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UD Faculty, Students Stand Up Against Res Life Proposal

05/02/2008

UPDATE: The proposed program was not accepted at yesterday's Faculty Senate Meeting. Instead, a vigorous debate took place, to be continued on Monday, May 12.

UD Faculty, Students Stand Up Against Res Life Proposal

The NAS is encouraged by the vigorous opposition mounted by the University of Delaware's faculty against the attempt to subvert its legitimate academic function. Yesterday, the UD Faculty Senate met; the last item on the agenda was the new residence life program proposal. Put forth by the Student Life Committee, this program would replace the old residence life program which was shut down on November 1, 2007. But the proposal never made it to a vote.

Both faculty members and students spoke eloquently against the program, explaining that it promoted a political ideology, just like the old program. They told how the residence life agenda focused on [sustainability](#), a term that, contrary to appearances, isn't limited to environmental issues but is being used by UD's Residence Life officials to promote political dogmas.

Professor Matt Robinson, chairman of the Faculty Senate Student Life Committee, who presented the new Res Life proposal offered the bold claim that, "The concept of sustainability, that's only speaking in terms of environmental." His attempt to package the new program as only conservation and environmental preservation, however, didn't persuade skeptical faculty members who had taken the trouble to read the details. They replied that the term sustainability is being used to sneak in "a curriculum of indoctrination" similar to the one President Harker suspended in November.

Yesterday's debate in the University's Faculty Senate also showed that many UD professors recognize the impropriety of turning instructional responsibilities over to ill-trained residence life activists. The presence of student voices among the opposition was particularly heartening. NAS hails our Delaware affiliate, particularly Jan Blits and Linda Gottfriedson, for their unflinching efforts to prevent the indoctrination program from being reinstated. We also salute Adam Kissel, of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, for his work on the UD res life situation, and for the [letter](#) he gave to faculty members urging them to reject the proposal.

We at NAS are pleased that yesterday's debate focused on substance. According to NAS executive director Peter Wood, "The UD faculty criticisms of the proposed new residence life program arise from genuine concern about the integrity of UD's undergraduate programs, not from any spirit of political partisanship."

Debate will be continued next Monday. If clarity about the University's mission is retained, it can only have one outcome.

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221 Witherspoon St, 2nd fl
Princeton, NJ 08542-3215
Email: nasonweb@nas.org
Tel 609-683-7878

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