

WORLD & NATION

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HB 1380 makes history with pushback against APUSH

BY LESLY VASQUEZ
STAFF WRITER

“An Act relating to schools; directing the State Board of Education to adopt a certain United States History program and assessment; requiring United States History courses to include the study of certain documents,” states HB 1380.

On Feb. 16, this new bill was presented to the Oklahoma legislature. The bill will ban Advanced Placement U.S. History from Oklahoma school systems, cut future funding on for the program and enforce a new curriculum to replace it.

In the same week of Feb. 16, the Oklahoma House committee passed the bill, with 11 Republicans voting for the measure and four Democrats opposed.

Several Oklahoma politicians who want to ban APUSH courses from their school systems, are calling the course unpatriotic after a new framework was introduced in October 2012.

The bill itself was presented by Daniel Fisher, a Republican representative of Oklahoma and member of the Black Robe Regiment, a group that self describes as seeking to dismantle the false wall of separation of church and state. Daniel claims that the APUSH course defines what is bad about America and fails to teach American exceptionalism, which led him to remove the curriculum and add his own.

The Guilfordian reached out to Daniel, but he did not respond.

Here on campus many are critical of the bill’s goals. “No reasonable house would pass such a bill, and the fact that such bill exists really says more about the neurosis of the man who drafted it,” said senior and history major Patrick Withrow.

“I can’t imagine anyone honestly viewing the APUSH

curriculum as being revisionist or anti-American.”

Other students echoed this sentiment. “Unfortunately, I didn’t take APUSH in high school ... I wish I would have taken the course because it would have given me a better background information about America’s history,” said first-year Meagan Wood. “I think that Representative Fisher is making a huge mistake by removing APUSH just because it’s not up to his patriotic standards.”

Daniel did single out a couple of documents that should be taught to all high school students. These include both earlier documents such as the Gettysburg Address, Madison’s Federalist paper No. 10 and “Common Sense” by Thomas Paine as well as later documents including Martin Luther King’s “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” and the “Ballot or the Bullet” speech made by Malcolm X.

“(Teachers may) teach each document in a manner and order to facilitate student learning,” says the bill. “Teachers may (also) include other foundational and historical documents.”

Even with this list of required readings, however, teachers find the bill problematic.

“I have been an APUSH teacher for several years, and I have even had kids from seven years back that have come up to me to thank me for teaching them the essence beyond American history, so taking away APUSH is maniacal,” said Lynn Fisher, head chair of the history department at Asheboro High School in an email interview. “Every future APUSH student should experience learning the good and bad about American history.”

Further criticism has focused on the fact that Daniel includes Republican speeches in his new list of mandatory readings, including speeches by George W. Bush and Ronald Reagan, but none from our three last Democratic presidents: Barack Obama, Bill Clinton or Jimmy Carter.



Thursday March 12, 2015 @ 7:30 p.m. | Leak Room, Duke Hall

“Race for Prophets: A Critical Conversation”

A talk by Dr. William Boone

William Boone is an associate professor of English and Africana Studies at Winston-Salem State University, where he teaches courses on hip-hop, gender, popular culture, African American culture and literature. His research interests include music criticism, cultural history, superheroes and race, and African American masculinity. Follow him on Twitter (@afroblew).

The event is sponsored by OSLE, Honors Program, and the English Department.

NEWS IN BRIEF

United Kingdom



The government in Britain has announced six contenders for their list of possible commercial spaceports, according to the BBC. Four are in Scotland, while Wales and England have one a piece. The hope is to have a commercial spaceport by 2018 for private space planes. These would carry tourists in below-orbital flights, or even take satellites into orbit. “I want Britain to lead the way in commercial spaceflight,” said Aviation Minister Robert Goodwill. “Establishing a spaceport will ensure we are at the forefront of this exciting new technology.”

France

STRASBOURG



Belgium was convicted of a human rights violation last week by the European Court of Human Rights, according to Vice news. The crime? Extraditing convicted Tunisian terrorist Nizar Trabelsi to the United States. Belgium handed Trabelsi over to the U.S. in 2011, on the condition he would be tried in a civilian court and not face the death penalty. Trabelsi appealed to the ECHR on the grounds that he might be given a life sentence without parole in the U.S., which would violate his human rights. The ECHR found in his favor, and ordered a total award of 90,000 euros to Trabelsi.

Myanmar

LETPADAN



One hundred and fifty students are in a standoff with police after attempting to march to the capital, according to Radio Free Asia. The students are protesting a new education bill that they claim restricts academic freedom. The students have been marching since Jan. 20 and have covered 400 miles, despite the government agreeing to potentially change the law. Now they are camped out in a monastery, surrounded by police, 86 miles from their target city of Yangon. Some students have begun a hunger strike to protest their march being halted.

Russia

MOSCOW



Last Friday, former deputy prime minister and Putin critic Boris Nemtsov was killed in the Russian capital, according to the Guardian. Nemtsov was shot four times in the back near the Kremlin, two days before leading a major opposition rally. A spokesman for Putin has shared the Russian president’s condolences with Nemtsov’s family, and said the investigation into his death will be under Putin’s “personal control.” The killing has been condemned by international leaders, including British PM David Cameron and Obama, but also from Russians who supported Nemtsov’s pro-democracy message and fight against corruption.

BY ABE KENMORE
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