

Letter to the editor: Shannon Gibney

Written by

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What an unsettling article about the MCTC, Minneapolis Community and Technical College, regarding its unfair and hypocritical treatment in rendering a threatening reprimand to the biracial English professor, Shannon Gibney, for addressing structural racism in the U.S. only because two (2) caucasian students in her class felt uncomfortable about the subject.

The two male students claim that they felt targeted when Gibney sought to discuss racism and believed that she was directing conversation towards them as individuals.

When they said they felt harassed by her, Gibney told them she was not singling them out as racists, but, if they still felt uncomfortable they could file a complaint of discrimination. They did, and consequently, she was strongly reprimanded via written correspondence to her.

The threatening written warning to Shannon Gibney completely contradicts MCTC's own statements that no faculty member is disciplined for teaching or discussing structural, institutionalized racism, which is very real in this country.

Ironically, some Caucasian male faculty at the college said that they freely discuss issues of structured racism in their classrooms, but they have never been approached or reprimanded by any superiors at the school as their colleague, Shannon Gibney, has been.

Given the history of MCTC maintaining an environment of unwelcome and racial hostility against faculty of color, it is clear that professor Shannon Gibney is herself the victim of the structured racism, which she was hoping to discuss further before she was threatened to stop via the reprimand from one of her superiors at the two-year college.

The union president, Barbara Hager, has summed the matter up quite honestly in relaying that, "you can have a plantation environment that's diverse but all of the people in power are Caucasians."

Hopefully, there will be justice for Shannon Gibney and the written warning and racial discrimination complaint against her will be dropped – completely.

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