

## [California: Muslim professor requires Berkeley students tweet weekly on Islamophobia](#)

Posted on February 6, 2014 by creeping

*Why do we have to find out about this from Canadian news? via [Berkeley students must tweet on Islamophobia | Toronto Sun](#).*

Two weeks ago, I received a panicked message from a student enrolled at the University of California, Berkeley.

He wrote: “I’ve been told by one of my professors I will be required, as part of my grade, to start a Twitter account and tweet weekly on Islamophobia. I can’t help but feel this is unethical. This is his agenda not mine.”

The professor conducting this exercise was Hatem Bazian as part of a course titled, “Asian American Studies 132AC: Islamophobia”.

When I asked him to elaborate on his concerns the student wrote: “There are 100 students in the class, all of us forced to create individual Twitter accounts. I’m not wholly clear on what our final project is yet (I find it very interesting that he excludes both the Twitter account requirement AND the final project from his official syllabus), but we have to meet with a group in San Francisco, and our class will be surveying people of color on the impact of some ads put out by (anti-Sharia blogger) Pamela Gellar. Now I’m no Pamela Gellar fan, I think she’s nuts, but I feel ... between the Twitter stuff and the final project he’s basically using us as unpaid labor to work on his agenda.”

I wrote to Prof. Bazian, who co-founded “Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP)” at Berkeley, asking why he was using his students to pursue what appeared to me to be a political exercise meant to propagate a specific message to the Twitterverse.

Bazian replied, without referring to Islamophobia:

“My course is designated as an American culture community engagement scholarship class ... Students are asked to send at least one posting per week on something related to the course content, be it from the actual reading or anything they read or came across.”

When I asked him why all the tweets by his students so far are about Islamophobia, he replied:

“The class is titled De-Constructing Islamophobia and the History of Otherness ... (Students) are asked to post based on ... examining Islamophobia through looking at earlier historical examples.”

The fact remains Prof. Bazian appears to be using his position of authority to make 100 students — mostly non-Muslims — tweet about Muslim victimhood in America, irrespective of how it's defined or whether it exists.

No student I have seen on Twitter has yet posted a tweet saying Islamophobia is a myth, nor has any student challenged the validity of the term.

*Daniel Greenfield [adds](#):*

[Bazian also helped raise money for Hamas.](#)

This abusive behavior isn't a unique invention by Bazian. Academics use their students to push agendas on social media and increasingly tie classwork to online activities blurring the line between required classwork and personal advocacy.

Even aside from Hatem Bazian's hateful views, that's a troubling boundary issue with students being forced to put forward a single opinion as their own in a public forum that goes outside the school. It's the equivalent of ordering students to write letters to the editor promoting a particular point of view and only that point of view. It's an inversion of academic freedom.

*Reader Jerry brings up an excellent point:*

**Taking a course entitled 'Islamophobia' should pretty well have told him what he was getting himself into with this Professor.**