

# *The Associated Press State & Local Wire*

## **Glendora college instructor placed on leave over anti-war letters**

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by Gail Schiller

A college speech instructor who gave students extra credit for writing letters to President Bush opposing a war with Iraq has been placed on administrative leave and the president of the college said Tuesday he was sending a letter of apology to the White House.

Louis Zellers, president of Citrus College in suburban Glendora, said adjunct speech professor Rosalyn Kahn offered her students extra credit for sending letters to Bush expressing anti-war views but said they would receive no extra credit if they wrote letters supporting a war with Iraq.

"Students confirmed if they did not protest the war they would not get the extra credit. That's inappropriate and we're not going to tolerate it," Zellers said, adding that his letter to Bush would request that all letters received from Citrus College students be retracted.

Kahn was placed on administrative leave with pay starting this week, pending a review of her actions, Zellers said. Kahn did not immediately return phone calls seeking comment.

Adjunct Faculty United, the professors' union, vowed to fight Zellers.

"We do not believe that the instructor was given due process," said Jean Culp, the union's co-president. "We think Dr. Zellers acted precipitously and the union plans to do everything we can to protect the instructor's due process as well as academic freedom."

College officials said she gave students another assignment offering extra credit if they wrote letters to state Sen. Jack Scott, D-Pasadena, protesting state budget cuts that would reduce the number of adjunct faculty positions and eliminate some college classes.

Kahn, who teaches at other community colleges in the area, hand-delivered the letters to Scott, said Samuel T. Lee, associate dean of language arts and foreign languages at Citrus College.

"In addition, she wanted students to suggest that adjunct faculty get tenure status," Lee said. "This just demonstrates the level of self-interest involved in the assignment."

Zellers said he would be sending a letter of apology to Scott as well, requesting those letters also be retracted. Lee believes four to six letters were actually sent to Bush and even more were delivered to Scott.

Citrus is a two-year community college in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains in eastern Los Angeles County. Kahn's speech class is a required course for students wanting to transfer to California State University or University of California campuses.

Citrus College officials received hundreds of e-mails and phone calls protesting the extra credit assignments after an organization called FIRE - the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education - first publicized the controversy last week.

Citrus College student Christopher Stevens, 20, had contacted FIRE, seeking the Philadelphia-based group's help in resolving the conflict.

"Letters were sent out to our president and to Sen. Scott that were a misrepresentation of the students' opinions," Stevens said, adding that he took back his letter from Kahn when he discovered she actually planned to send it to the White House.

Lee said he had already instructed Kahn to alter her practice of "discriminating against dissenting students" when FIRE got involved in the fray.

College officials said the extra credit awarded by Kahn will be expunged and students will be given alternative extra credit assignments to write letters to Bush and Scott expressing their own opinions on a war with Iraq and California's budget crisis.