

University Suspends Student for Refusing to Stomp on Jesus' Name

A Florida Atlantic University student has been suspended for refusing to trample on Jesus' name.

According to Ryan Rotela, a Mormon, his Intercultural Communications professor forced his students to write "Jesus" on a piece of paper and then stomp on it as part of a "lesson in debating." Rotela refused, picked up the paper from the floor and placed it back on the table.

"I'm not going to be sitting in a class having my religious rights desecrated," Rotela told WPEC. "I truly see this as I'm being punished."

Though professor Deandre Poole was supposedly trying to teach the students "a lesson in debate," the student found the assignment to be offensive and insulting.

"I said to the professor, 'With all due respect to your authority as a professor, I do not believe what you told us to do was appropriate,'" Rotela said. "'I believe it was unprofessional and I was deeply offended by what you told me to do.'"

The Boca Raton, university, which is defending the professor, later suspended the student.

"As with any academic lesson, the exercise was meant to encourage students to view issues from many perspectives, in direct relation with the course objectives," Noemi Marin, the university's director of the School of Communication and Multimedia Studies, told Fox News.

"While at times the topics discussed may be sensitive, a

university environment is a venue for such dialogue and debate," Marin added.

Included in the textbook, *Intercultural Communication: A Contextual Approach, 5th Edition*, trampling on Jesus' name is actually an entire lesson.

"Have the students write the name JESUS in big letters on a piece of paper," a synopsis for the lesson reads. "Ask the students to stand up and put the paper on the floor in front of them with the name facing up. Ask the students to think about it for a moment. After a brief period of silence instruct them to step on the paper. Most will hesitate. Ask why they can't step on the paper. Discuss the importance of symbols in culture."

Paul Kengor, the executive director of the Center for Vision and Values at Pennsylvania's Grove City College is not surprised by the lesson.

"These are the new secular disciples of 'diversity' and 'tolerance'—empty buzzwords that make liberals and progressives feel good while they often refuse to tolerate and sometimes even assault traditional Christian and conservative beliefs," Kengor told Fox News.

Kengor said classes like this one at FAU demonstrate how many public universities hold contempt for people of faith.

"It also reflects the rising confidence and aggression of the new secularists and atheists, especially at our sick and surreal modern universities," he said.

Poole, who has declined to make a comment on the matter, has a doctorate from Howard University and is writing a book titled *Obamamania: The Rise of a Mythical Hero*.

Update: [Click here for a follow-up to this story.](#)