Professor Nelson had sent to students urging them to strip naked at the event to further disrupt my speech. Professor Nelson is the Director of Undergraduate Studies for the Department of Anthropology at a university ranked fifth in the nation in academic quality. So far, there have been no repercussions for this professorial behavior.

The increasing power of the imperial faculty is accompanied by the increasing presence of the political radicals who have achieved tenure, and with it lifetime jobs. That is the meaning of a third incident — the forced resignation of Harvard’s president over a remark that a radical minority on the Harvard faculty regarded as politically incorrect.

Lawrence Summers was the most powerful university president in the history of the modern research university. But within four years of his appointment, he became the first president ever to be censured by his own faculty. Months after this censure the same faculty radicals threatened to follow it with a second censure vote. This crippled Summers' presidency and forced him to resign.

The trigger of Summers' unprecedented termination by a small but politically aggressive faculty minority (a mere ten percent of all Harvard professors) was his expression of forbidden ideas. While academic freedom was regarded by the faculty as their right to say anything they wished in a classroom, the same freedom did not apply to their university president in a private seminar with only faculty members and administrators present.

The idea that precipitated Summers' censure was his observation that scientific studies showed that women and men had different aptitudes for mathematics. Although what he said was scientifically accurate, it was not an idea that could be safely uttered by a university president, even one with distinguished academic credentials. Because it offended the feminists present in this closed door meeting, the President of Harvard had to go.

There is not a single university or college president in the entire nation who has not taken note of this episode or considered its implications. The implications are these: To challenge the political radicals on their faculty risks damage to their universities and would lead to the possible termination of their careers. The faculty radicals, by contrast, have tenure – lifetime jobs.

The second development underlying the present crisis in academic governance is the creation of entire academic programs that are overtly ideological in nature and whose agendas are determined by political rather than scholarly goals. The driving force behind these programs is the same radical minority that has enforced the censorship of ideas on campus beginning at the classroom level and reaching into the office of the university president.



An advanced stage of this intellectual corruption can be seen in the Women's Studies Department at the University of California Santa Cruz. Faculty radicals have even changed the name of the Department to reflect the overtly ideological nature of its "academic" program. It is now called the Department of Feminist Studies,<sup>4</sup> and is a blatant program of ideological indoctrination in the theory and practice of radical feminism. Its frankly stated "academic" mission is the recruitment of students to radical causes.

On the official departmental website under "Career Opportunities" and the heading "What Can I Do With A Major in Feminist Studies" the answer is as follows:

Employment Opportunities for Feminist Studies Majors:

With a background in women's and minorities' histories and an understanding of racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, and other forms of oppression, graduates have a good background for work with policy-making and lobbying organizations, research centers, trade and international associations, and unions. Graduates' knowledge about power relationships and injustice often leads them to choose careers in government and politics, because they are determined to use their skills to change the world...<sup>5</sup>

This is not an academic curriculum. It is an indoctrination and recruitment program that violates the most fundamental precepts of the academic freedom guidelines of the University of California. Yet not a single administrator in the University of California system is the slightest concerned.

Using university mandates to promote "multiculturalism" as a pretext, faculty radicals have made political indoctrination courses like those offered by the Santa Cruz Feminist Studies Department required courses for all university undergraduates. The undergraduate programs radicals have corrupted are the feeder systems for law and journalism faculties that the taxpayers in California and Kansas and other states have set up as professional training institutions for future lawyers,

judges, editors and reporters. Radical academics see their mission as turning universities into a political base for changing the society as a whole. The crisis this has caused in academic governance is one from which the higher education system in Kansas is not immune and is the subject I am here to discuss.

Obviously in the time allowed me, I cannot present a comprehensive analysis of the Kansas system of public higher education. I will have to settle for a few examples that reflect a more widespread problem. I urge the legislature to consider undertaking an audit of the entire state university system with an eye to assessing the condition of academic freedom on its many campuses.

## ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND TENURE

I would like to begin the discussion by reminding everyone of the contract established between the faculties of Kansas's public universities and the tax-paying citizenry that supports them.

