

My Socratic Oath as a Dean and Faculty Member

By ALDEMARO ROMERO

As Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and faculty member at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, I want to publicly state to my faculty colleagues, students, staff, and the SIUE community in general, what I call “My Socratic Oath as Dean.” This is a modified version of the one proposed for faculty in general in F. H. Rhodes’ book *The Creation of the Future. The Role of the American University* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001). I present it here as a statement about the commitment and accountability I will subject myself as a new member of this community.

The Oath

I hereby will devote myself to the advancement and extension of knowledge, recognizing that I have an obligation to students, to the development of knowledge, to the faculty, to the staff, to SIUE, and to the public.

I will ensure that everybody understands teaching as a moral vocation. I recognize research and scholarship as a public trust and accept professional service as a societal obligation. In pursuing these responsibilities, I will make sure that both teaching and research will be promoted the same sustained, imaginative, and rigorous attention. I will make sure that new knowledge and creative activities will be promoted in a scrupulous manner that befits the highest professional standards in any field and that I will play my full part in service to the larger community. In undertaking these tasks I recognize that teaching, research, and public service are the fundamental responsibilities; that they are responsibilities that must be continuously balanced; and that while

they are responsibilities of comparable importance, teaching lies at the heart of the mission of the University.

Towards this end, I accept the trust that the transmission of knowledge implies so that accuracy, fairness, balance, and integrity are exemplified in the way any subject is presented and arguments are handled. That academic disciplines, whatever they may be, will be presented with rigor, but also in a liberal spirit, with a breadth of outlook and a humane concern for its foundations, context, relationships, and implications.

I will respect the integrity of the relationship between professor and student, in both personal and intellectual terms, and in both substance and appearance. That the relationships with students will always be open but respectful, intellectually intense but personally scrupulous. I will consider misrepresentation of either as unthinkable as abuse of power or harassment. That students' evaluations will be objective, rigorous, and fair and that they will be taken into consideration. And that faculty will be available for student conferences, office hours, laboratory and workshop sessions, fieldwork, and other formal contacts outside the lecture room.

I will participate in the life of the university community, cooperating with faculty, staff, and students in both educational endeavors and campus-wide activities. And that I will encourage, help, and mentor my colleagues, especially those newly appointed, to become effective teachers and successful scholars.

As a Dean I will be a leader projecting a vision for the future, a vision that has been developed with the advice and consent of my fellow faculty members, staff, and students. I will facilitate faculty, staff, and students to be as successful as they can be, and I will do so teaching by example, respecting them, through open communication, encouragement, humility, and courage. I will be a

builder, someone who builds on the strengths of the College and the university in general, who builds bridges so others can go farther and further, do more, be more, and give more.

Finally, I promise that all my professional activities will be as transparent as possible, open to scrutiny, inviting to criticism, and accountable to the end.

This vow, which I freely take, I will keep, recognizing that the confidence by the SIUE community is something I need to earn everyday and therefore, carries with it the obligation of professional responsibility to honor and serve students, the disciplines, faculty, staff, SIUE, and society as a whole.

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