



# MINDING THE CAMPUS

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## FORUM

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### Indoctrination At Delaware

Posted by [John Leo](#)

Many universities try to indoctrinate students, but the all-time champion in this category is surely the University of Delaware. With no guile at all the university has laid out a brutally specific program for "treatment" of incorrect attitudes of the 7,000 students in its residence halls. The program is close enough to North Korean brainwashing that students and professors have been making "made in North Korea" jokes about the plan. The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) has **called for** the program to be dismantled. Residential assistants charged with imposing the "treatments" have undergone intensive training from the university. The training makes clear that white people are to be considered racists - at least those who have not yet undergone training and confessed their racism. The RAs have been taught that a "racist is one who is both privileged and socialized on the basis of race by a white supremacist (racist) system. The term applies to all white people (i.e., people of European descent) living in the United States, regardless of class, gender, religion, culture, or sexuality."

FIRE reports that the university's views "are forced on students through a comprehensive manipulation of the residence hall environment, from mandatory training sessions to 'sustainability' door decorations." Residents are pressured to promise at least a 20 percent reduction in their ecological footprint and to promise to work for a "oppressed" group. Students are required to attend training sessions, floor meetings and one-on-one sessions where RAs ask personal questions such as "When did you discover your sexual identity?". Students are pressured or required to accept an array of the university's approved views. In one training session, students had to announce their opinions on gay marriage. Those who did not approve of gay marriage were isolated and heavily pressured to change their opinion.

The indoctrination program pushes students to accept the university's ideas on politics, race, sex, sociology, moral philosophy and environmentalism. The training is run by Kathleen Kerr, director of residential life, who reportedly considers it a "cutting-edge" program that can be exported to other universities around the country. Residential assistants usually provide services to residents and have light duties, such as settling squabbles among students. Kerr and her program are more ambitious. She has been quoted as saying that the job of RAs is to educate the whole human being with a "curricular approach to residential education." In this curricular approach, students are required to report their thoughts and opinions. One professor says: "You have to confess what you believe to the RA." The RAs write reports to their superiors on student progress in cooperating with the "treatment."

The basic question about the program is how did they think they could ever get away with this? Most campus indoctrination is more subtle, with some wiggle room for fudging and deniability. This program implies a frightening level of righteousness and lack of awareness. But the RAs have begun to back away a step or two. After telling the students the program is mandatory, the RAs sent an email saying the sessions are actually voluntary.

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**COMMENTS (22)**

Is that a university? Or a Gettoized brainwashing Gulag

Posted by John Calomiris | **October 30, 2007 5:39 PM**

Wow, if there was ever a reason NOT to send your son/daughter to a particular school, this is it.

The problem is that even if FIRE gets THIS implementation of this stupidity stopped, the people in the university heirarchy that believe this stupidity will still be in place and able to invent new, less obvious, ways of pushing the same agenda.

Posted by Tyler G. | **October 30, 2007 5:51 PM**

Every individual involved in this program should be fired. I'd go further and say that the entire administration of the university should be fired and have their academic credentials stripped. They should never be permitted anywhere near a school again.

Posted by jim disalvo | **October 30, 2007 5:56 PM**

"All-time champion?" I believe you are being a bit presumptuous, Mr. Leo! Given that things like this keep getting worse and worse, this is a watermark that is sure to be topped any day now by an even more eager indoctrinator.

Posted by Ben | **October 30, 2007 5:57 PM**

My biggest problem with the RAs I had in college was that they didn't have enough time or energy (or interest) in dealing with roommates who violated either the rules of the university or their own room agreements by smoking pot, having drunken parties till 5am on a school night, and getting so drunk they actually hit the other girls living with them.

I find it hard to believe that any 20-year-old taking 17 hours a week and working as an RA to avoid having to pay rent is at all interested or competent in the art of writing reports on the doctrinal purity of the other kids on her floor. It's rare enough to find one who cares about noise violations, for heaven's sake.

(the program overall sounds pretty evil -- but the reliance on RA labor makes me think it probably just doesn't work very well.)

Posted by Sarah | **October 30, 2007 6:03 PM**

I went to UD and had planned on sending my daughter there. Now ...

Posted by Hube | **October 30, 2007 6:04 PM**

I am a high school teacher who has students apply and go to many colleges, including the Ivys. My new policy is to not write letters of recommendations to schools that have these coercive policies. I tell the student flat out that I cannot in good conscience recommend a school like that. They can still apply, but I won't help them.

Posted by Rob Schwartz | **October 30, 2007 6:05 PM**

Who needs reeducation camps when there is the University of Delaware?

Posted by charles austin | **October 30, 2007 6:07 PM**

What are you paying for in a college education?

People aren't following the money. The principal reason why college education is expensive is because it is in high demand. The principal reason why college education is in high demand is because of the widespread belief that a college degree leads to higher wages. The principal reason why a college education leads to higher wages is because of the belief among corporate and small business HR departments that a college educated employee is a better employee. It is perhaps the irony of the century that students are willing to sit through leftist indoctrination prevalent at today's universities because of the hope of making more bucks later.

Maybe HR directors should start thinking about hiring straight out of high school and go by SAT/ACT scores and applications with their own pithy essay sections. Entrepreneurial companies should be able to find more efficient alternatives to developing employees, from sponsoring students at local community colleges to in house training to book clubs. Unless you're talking about rocket science, it ain't rocket science.

If that became widespread, you would find that demand for a college degree would fall and prices would fall, and ridiculous programs like the one above that do NOTHING to advance the core mission of a university

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