Tenured faculty in Kansas — as at publicly and privately financed universities elsewhere — are a highly privileged social and economic elite. According to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, full professors with tenure at public universities can make in excess of \$100,000 a year, while at private universities the figure moves to \$150,000. These salaries are supplemented by generous benefit packages. At the University of Kansas the average salary for a full professor is \$92,253 and at Kansas State, \$79,983.

These are handsome payments for public officials. To earn this income, professors work an average of six to nine hours a week in class and are required to work only eight months out of the working year. Every year they are entitled to four months paid vacation, and every seven years they are awarded a sabbatical leave that provides them with 10 months leave at full or half pay. To crown these privileges, alone among America's public employees — with the exception of Supreme Court Justices — they have lifetime jobs.

These great privileges are specifically granted to academics on the assumption that they are professionals who possess an expertise that is of great benefit to society at large. The Kansas Board of Regents specifies this contract in the following words: "It is the mastery teachers have of their subjects and their own scholarship that entitles them to their classrooms and to freedom in the presentation of their subjects."<sup>6</sup>

The contractual premise is that professors are scholars who require prodigious amounts of time outside the classroom to conduct research that is scholarly and disinterested, and that encompasses such diligence and long years of effort in its pursuit as to make the results of the research beneficial to knowledge in general and to society, and also puts it beyond the ken or judgment of lay persons who lack similar training and research experience.

That is the contract. That is why university academics are paid more generously than most public employees, and that is why the elite among them are afforded lifetime tenure. The tenure provision is specifically intended to protect their valued expertise, not their inexperienced opinions on controversial political and social matters.

Academic freedom and academic tenure are historically linked in all the policy statements concerning academic freedom by the American Association of University Professors. The principles of academic freedom and tenure have been established to hold scholars harmless for conclusions they may draw from their years of specialized research. They are designed to guard the disinterested knowledge of professional scholars from unwarranted censure by persons who are unqualified – because are not experts — to pass judgment on what their scholarship has revealed.

Politicians and radio talk show hosts do not have lifetime tenure or lifetime jobs; they do not have special freedom protections beyond what is guaranteed to all citizens through the First Amendment. That is because they deal in opinion, not in expertise. Opinion is vital to a democracy; it is what we take into the voting booth when we pull the lever. It is what the First Amendment protects. But it is not expertise. And it does not require the protection of a lifetime job.

Thus, there is another side to the special privilege that professors enjoy under the provisions of academic freedom. This is their obligation to be professional, to strive for scholarly objectivity, and to remain non-partisan and non-political in their classroom pronouncements. Professors are not granted tenure or the protections of academic freedom to defend their “free speech.” Their free speech as citizens is already guaranteed by the First Amendment. Their speech in the classroom, on the other hand, is professional speech which entails concomitant obligations and requires certain self-restrictions to fulfill these obligations.

The Kansas Board of Regents recognizes this distinction and explains it in these words: “College and university teachers are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational institu-

tion. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence, they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution...”<sup>7</sup>

Free speech is the right that professors have as ordinary citizens to express themselves in public spaces outside the classroom. Like other professionals, however, teachers are expected to maintain professional standards to earn the privilege of their employment. Military personnel are forbidden to express political views about the wars they are fighting, despite the protections of the First Amendment. A pastor who preaches a sermon to the effect that God does not exist will soon be looking for other work, free speech or no. A nurse who interrupts an operation she is assisting to deliver a speech on nurse’s salaries will probably not be invited into the same operating room again.<sup>8</sup> And a professor who violates the standards of the academic profession or the academic guidelines of his university is subject to discipline, including possible termination, for breach of professional conduct.

Teachers are privileged with the freedom to express ideas that result from their expertise; but they are required to limit their instruction to that expertise and not to inflict their prejudices – political or otherwise – on students who have been entrusted to their care. While teaching their expertise – the knowledge that has been gleaned from long and arduous years of research in a specialized field – they are not permitted to fill their classrooms with uninformed opinions they may hold as ordinary citizens or to vent their biases on controversial issues of the day; or to impose such attitudes on impressionable students through the authority they have been granted as a result of their expertise.

