

Dear Associate Dean Nancy Um, Dean Celia Klin, and Provost Donald Neiman,

We are writing this letter as the advisees of Professor Ana Maria Candela and graduate students in the Sociology Department to express our unwavering support for her. We are deeply disturbed and saddened by the unfounded accusation and attack on Dr. Candela. Her pedagogical approach to diversifying classroom discussions was taken out of context and misrepresented.

Progressive stacking policy does not deny anybody the right to speak and succeed, and it does not harm/discriminate against students who are privileged due to their race, gender, and ability status. Rather, progressive stacking aims to undo the unequal power that the students bring to the classroom and amplify the marginalized voices. These pedagogical efforts aim to empower the most marginalized students.

We believe Binghamton University has missed the chance to lead a fruitful debate on the national level regarding materializing “diversity, equity, and inclusion” principles institutionalized in most campuses. The progressive stacking policy certainly fits Binghamton University’s alleged commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equity. If the university administration is indeed interested in furthering social justice and equity on campus and in the classroom, it should have supported Professor Candela.

Working with Dr. Candela over the years and knowing her personally, we have witnessed firsthand her compassion and hard work for her students at every level. Professor Candela has worked with a diverse group of students, including a large group of international students. Dr. Candela is an outstanding professor and excellent instructor who takes her teaching seriously, goes above and beyond to assist her students in their learning process, and understands the diverse needs of students in a public state university.

As graduate students, we have benefited immensely from her academic expertise, critical thinking, and mentorship. Thus, we are disappointed to see that the university administration has failed to represent her to the public as a passionate, well-respected, and accomplished professor and mentor. We kindly ask you to reverse the administration’s official approach to this incident and support Professor Candela by publishing an official statement clarifying her pedagogy and emphasizing her excellent qualities as a member of the university community.

Sincerely,

Sociology Graduate Student Union (SGSU)