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# Where's the balance, professor?

**"A sound education presents students with multiple perspectives and equips students to make up their own minds." Indeed.**

By Jay Ambrose

College students are telling on their professors, and what they say is that some cheating is going on, at least if you think it's cheating to teach just one side of political issues and use your classroom authority for purposes of indoctrination.

This information comes by way of a survey sponsored by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni. Researchers interviewed 658 students at 50 of the nation's most highly ranked colleges and universities and discovered the following:

Seventy-four percent reported that their profs say nice things about liberals. Forty-seven percent say they bash conservatives. Sixty-two percent said professors praised Sen. John Kerry during the recently completed presidential campaign. Sixty-eight percent reported uncomplimentary assessments of George W. Bush. Even in courses having nothing to do with politics, professors bring up politics, said 49 percent of the students. To get the grades you want, it pays to be on board with a professor's political ideas, said 29 percent of the students. Some 49 percent find campus panel discussions and other presentations on politics to be one-sided.

These are significant percentages. Although equally significant percentages of the interviewed students take contrary positions, it's not as if we lack widespread confirmation through other surveys, articles and books that the vast majority of college professors are liberal Democrats and that many of them favor their biases over objective instruction in the classroom.

The worst of it is not that America's professoriate has taken sides almost monolithically in the tug-of-war between Republicans and Democrats. The worst of it, some serious observers agree, is that so many professors on some campuses subscribe to and are trying to further a radically relativistic, subjectivist view of reality. It is a view in which all cultures are about the same except for one that sinks particularly low because of its racism, chauvinism, ethnocentrism, greed, corruption and outsized power of its government, namely the culture of the United States of America.

I know of this in part from a student who told me a few years ago about a college course on U.S. history that was almost exclusively focused on slavery, the killing of Indians, segregation and unfair treatment of women. Practically all societies have been guilty of such evils, an American difference being that we have been fixing our faults while our remarkable land has simultaneously offered a degree of liberty virtually unexampled in this world.

I recently heard a discussion featuring Victor Davis Hanson, a classicist, a superb thinker and writer and a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, a West Coast think tank where I have been a media fellow. Hanson said Rome thrived when Romans thought it a wonderful thing to be Romans, and that it disintegrated when they no longer valued being Roman. He worried aloud that Americans no longer recognize how exceptional they are

in history. A problem, he said, is that we are forever measuring ourselves against perfection instead of against other societies. Next to them we fare extremely well.

Colleges and universities should help cultivate an understanding of why it is blessed to be American and help us to avoid America's disintegration. A sign of how far we are from that goal is found in a review in a political science journal of several books, including one by William Bennett, former U.S. education secretary.

Bennett is quoted as having written in *Why We Fight* that on the Sunday after the terrorist attack of Sept. 11 there was a Pledge of Allegiance at his alma mater of Williams College that was attended by "two hundred students, numerous maintenance and cafeteria workers, the college president ... and exactly one professor."

Anne Neal, president of the group that paid for the recent survey, said, "A sound education presents students with multiple perspectives and equips students to make up their own minds." Indeed.

It's the kind of education that gives truth a chance.

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