

Duban's departure nothing special

I've resisted writing this since the beginning of the Gribben incident, but Tuesday's editorial ("Intolerance in English Department claims Duban," *The Daily Texan*) on James Duban's departure deserves a reply.

First, let me say that, unlike a lot of people in the department, I am on good terms with Jim and have been for many years.

I was not a strong supporter of the multicultural E306 proposal, but I did (and do) believe that the Department of English should have the right to adjust its curriculum without having Bill Buckley and the Heritage Foundation control the proceedings from Washington. Which brings me to my point. There is only one basic difference between the departures of Gribben and Duban and the departures of other faculty members from the Department of English over the last two years: the media coverage.

Only Gribben and Duban chose to publicize their change of employment with banner headlines. Gribben, of course, was an insatiable publicity hound, marketing himself like a jilted Hollywood starlet. Duban, I like to think, was more a victim of circumstance, specifically, the local media hunger for examples of "political correctness."

But the point is that over the last two years we have lost far more distinguished faculty than either Gribben or Duban without a whimper from the press. Ramon Saldivar, perhaps the foremost critic of Chicano literature in the country, went to Stanford. Given the fact that he was quite unhappy that the E306 revision

didn't go into effect, perhaps we should think of him as an example of right-wing "correctness." David Wallace and Rita Copeland, two outstanding medievalists, went to the University of Minnesota. Both were somewhat left of center politically.

This year we are losing Bill Worthen, an extraordinary theater and drama specialist, to Northwestern. They just left gracefully. Maybe it's because their distinguished records allowed them to go to distinguished institutions.

More's the pity for us. These are the people *The Daily Texan* and the University should be worried about losing, not just those who go to Auburn's second campus or North Texas State.

Lance Bertelsen
Associate Professor of English

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