



Bellevue Community College

3000 Landerholm Circle SE, Bellevue, WA 98007-6484 | www.bcc.ctc.edu

Peter Ratener
Science Division

CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: Notice of One Week Suspension

Dear Peter:

In accordance with Article Eight, Section B (Right to Due Process) of the 2005-07 Negotiated Agreement between the Board of Trustees and the Bellevue Community College Association of Higher Education, I wrote to you on April 24, 2006, requesting a pre-disciplinary meeting with you. In that letter I stated that the test question you wrote which begins "Condoleezza holds a watermelon..." offended a student who read it while practicing for the Math 099 exam in Winter, 2006. I indicated to you that your action, while unintentional, interfered with the educational process for this student and, possibly, for others as well.

As you acknowledged in your written statement on April 19, 2006, you have been judged by "...what I should have known." You also acknowledged as an educator you are held to a higher standard.

Appendix A of the 2005-2007 Negotiated Agreement between the Board of Trustees of District VIII and the Bellevue Community College Association of Higher Education sets standards for teaching faculty regarding choosing appropriate test materials and treating students with respect. As I stated in my letter of April 24, I believe that your test question does not meet either of those standards.

I met with you on Monday, May 1, 2006, at which time you and your representative indicated that you did not believe that formal disciplinary action was necessary because the Board of Trustees and the College President had already formally and publicly condemned your actions.

I have considered the statements you made in our May 1 meeting. I acknowledge that you have apologized for your actions, which is an important consideration. I also have considered the fact that the college has been judged by your test question: this incident has brought disfavor to Bellevue Community College, damaged the college's reputation, publicly undermined its meritorious work in pluralism, and created disruption to its academic and educational environments.

Furthermore, the preamble to the negotiated agreement contains a statement of faculty commitment to the college's pluralism policies. Over the past 15 years since the policy was adopted, BCC has provided numerous opportunities each year for faculty members

to obtain education and training regarding cultural issues and the impact of stereotypical thinking on the perpetuation of racism, many of which you have not chosen to attend.

However, college records indicate that, in your twenty-five years of teaching at Bellevue Community College, there have been no other complaints of racial insensitivity against you. I also acknowledge the fact that the offensive question escaped the attention of several other faculty who served as proofreaders.

After weighing each of these issues and the impact of your action on the college, I have determined that your conduct warrants disciplinary action. Accordingly, I will place you on leave without pay for the period of one week. I will delay the implementation of this suspension until such time as any rights you have to challenge this disciplinary action under the terms of the Negotiated Agreement have been exhausted.

This letter will be placed in your personnel file. In accordance with Article Eight, Section IV, B, you have the right to discuss this matter with the Vice President of Human Resources. You are required to sign the copy of this letter which will be placed in your file.


Sincerely,



Ron Leatherbarrow
Executive Dean of Instructional Services

cc: Lucy Macneil, VP of Human Resources
James Conlin, WPEA

My signature below signifies that I have read this material which will be placed in my personnel file, but does not indicate agreement or disagreement with its content.

 5/11/06
Peter Ratener Date