

# SANTA FE COLLEGE

November 18, 2022



Dear [REDACTED]:

As promised at our meeting on October 28, 2022, this letter will summarize salient parts of our discussion and provide some insight as to the legal position of the college. Thank you again for taking the time to meet with [REDACTED] and me to help us better understand your concerns. You confirmed that you did not believe that the instructor was imposing her personal opinions or views on the class, but your belief is that instructor's assignment of particular essays from the textbook constituted a violation of the law. I know that you were disappointed that you forgot to bring your daughter's copy of the textbook with the highlighted objectionable material, but we were still able to meaningfully discuss the types of issues and concerns that you identified. We also understand that your daughter was permitted to choose alternative essays, and she is pleased overall with the education that she is receiving at SF.

Thank you for confirming for the framework of our discussion that the following portion of HB-7 (now codified in Florida Statute s. 1000.05) is the law that you believe is being violated by the college's use of the Norton Field Guide textbook:

(4)(a) It shall constitute discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex under this section to subject any student or employee to training or instruction that espouses, promotes, advances, inculcates, or compels such student or employee to believe any of the following concepts:

1. Members of one race, color, national origin, or sex are morally superior to members of another race, color, national origin, or sex.
2. A person, by virtue of his or her race, color, national origin, or sex, is inherently racist, sexist, or oppressive, whether consciously or unconsciously.
3. A person's moral character or status as either privileged or oppressed is necessarily determined by his or her race, color, national origin, or sex.
4. Members of one race, color, national origin, or sex cannot and should not attempt to treat others without respect to race, color, national origin, or sex.
5. A person, by virtue of his or her race, color, national origin, or sex, bears responsibility for, or should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment because of, actions committed in the past by other members of the same race, color, national origin, or sex.
6. A person, by virtue of his or her race, color, national origin, or sex, should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment to achieve diversity, equity, or inclusion.
7. A person, by virtue of his or her race, color, sex, or national origin, bears personal responsibility for and must feel guilt, anguish, or other forms of psychological distress because of actions, in which the person played no part, committed in the past by other members of the same race, color, national origin, or sex.
8. Such virtues as merit, excellence, hard work, fairness, neutrality, objectivity, and racial colorblindness are racist or sexist, or were created by members of a particular race, color, national origin, or sex to oppress members of another race, color, national origin, or sex.

(b) Paragraph (a) may not be construed to prohibit discussion of the concepts listed therein as part of a larger course of training or instruction, provided such training or instruction is given in an objective manner without endorsement of the concepts.

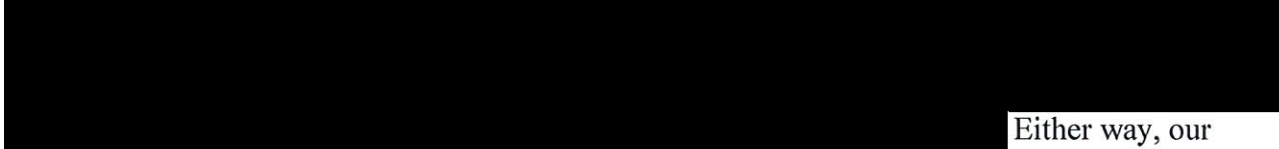
## Academic Affairs

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Your primary concerns appear to be that the content of the essays, which often refer to current and historical events, serves to “indoctrinate” students to certain political viewpoints. After review, the college firmly believes that utilizing current and historical events as content in textbooks provides an effective way to engage students and encourage independent thinking. The class at issue, ENC 1101, is not focused on content but rather on recognizing common rhetorical patterns and strategies, such as purpose, audience, and genre, while building critical thinking skills. Accordingly, when a student is required, for example, to state an author’s purpose, this allows the instructor to assure that the student is comprehending the text so that further learning can occur. As your daughter indicated, the students are not asked whether they agree with the author but whether they can articulate in writing the author’s position.

You have also recommended that ENC 1101 instructors be required to provide materials for each assignment that will provide for debate regarding the “opposing” points of view. We appreciate this suggestion. There are classes that may employ those types of pedagogical techniques as appropriate to achieve the learning outcomes associated with the classes. However, in ENC1101, discussions of readings are tied directly to aspects of writing; for example, when teaching students how to write a profile, students analyze readings in this genre for rhetorical strategies focused on writing skills. We do understand that the law might be violated if there was endorsement of the concepts listed such that students were essentially required to believe one of the eight concepts listed in the law. In this case, our faculty, chair, and I have reviewed the textbook and find that the instructor’s assignment of the reading materials at issue for purposes related to her instruction of ENC 1101 does not violate Florida law and discussion of these topics is not prohibited as per 1000.05(4)(b), F.S.

 Either way, our focus is on the best possible learning outcomes, in compliance with the law, for all of our enrolled students.

Please know that we take your concerns very seriously, and we will continue to review our curriculum to ensure that we remain in full compliance with Florida law.

Sincerely,



Lisa Armour, Ph.D.  
Interim Provost and Vice President Academic Affairs

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