These strictures are made explicit by the Regents in the following statement of principle: “Thus, it is improper for an instructor persistently to intrude material that has no relation to the subject or to fail to present the subject matter of the course as announced to the students

and as approved by the faculty in their collective responsibility for the curriculum.” And again: “Students should not be forced by the authority inherent in the instructional role to make particular personal choices as to political action or their own social behavior.”

In other words, professors should not be making comments about the war in Iraq in classes that are not about the war in Iraq, or where the subject matter has no relation to the war in Iraq. Nor should they be indoctrinating students in feminism or any other ism. Nor should they be attempting to impose controversial positions or sectarian attitudes on students in their classrooms no matter what the subject.

Professor Stanley Fish, who is a well-known academic scholar and political liberal, and who recently retired as Dean of the Chicago campus of the University of Illinois summarized these long-standing professional imperatives in an article that appeared in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. The article was titled, “Save The World On Your Own Time”:

Teachers should teach their subjects. They should not teach peace or war or freedom or diversity or uniformity or nationalism or anti-nationalism or any other agenda that might properly be taught by a political leader or a talk-show host. Of course they should teach about such subjects, something very different from urging them as commitments – when they are part of the history or philosophy or literature or sociology that is being studied. The only advocacy that should go on in the classroom is the advocacy of what James Murphy has identified as the intellectual virtues, ‘thoroughness, perseverance, intellectual honesty,’ all components of the cardinal academic virtue of being ‘conscientious in the pursuit of truth.’<sup>9</sup> (emphasis added)

In other words, in discussing controversial issues that are relevant to their courses, teachers should approach controversial issues (provided they are relevant to the courses) as disinterested scholars. They should present their students with two or more sides to any controversial issue, and should not be advocates of any particular side.

They should teach their students what the evidence is, how to assemble it, and how to construct an argument. After that, they should leave it to students to form their own conclusions. This has been the basic idea of a democratic education throughout our nation's history. But it is now under sustained and systematic assault from forces within our educational institutions themselves.

In a democracy an academic program should be governed by principles of disinterested inquiry; it should not be a program in advocacy for a specific point of view, nor should it attempt to indoctrinate students in the pet ideologies or prejudices of professors.

Are these policies being violated in Kansas schools? The evidence is that they are. Entire departments at Kansas State and the University of Kansas are devoted to ideological and political agendas, and are in fact advocacy programs designed to indoctrinate students in one-sided views of controversial issues. In other words, they violate the explicit mandates of the Kansas Board of Regents and the American Association of University Professors.

## WOMEN'S STUDIES PROGRAMS

At Kansas State University, the Women's Studies Department describes its program in the catalogue this way<sup>10</sup>:

To qualify for a B.S. or B.A. degree in Women's Studies, students will have demonstrated:

Their understanding that Women's Studies is an academic discipline that generates new knowledge about women and gender, reconsiders other disciplines through feminist perspectives, and is committed to social action and social change. [emphasis added]

Their familiarity with key Women's Studies concepts such as the social construction of gender, oppression of and violence against women, heterosexism, racism, classism, and global inequality.

Their understanding of how and why gender inequality developed and is maintained in the United States and in our global society. Their ability to recognize the social, political, economic, and cultural consequences of gender inequality.

Their familiarity with the history of feminism in the United States and with the different ways that gender inequality has been challenged in the contemporary world.

Their ability to identify and apply a broad range of feminist perspectives and theories to their personal experiences, professional work, and to their understanding of society.

This is not the mission statement of an academic program of scholarly inquiry into the history and sociology of women; this is an ideological program frankly designed to indoctrinate students in a radical feminist view of the world, and to recruit them to feminist causes.



In particular, the statement takes a non-academic, partisan view of issues that are controversial – whether women are in fact “oppressed” in the United States, whether there is “gender inequality” in our society, or whether “heterosexism” and “classism” are meaningful let alone valuable categories of analysis. The Women’s Studies program is openly designed to recruit students to radical feminist causes and political agendas. Its core courses for establishing a major are not courses about women, but are courses in the history, theory and politics of a particular ideology of women, namely radical feminism; the program is designed to be taught exclusively from the point of view of radical feminists and with assigned readings from texts by radical feminists. No intellectual diversity is permitted.

