

11-19-06

# Advisor Quits UCLA Alumni Group



Ex-GOP Rep. James E. Rogan resigns from the fledgling conservative organization, which has offered to pay students to report on instructors.

By PETER Y. HONG  
Times Staff Writer

Former U.S. Rep. James E. Rogan has resigned from the advisory board of a conservative UCLA alumni group after learning that the group's founder had offered students \$100 payments to record professors' "non-pertinent ideological comments."

Rogan, a Republican who represented Glendale and Pasadena for two terms and was a manager in the impeachment trial of President Clinton, said he did not want his name linked to the controversial effort to record professors in their classrooms.

Rogan, now a lawyer in Irvine, on Wednesday sent an e-mail tendering his resignation to Andrew Jones, head of the Bruin Alumni Assn. and its one full-time employee. The year-old group, supported by donations, has no formal connection to UCLA.

In his e-mail, Rogan wrote, "I am uncomfortable to say the least with this tactic. It places students in jeopardy of violating myriad regulations and laws."

Jones had offered to pay UCLA students \$100 for recordings and lecture notes of professors caught in "indoctrination, one-sided presentation of ideological controversies and unprofessional classroom behavior." Jones said one student, whom he declined to identify, had taken up the offer thus far.

While saying that he was interested in monitoring professors who inject any sort of inappropriate ideology into courses, Jones has identified mainly instructors with liberal and leftist views as potential monitoring targets.

Rogan said that when he

**DECISION:** James Rogan says he does not support the monitoring of professors.

agreed to serve on the alumni group's advisory board, he believed its role would be to mentor Republican students and student groups. He said he did not recall any discussion of faculty monitoring, which he does not support.

"I went to Berkeley as an undergraduate and UCLA law school. I don't need to go to a website to learn there is an overabundance of liberal faculty," Rogan said.

Being taught by liberal professors is a simple fact of life when attending an elite university, Rogan said. "You should not go to Harvard and be surprised to find an overabundance of liberals," he said.

Of his own education, Rogan said the faculty's ideology "doesn't seem to have hurt me."

Rogan's resignation follows that of Harvard historian Stephan Thernstrom and UCLA professor emeritus Jascha Kessler, who also quit the board after the plan to record professors was announced.

The group's monitoring effort has outraged several faculty members listed as potential targets; they likened it to a witch hunt that could harm the classroom atmosphere.

But advisory board member Shawn Steel, a lawyer who was recently chairman of the California Republican Party, called the effort to record professors "a great idea... I can't see anything controversial about recording a professor speaking in an open class."

Steel said recording professors could "expose the nasty secrets of the university. Most parents assume students get a square education at a public university, when in fact, there is no real intellectual diversity. If a student says anything positive about Bush, he'll get bashed."

Jones, 24, who graduated in June 2003 and was chairman of UCLA's Bruin Republicans student group, said of Rogan, "I wish him well. It was a pleasure to have worked with him."

Since news reports of his financial offer to students appeared, Jones said he had received about 200 e-mails, both supportive and critical, on Wednesday. Rogan is the only board member who resigned following a Times story about the offer, he said.

UCLA officials said paying students to record professors would probably violate university policies.

The university dictates that students cannot give or sell notes or other records of course presentations without the written consent of the instructor and the chancellor.

Officials said they intend to notify Jones of that policy but are not taking any other action at this point.