



SURVIVE takes to the streets

Playboy exposed

Bands battle it out for FEST:05

Service Day lends a helping hand

Amate house makeover

Miracle on Fullerton Avenue?

Sex on 'the couch'

Quickies: Naked News

Someone you should know: John J. Egan

Weekly Snapshot

Spring fever sets in

Special to The DePaulia: SNL seeks to resolve situation

by Susanne Dumbleton
Staff Writer

Dear Editor:

I want to commend you for your coverage of the incident in which a part-time faculty member from my college offended members of Students for Justice in Palestine and United Muslims Moving Ahead. It is important that we talk about such issues so we can all learn from them.

A university is a sacrosanct place, a place where persons gather for the sole purpose of learning and seeking truth and coming to understand the human condition. At DePaul, we have dedicated ourselves in a particular way to honor the dignity of each individual, considering each person as uniquely valuable and honored.

At any university, teachers have a crucial role passing knowledge to a new generation, to be sure, but always with the main purpose of helping students develop their capacity to think critically, to define themselves, to shape their future and the future of human kind.

Great teachers at any university create a climate where students feel free and empowered to analyze information critically, consider the validity of ideas, make difficult choices, and imagine possibilities. At DePaul, we make a particular point of diversity, deliberately recruiting to our student body faculty and staff people with widely divergent histories and futures.

No students anywhere should ever have to be concerned that they will be verbally attacked for their religious belief or ethnicity. No one should ever use the role of teacher to demean the ideas of others or insist on the absoluteness of an opinion, much less press erroneous assertions. This is particularly true at DePaul, which strives to be an institution in which the values of all faiths and all peoples are held in high esteem.

That does not mean that every person at a university needs to agree with the ideas of every other person. The opposite is true. The university must serve as a forum at which individuals are able to express contrary ideas, debate opposing positions, challenge assumptions, press areas of the unknown, and consider unimagined possibilities. Vital to such a forum is the climate of openness.

On Sept. 15, at the Loop Student Involvement Fair, these assumptions were violated. The students' perspective was dishonored and their freedom demeaned. Individuals were deeply insulted.

Our college acted immediately by removing the instructor from the classroom. This is a part-time faculty member, whom the university contracts for individual courses. He has no further responsibilities with the university at this time.

In my meeting with the students on Sept. 23, I apologized to them for the insult and disrespect they had endured, acknowledged the seriousness of the offense, and informed them that this teacher had been removed from class. I repeat that apology now. I sincerely regret the assault on their dignity, their beliefs, their individual selves, and I continue to be saddened by the fact that they have experienced such pain at the hands of a person who taught at my school, which has defined commitment to social justice as one of its core values. Indeed, our mission says: "SNL deliberately works to shape a more just, livable world; to ensure that those who

have historically been ignored, excluded, marginalized, oppressed and economically disenfranchised benefit from the many learning opportunities available through SNL and beyond.

In its curriculum, its classroom environments, its assessment practices, its advising strategies, and its formal advocacy, SNL creates an intellectual and social milieu where a plurality of worldviews, cultures and value systems are respected, understood, encouraged and appreciated."

This event is not simply history. As Father Holtschneider said in his note sent to nearly 28,000 faculty, staff and students, it is our individual responsibility to remain vigilant about how our actions and words affect other members of our community. We have much to do.

Sincerely,
Susanne Dumbleton
Dean, School for New Learning

Hay muchas maneras de animar
a los chicos a que permanezcan
en la escuela...



Copyright © 2004, DePaul University. No logos, photographs or graphics on this site may be reproduced without written permission. All rights reserved.