The academic program of the Women’s Studies Department at the University of Kansas is designed in exactly the same vein. The introductory course required of all majors states: “Our focus is not only to look at how women are members of an oppressed group, but how women have always been active agents in changing the world in which they live.”<sup>11</sup>

An academic course by contrast would ask whether women are members of an oppressed group; it would not focus on the alleged fact that they are, which is itself a controversial claim that divides our political culture. An academic course would not presume that women “have always been active agents in changing the world.” A program of scholarly analysis would not place at its center the idea that its graduates should be “active agents in changing the world.” That is a program of political action, in this case funded unwittingly – and possibly illegally — by the taxpayers of the state of Kansas.

The mission statements and curricula of the Women’s Studies Departments at Kansas State and the University of Kansas violate the academic freedom policies and standards of the Kansas Board of Regents. They can in no way be justified as taxpayer-supported programs. Radical feminism is not an academic category or enterprise. It is a sectarian political movement. Professors who teach

radical feminism are not scholars; they are political activists. This is why they do not permit intellectual critics to enter their programs. Scholars would welcome such diversity; but activists disdain contrarian viewpoints as complicating their agendas of indoctrination and action. The hiring procedures for Women's Studies programs in Kansas and across the country amount to a political blacklist for those who do not ascribe to radical feminist views.

As already noted, politicians don't have lifetime jobs; nor do radio talk show hosts. That is because they deal in opinions, not scholarly expertise. Radical feminism is a collection of opinions. According to who is judging them, they may be good opinions or groundless opinions, but they are opinions nonetheless. In a democracy the way to adjudicate political opinions is by election. On what basis should political activists in Women's Studies Departments be granted lifetime jobs?

Professors of Women's Studies at the University of Kansas are not elected. They are appointed, and in fact they are self-appointed, since new hires in the Women's Studies Department will be determined by the votes of the tenured members of the Department itself. This means that not only is there no intellectual diversity in Women's Studies programs now, but as long as they continue to exist there never will be. The tenured members of these departments know the ideology they want in a hire, and will always hire someone who believes politically as they do. An analogy would be if the Republican majority in the Kansas State Legislature had lifetime jobs and were entrusted with electing their successors. This is a prescription for authoritarian rule; it is not the kind of principle under which we operate in a democracy.

The questions for this committee are: How did such self-perpetuating political departments get created in our universities, and what can be done about them? These, by the way, are not small or insignificant programs. The Department of Women's Studies (which is in practice the Department of feminist ideology) at the University of Kansas lists more than 30 courses. How did such a political enter-

prise, totally inappropriate for an academic institution and totally inappropriate for a state institution, get funded in the first place? How is it that no one in the administration of either of these two universities noticed that such advocacy programs violate the core policies of academic freedom that have been established by the Kansas Board of Regents to govern them? Or, if they did notice, how is it that they have allowed this massive misuse of public funds and abuse of Kansas students to take place?

## SCHOOL OF SOCIAL ACTIVISM

Women's Studies is not the only field with such problems in Kansas universities, and indeed in universities across the nation. At Kansas State the Social Work program describes itself to students this way: "Social work is a profession for those with a spark of idealism, a belief in social justice, and a natural love of working with people."<sup>12</sup>

The term "social justice" is not a neutral term but is a generally recognized code for partisans of socialism and the expansion of the welfare state. It does not mean "justice for all" in the legal sense, but refers to an "economic justice" that the free market system allegedly denies, and that government is required to redress. In other words, it is a partisan code for one of the central political debates in our democracy. The School of Social Work at Kansas State, funded by taxpayers on both sides of this debate, is training students to take only one side.

A required course for Social Work majors — Social Work 525 — lists in its syllabus for students "Social Work's Core Values." The second of these core values is "social justice":

### Social Justice-Social Workers Challenge Social Injustice.

Social workers pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people. Social workers' social change efforts are focused primarily on issues of poverty, unemployment, discrimination, and other forms of social injustice. These activities seek to promote sensitivity to and knowledge about oppression and cultural and ethnic diversity.

This is the program of a political party or the training school for political party activists. It does not represent an academic approach to social work. It is a program of radical social activism funded — I am sure unknowingly — by the taxpayers of Kansas.

