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to Faculty ▾

In the spirit of FactCheck.org, an evaluation of Assoc. Prof. Hagopian's recent contribution (along with co-authors). Their original post is below.

Hagopian et al. assertion: They refer to the "unilateral provost appointment," presumably of Interim Provost Baldasty by President Cauce.

Assessment: Inaccurate. Three months ago, Cauce created an 11-member committee to advise her on the idea of making the interim provost the "permanent" provost for two years or to propose other alternatives. She asked the faculty Senate Executive Committee for feedback on this idea. Cauce also has sought comment from members of the UW community on all three campuses on Baldasty and/or the process followed in the provost search. A "unilateral" appointment would be one done or undertaken by one person or party without input from others. That wasn't the case here.

Hagopian et al. assertion: They say a recent post by Cauce "sweep[s UW student leaders] under the bus" by "hinting" that they were responsible for chalking crude remarks about her and Undergraduate Dean Ed Taylor at Gerberding Hall. The chalked statements had race-related content.

Response: Inaccurate. Relevant excerpt from Cauce's post on this: "I still don't know where the graffiti came from, but I did know there were some tensions with students about the slow progress of the Race&Equity Initiative, etc." On its face, the post doesn't blame any specific party, directly or indirectly, for the chalked statements. Only the most uncharitable interpretation of Cauce's post would conclude that she was trying to "sweep them [student leaders] under the bus" -- presumably link them to the chalking.

Hagopian et al. assertion: They criticize UW (and by implication its leadership) for the "hypocritical" practice of buying furniture from Washington Correctional Industries. Their post links to a Seattle Times investigative series documenting the exploitation of prisoners through that program.

Response: Misleading, perhaps intentionally. UW and other state agencies buy furniture from CI not because they want to but because the state legally requires them to do so. The Times story points that out in at least two places. Hagopian et al. apparently decided against disclosing that mitigating factor, even though their link to The Times' story would suggest that they know what it said. The Hagopian et al. post incorrectly implies that the UW could buy this furniture from other parties if it wanted to do so.

Author's conflict-of-interest statement: My spouse is the interim provost. I don't assume all administrators are evil. I get annoyed by the half-truths offered up as "facts" by some posters to this listserv. --Randy Beam, Department of Communication