

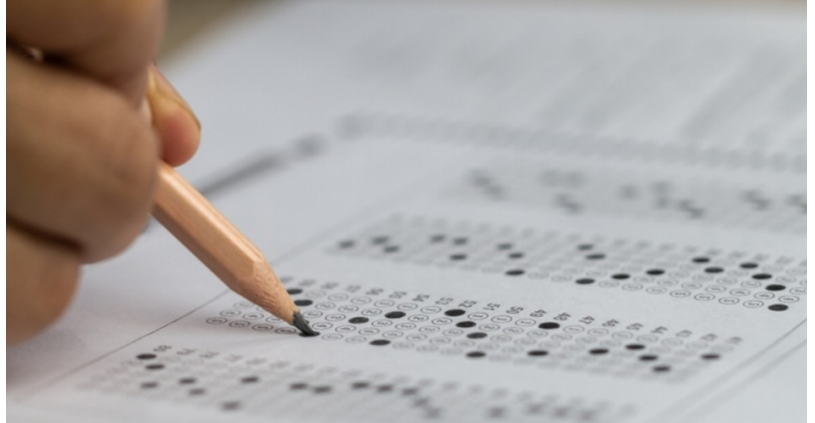


Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on June 10, 2020

## UCLA Professor Suspended, Threatened for Refusing to Make Finals Easier for Blacks

A University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) accounting professor has been suspended and placed under police protection for refusing to make his final exams easier for black students in light of the death of George Floyd.

According to [Inside Higher Ed](#), a group of students e-mailed Anderson School of Management professor Gordon Klein with a request “for a ‘no-harm’ final exam that could only benefit students’ grades, and for shortened exams and extended deadlines for final assignments and projects.” The students wrote that they were not asking Klein to cancel finals for non-black students, just to “exercise compassion and leniency with black students in our major.”



Klein declined to bow to the students’ demands. “Thanks for your suggestion ... that I give black students special treatment, given the tragedy in Minnesota,” he replied. “Do you know the names of the classmates that are black? How can I identify them since we’ve been having online classes only? Are there any students that may be of mixed parentage, such as half black-half Asian? What do you suggest I do with respect to them? A full concession or just half?”

While Klein may have been employing a little sarcasm, his points are well-taken. After all, were he to request photographs of all his students and then decide which ones should get which breaks based on physical characteristics, he would no doubt be called a racist.

“Also,” continued Klein, “do you have any idea if any students are from Minneapolis? I assume that they probably are especially devastated as well. I am thinking that a white student from there might be possibly even more devastated by this, especially because some might think that they’re racist even if they are not.”

Klein then asked the quite reasonable question of how he could possibly make the final exam a “no-harm” test when it was the sole determinant of a student’s grade for the course.

“Remember that [Martin Luther King, Jr.] famously said that people should not be evaluated based on the ‘color of their skin.’” Klein added. “Do you think that your request would run afoul of MLK’s admonition?”

Unfortunately for Klein, King’s vision is hopelessly out of date among today’s “woke” crowd, who view racial colorblindness as [“a form of racism”](#) and prefer to treat each person not as an individual but as a representative of a particular group with its own claims to preferential treatment, usually based on physical characteristics (except, of course, in matters of gender).



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In a follow-up e-mail obtained by the [Washington Free Beacon](#), Klein tried to inject some hard-headed realism into the discussion, pointing out that people often have to fulfill responsibilities despite personal hardships and traumas. “He pointed to his daughter, who suffered a severe illness and lost close friends to suicide during her time at UCLA. Those personal hardships did not interfere with fulfilling her course work, according to the professor,” the *Free Beacon* reported.

Klein also indicated that university rules prohibited him from modifying the course requirements at this time. An e-mail from Anderson School diversity committee chairman Judson Caskey, in fact, “urged professors to avoid changing final exam plans in the face of student demands,” wrote the [Free Beacon](#).

Angered by Klein’s initial response, one student posted it on Twitter, and another started a [Change.org petition](#) to have Klein fired “for his extremely insensitive, dismissive, and woefully racist response to his students’ request for empathy and compassion during a time of civil unrest.” The petition has garnered over 20,000 signatures. Students also “doxxed” Klein, according to the *Free Beacon*.

Following the outcry, UCLA suspended Klein for three weeks beginning June 25 and launched an investigation into his “troubling” behavior, Anderson School dean Antonio Bernardo told students in an apologetic e-mail. In addition, the Malibu Police Department “increased police presence near the educator’s home after Klein received multiple threats,” a department spokesman told the *Free Beacon*.

Whether Klein has a future at UCLA remains to be seen, but his treatment by both students and administrators does not bode well for the future of higher education. And given that the students of today are the leaders of tomorrow, it casts doubt on the future of the nation, too.

*Image: smolaw11/iStock/Getty Images Plus*

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