



From Worker Education Center to Hedge Fund and State Department Cabal: An Open Call to Struggle Against an Obscene Transformation

Posted on June 27, 2015 by John Alter

Dear friends and supporters of Worker Education:

After more than three years of the collective efforts by The Committee of Concerned Alumni, Students, Faculty and Staff to save and restore the Brooklyn College Graduate Center for Worker Education, City University of New York, we have deeply disturbing developments to report about management's recent actions. [See this for previous report.](#)

First, we proudly and defiantly note our struggle to save Worker Education is as strong as ever. The Committee of Concerned Students, Alumni, Faculty and Staff has thousands of supporters including the New York City union movement and elected officials. The labor movement is aware of our ongoing mobilization efforts and shares a common vision that access to higher education in NYC for youth, people of color and the working class hinges on the access to Worker Education, which was removed without cause by Brooklyn College.

This is why our campaign will continue until we restore a graduate program in public policy at the Graduate Center for Worker Education.

In 2013, as a result of all of our work, Brooklyn College's administration was forced to claim that they would adhere to the original mission of the Graduate Center for Worker Education. As our struggle gained strength among working people in New York, the Brooklyn College administration agreed to speak with our Committee, but, after numerous meetings with their administrators giving "assurances" - tragically, no Masters in Urban Policy exists at the Graduate Center for Worker Education, nor any similarly themed program.

Incredibly, and shamefully, a hedge fund program - The M.D. Sass Investment Academy - will be housed at the Graduate Center for Worker Education. As such, it remains clear for all to see that Brooklyn College has removed any pretense of serving African American, Latino, and working class students. Moreover, Brooklyn College administrators mislead faculty that they would play a meaningful role in the governance of the Center. Instead the Graduate Center for Worker Education has been corrupted to serve as a training ground for future hedge funders, which seek to privatize public education. This violates the principle of faculty governance and contradicts the very nature of Worker Education and community empowerment, which is the mission of CUNY; and is diametrically opposed to the progressive tradition of the Graduate Center for Worker Education.

To make matters worse, the Political Science Department and the Humanities and Social Science Dean's Office placed at the Center a so-called "Human Rights in Iran Unit", a US state department-funded program, which operates without faculty oversight and was previously rejected by Rutgers University. This demonstrates Brooklyn College's priority to defend the one-percent in the US and support US State Department secret programs to destabilize governments overseas paving the way for war in the Middle East and Central America.

The purge and non-replacement of adjunct and full time faculty and staff at the Graduate Center for Worker Education demonstrates that President Gould disregards faculty as it seeks to transform Brooklyn College into a playground for the elite.

Former director, Professor Joseph Wilson, has filed a major civil rights lawsuit against CUNY, Brooklyn College and those who attacked him and dismantled the program to expropriate valuable Manhattan real estate and the modern campus located at 25 Broadway. Originally intended for working class students, the Center has been made available to elements of the upper class and US foreign policy operatives.



Graduate Center for Workers Education in Brooklyn was the site of the 2013 LAWCHA conference.

Meanwhile, to deflect criticism about how it is using the Center, the Brooklyn College administration is cynically offering its auditorium and space for public events around labor and worker rights to give the appearance of legitimacy. We call for a mass boycott of all public events and activities at Brooklyn College's 25 Broadway campus, ironically still called the Graduate Center for Worker Education. We will continue to call upon elected officials, trade unions, civil rights organizations and the CUNY Chancellor to demand that President Gould cease her harmful, shameless, and deceitful actions until a responsible Worker Education center committed to the values of social and economic justice, racial equality, which shuns all forms of xenophobia, is restored.

We demand underrepresented workers have a graduate degree program at the Graduate Center for Worker Education!

The struggle to save Worker Education continues. This battle is an integral part of the defense against the class warfare waged on unions, public education and institutions, the working class and those who work toward a democratic society, and human rights and opportunity for the oppressed, not hedge funders and warmongers. Please join the movement to save worker education at CUNY. Spread the word and repost on social media.

-The Committee of Concerned Students, Alumni, Faculty and Staff
John Alter, Chair

Author



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