The entire Social Work program at Kansas State is an advocacy program for leftwing “solutions” to significant social problems. A leftwing point of view is a legitimate part of the great political debate within our culture, but it is only one point of view, and constitutes only one side of the debate in our two-party, two-sided system.

A Kansas State student who does not accept the premises and goals of the program will fail out of the program, because he or she has failed to “understand” its core beliefs. More likely, such a student will never be admitted to the program in the first place, no matter how much he or she wants to help poor people. This is not an academic program. It is ideological and partisan, and it violates the academic freedom policies of the Kansas Board of Regents.

Social Work 510 and Sociology 510 constitute a joint course in “Social Welfare” taught by both the Social Work program and the Sociology Department at Kansas State. This is just one indication that the problem is not confined to a single department or program at the university. The syllabus for Social Work 510 and Sociology 510 explains the course’s agendas: “An understanding of the development of social injustice is a necessary first step toward working for social justice.” This is, again, a statement of advocacy not inquiry.

And what does the curriculum for the course in Social Welfare consider to be the origins of social injustice? The sole required text for the Social Welfare course, which answers this question, is not a text that presents several points of view, nor is it even a text with social welfare as its subject. Instead, it is a highly tendentious and well-known political indictment of American history, from Columbus to the present, written by Marxist historian Howard Zinn. The entire Social Welfare course offered by the Social Work program and the Sociology Department at Kansas State is, in fact, a chapter by chapter, class by class reading of Zinn’s political tract, *A People’s History of the United States*.

Howard Zinn is a well-known radical who supported the Soviet empire during the Cold War, and whose book describes America

as a repressive state run by a corporate ruling class for the benefit of the wealthy. According to Zinn, the root causes of social injustice are private property and private corporations, the very foundations of America's legal, political and business systems. According to Zinn, America is the world's "greatest terrorist state" and the terrorists America faces are victims of American imperialism and oppression and thus "freedom fighters." Furthermore, in Zinn's view the entire American system of government and its laws should be overthrown, by violent means if necessary, and replaced with a socialist system.

Zinn's book is not a text in Social Welfare policy. According to the course syllabus, one entire class session is devoted, for example, to Zinn's chapter called "The Impossible Victory: Vietnam" which celebrates the victory of the Communists in Vietnam, which included the summary executions of a hundred thousand Vietnamese and the Communists' imposition of a totalitarian state. What is the relevance of this history — let alone this tendentious history — to the training of Kansas State students for careers in Social Work? There is none. But is there anybody in the Kansas State administration who has ever asked this question?

And what business is it of a professor of social work to be teaching a Marxist view of the Vietnam War as part of a course on Social Welfare? Professors, as noted, are professors by virtue of their trained professional expertise in specific subjects. That is what gives them license to teach those subjects. But this is a course in American imperialism and oppression taught by amateurs, who have no expertise in the subject but are nonetheless intent on imposing their political prejudices on impressionable students. And let us not forget that the taxpayers of Kansas are paying for this.

In addition to presenting an extremely one-sided view of matters that have no relevance to the subject of Social Welfare, Social Work 510 fails to present any other perspectives so that students in the course could read critics of the extreme views that Zinn presents and make up their own minds. Where are the debates that surround these issues, let alone the debates that address Social Welfare policy itself in a course presented as a course on Social Welfare?

This course violates every tenet of Kansas State University's existing academic freedom policies. According to the catalogue it has been offered since 2001. Social Work 510 is a course designed to indoctrinate students into an extreme Marxist view of American society which proposes the destruction of the very system in which students are intending to seek employment. No society can survive if its schools become one-sided indoctrination centers in propaganda against it. And this is but one such course in the Kansas State Social Work program.

If Social Work 510 were a course whose sole text were written by a conservative like Charles Murray, and was clearly designed to indoctrinate students in a conservative view of Social Welfare theory, it would also violate the academic freedom policies and standards of the Kansas Board of Regents and would be just as illegitimate from an educational and policy point of view. But does anyone think it would proceed without opposition? Or that some outraged faculty members would not have informed the administration that it violates the academic guidelines of the university? Or that it wouldn't have been terminated long before now?

