

We acted to preserve the intergity of our writing courses and to defend the curriculum from politics.

I opposed both the politicization of the course and the hasty way a major new course was being implemented. That is, I was opposed to the way a political imperative was affecting our judgment about academic matters--thousands of students might suffer from our bad decisions. Assistant Instructors already taking the social issues approach in their courses were having a terrible time of it.

The course was titled "Difference," but the one thing it **didn't tolerate was diversity** in teaching methods, in subject matter, in political orientation.

In what was supposed to be a class in **argumentation**, all the course readings agreed with each other. There was no debate, no balancing of points of view--just a relentless hammering on left-wing themes.

Some proponents of the course seemed to believe that there would have been no complaints if the course conformed to the **political views of its critics**. But that's flat wrong. A course like freshman English shouldn't cater to anyone's politics. That's why opponents of the "Difference" curriculum came from all across the political spectrum.

The public got involved in this one because freshman English is almost an institution. They could understand that such a course should be about writing, not politics.

The **persona of the class kept shifting**. In a course committee, the freshman English was what Texas kids needed to unmask their oppressive ideologies; in a department meeting, it became an trend-setting program in multiculturalism; in the press, it was sold as a traditional course in argumentation with a Civil Rights theme.

No one could figure out what E 306 Difference was, and the program administrators weren't volunteering any specifics--not even to colleagues charged with supervising the lower division program. Daily reports on the program in the school paper read like a Comedy of Errors.