



“The ‘Solidarity Journalism Initiative’ at University of Texas at Austin teaches students to ‘convey outrage’ and abandon neutrality with the funding of top tech companies and George Soros’ Open Society Foundations. The initiative, which is part of the University of Texas at Austin’s Center for Media Engagement, ‘helps journalists, journalism educators, and journalism students improve coverage of marginalized communities,’ according to its website. ‘The decision to report – or not report – on these conditions inherently leaves neutrality behind,’ the Solidarity Journalism program states. Financial backers of the initiative include Google and Facebook according to the ‘About Us’ page.”

“The program began at UT-Austin in 2021, after Professor Anita Varma brought it from Santa Clara [California] University. The College Fix reached out by email to Varma twice over two weeks but did not receive a response. She wrote an article in 2021 for Nieman Lab: ‘objectivity as an aspirational ideal ends up encouraging journalists to avoid addressing what matters. In coverage of issues like immigration, Covid-19, police brutality, and housing instability, the idea that observations will objectively speak for themselves is quickly off the table,’ Varma wrote.”

“Journalism Professor Jeffrey McCall criticized this approach in an email to The College Fix. ‘The journalism profession should absolutely reject this vacuous and harmful approach to ‘news,’ McCall said. ‘Credibility for the news industry is already at historic lows,’ the DePauw University professor told The Fix. ‘If advocacy journalism becomes the norm in America, the public will simply tune it out because it will be untrustworthy,’ he said. ‘Solidarity reporting’ works by ‘first determin[ing] an ideological goal, and then craft[ing] content to meet that

objective,’ McCall said. Instead, ‘professional journalism should go where facts lead and report without fear or favor,’ McCall said.”

<https://www.thecollegefix.com/ut-austin-journalism-program-trains-students-to-leave-objectivity-behind/>

<https://mediaengagement.org/research/solidarity-reporting-guide/>

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