Obviously this is not a small problem that radical faculties and negligent administrations have created in our university system. For one such course to exist, whole departments, and university administrations have to collude in the corruption of academic standards in favor of radical political agendas. Moreover, these abuses could not exist if an academic blacklist had not excluded potential critics of such practices from university faculties. What can the legislatures do to advance a remedy for these problems without causing injury to the institutions themselves?

The long-term remedy for the political corruption of our institutions of higher learning is the restoration of academic values and standards, such as the academic freedom policies of the Kansas Board of Regents. This remedy might be summed up as the restoration of academic professionalism.

It is also vital that educational authorities focus attention on the lack of intellectual diversity on university faculties and in the uni-

versity curriculum. Without a true marketplace of ideas, it is much easier for intellectual standards to be ignored and for indoctrination to replace education.

The immediate step I would recommend is the passage of The Academic Bill of Rights resolution that is now before the Kansas House, HCR 5035.<sup>13</sup>

The second would be to pass a resolution recommending the following:

1. That the Kansas Board of Regents draw up and institute in the colleges and universities under their jurisdiction a Student Bill of Rights incorporating the provisions of their academic freedom policies (I would include in these provisions the right of students to be assigned a class text that is not sectarian in nature or to be assigned multiple texts with reasonably different points of view);
2. That the Kansas Board of Regents adopt the June 23 statement on academic freedom of the American Council on Education<sup>14</sup> for all public institutions of higher learning in the state. This statement affirms that “intellectual diversity is a central principle of American higher education;”
3. That the Kansas Board of Regents instruct its institutions of higher learning to put in place a grievance machinery for students who feel they have been discriminated against for their political views, as recommended in the American Council on Education statement;
4. That the Kansas Board of Regents instruct its institutions of higher learning to place the Student Bill of Rights and all academic freedom policies in a brochure that is handed out to every incoming freshman, and to make the contents of the brochure part of every freshman orientation program;
5. That the Kansas Board of Regents create an Office of Intellectual Diversity and Academic Standards on each of its campuses in the Office of the president or chancellor. The new office would be tasked with maintaining professional standards in all university departments and



fostering the growth of intellectual diversity on the faculty and in the curriculum;

6. That the Kansas legislature create a standing committee to look into the state of academic freedom at public colleges and universities, and to make annual reports to the legislature on the progress of university reforms.

I consider this last step to of utmost importance in furthering these agendas.

I thank you for your patience and your time, and I hope you will attend these matters with all the gravity that they deserve.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> I have edited the text for clarity.

<sup>2</sup> Rule APM 0-10 of UC Berkeley's Academic Personnel Manual.

<sup>3</sup> Martin Trow, "Californians Redefine Academic Freedom," *Academic Questions*, Summer 2003

[http://gspp.berkeley.edu/people/faculty/emeritus/calif\\_redefine\\_adademic\\_freedom.pdf](http://gspp.berkeley.edu/people/faculty/emeritus/calif_redefine_adademic_freedom.pdf);

David Horowitz, "California's Betrayal of Academic Freedom," *FrontPageMag.com*, September 14, 2004

<sup>4</sup> <http://feministstudies.ucsc.edu/resCareers.html>

<sup>5</sup> <http://feministstudies.ucsc.edu/resMajor.html>

<sup>6</sup> Kansas Board of Regents Policy Statement on the Use of Controversial Material in Instruction, Including the Use of Sexually Explicit Materials in Instruction adopted April 23, 2004).

[http://www.provost.ku.edu/policy/controversial\\_material/controversial\\_%20material\\_policy\\_042304.doc](http://www.provost.ku.edu/policy/controversial_material/controversial_%20material_policy_042304.doc)

<sup>7</sup> This clause is identical to the "1940 Statement on the Principles of Academic Freedom and Tenure" of the American Association of University Professors.

<sup>8</sup> I owe this example to Stanley Fish.

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.studentsforacademicfreedom.org/essays/political\\_party.html](http://www.studentsforacademicfreedom.org/essays/political_party.html)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.k-state.edu/womst/>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.ku.edu/~wsku/>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.k-state.edu/socialwork/main.html#pro>

<sup>13</sup> [http://www.kslegislature.org/bills/2006/2006\\_5035.pdf](http://www.kslegislature.org/bills/2006/2006_5035.pdf)



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