

NO THANKS

Administration's poor planning sinks E306 proposal

So the University has suffered its first defeat on the issue of multicultural education — at the hands of itself.

Because those responsible for instituting racism and sexism studies into E306 classes were ill-informed and ill-prepared, and because they allowed the opposition to be so characteristically uninformed and took no steps to correct this, the entire program seems to be falling through. It was finished before it started.

According to Alan Gribben, professor of English, in a letter that he wrote to the *Austin American-Statesman*, the English Department faculty was never allowed to vote on whether or not to include Paula Rothenberg's hotly disputed sociology textbook, *Racism and Sexism*, in the E306 curriculum.

Furthermore, according to Gribben, English instructors were to be teaching this material "without any benefits of formal training or objective methodology," which is important given that the Rhetoric and Composition teachers are not supposed to do anything but teach students to "compose."

This is not to say that Gribben is truly on top of the issue. His letters both to the *Statesman* and to *The Texan* seem like little more than ideologically motivated whines and complaints, but he does raise the salient issues.

First of all, E306 is a curious place to begin

multiculturalism training. It's an *English* class designed to teach students how to express themselves, not what they should express.

Many students never see any part of an E306 class anyway. If the University is sincere in its efforts to promote diversity and egalitarianism in thought, then it should focus on a class that most people are going to take — a required class. This whole E306 fiasco is beginning to smell like a ploy on the part of the University to satisfy the demands of students and faculty who support the idea of a required class devoted to multicultural education.

A word of wisdom — the next time the University wants to try this, policy makers should consider that English professors, or any other professors for that matter, don't want decisions shoved down their throats any more than we want Eurocentric overkill shoved down ours.

The English professors have shown that they don't want the multiculturalism ship to begin its voyage in their port, most people aren't particularly fond of another requirement, and the E306 idea was a bad one anyway.

Why not consider teaching the truth in the classes that we already take? Since the University is not going to do that, students shall have to find consolation in piece by piece efforts. Let's hope they think about it next time.

— Scott Stanford