



Written by [James Murphy](#) on May 1, 2018

## Another Day, Another Leftist Attempt to Censor Conservative Thought

The modern-day left's battle against intellectual diversity on college campuses continues. Last week at Davidson College in Davidson, North Carolina, a three-person approval committee denied use of a venue to Burton Folsom on the grounds that Folsom's presentation was not "academic" in nature and would not attract a broad enough audience to allow him to speak in the McKay Atrium of the campus, a large centrally located venue at Davidson.



It's important to understand just who Burton Folsom is. Folsom is a distinguished fellow and professor emeritus at Hillsdale College. He has written more than a dozen books mainly on economic history, which include the titles *Entrepreneurs vs. The State*, *The Myth of the Robber Barons*, and *New Deal or Raw Deal?: How FDR's Economic Legacy has Damaged America*. He has an M.A. from the University of Nebraska and a doctorate in history from the University of Pittsburgh. He has served as an associate at the Free Enterprise Institute as well as the Mackinac Center for Public Policy. Very few professors at Davidson can match Folsom's credentials or his prolific publishing success.

Even with these bona fides, the three-person panel denied the Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) request to have Folsom speak at the McKay Atrium. "[The McKay Atrium] is reserved for more academic related events that are campus wide and attract a broad audience," said an e-mail from the committee which denied the request.

YAF spokesman Spencer Brown stated, "Students, alumni, trustees and administrators should be concerned that the powers that be have decided scholarship is subject to a rigid ideological test where liberals win and conservatives are shoved to the edge of the campus."

And Brown, of course, has it exactly right. It's entirely possible that the three-person board simply saw the titles of Folsom's books, or the fact that his presentation would be pro-free market, and said, "No." Whatever the case, Davidson officials eventually realized the error of their ways and apologized to the Davidson chapter of YAF.

"It was absolutely an academic event," said Mark Johnson, the Davidson communications and college marketing officer. "Dr. Folsom is a distinguished professor. This is a campus committed to free inquiry that welcomes speakers of all perspectives, beliefs and backgrounds." Johnson blamed the denial of the larger venue on a "communication breakdown internally within the college."

Folsom was allowed to speak in a classroom environment to a much smaller audience than was originally anticipated. "My biggest regret is that we had a low turnout, because we started promoting our event so late," said Andrew Becker, the YAF chapter president at Davidson. "The speaker did a fantastic job expounding upon the historical successes of free market entrepreneurship, and his animated and engaging style was a clear success with the audience. He did not disappoint."



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Dr. Folsom himself held no grudges. “We don’t know what was in their hearts,” Folsom told Hillsdale’s school newspaper, *The Collegian*. “It’s certainly possible this was an innocent error. They certainly did make it difficult.”

Dr. Folsom is generous with his forgiveness of this academic slight and, in general, that is probably the correct attitude to have. But when a gifted academician such as Dr. Folsom is denied a platform on the ludicrous grounds that he was not academic enough, it makes one wonder, who will they try to silence next?

The left’s ideological fascism must be confronted each time it rears its ugly head. A light needs to be shined on each incident of censorship, “accidental” or not.



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