

FIRING LINE

Duban a victim of politics

Jim Duban's firing is a sorry comment on the true commitment to tolerance, pluralism, diversity of opinion and open-mindedness on the part of some of the most vocal advocates of "multiculturalism." Such actions speak louder than words.

Until this latest incident, I had some residual doubts that the English Department was totally out of sync with basic academic civilities, such as freedom of expression and pluralism of viewpoints. Like others, I wondered whether many of these reports weren't somewhat exaggerated.

In that spirit, I read over a draft of the statement Jim made to the University Council on Monday. He asked me on Saturday to look it over; as a former chairman of the Faculty Senate, I was supposed to tell him whether it was in any way out of line. I simply could not understand his concern. It was perfectly straightforward and reasonable.

Obviously, some people would disagree, but such is the nature of academic debate. I jokingly told him that his argument might be perceived as objectionable

because of its "logocentrism." Well, that turned out to be true and it ceased being a joke.

It is, of course, pure b.s. for a department chairman to claim that the replacement of a major committee chair this far into the semester is "normal." We all know better.

Your editorial ("Power Play," *The Daily Texan*, Wednesday) is completely on target. Many of us will ponder in the next few weeks whether, as committed as we are to a true pluralism of the teaching of cultures on this campus, we want to see protectionist mandates revive the old English 306 ghosts.

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