

***Richmond Times-Dispatch***

**"Grave Injustices"**

**May 2, 2001**

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That policy contains provisions preventing accused faculty members from learning the identity of their accusers. Worse, they will not be told even the specific charges against them - which makes mounting a defense daunting to say the least. And they can be charged with harassment if something they say in class offends someone. (Exceptions will be made in cases where the material is relevant to the subject-matter.)

The anonymous accuser/unspecified charges arrangement sounds like something out of Kafka, but it has been gaining ground at colleges and universities. Advocates say it makes it easier for a complainant to come forward. Indeed - and perhaps in some cases to the detriment of justice. In the hothouse atmosphere of university politics, a harassment claim is explosive.

Universities often work themselves into a lather over the grave injustice ostensibly done to a Death-Row inmate who had a rough childhood or whose lawyer failed to raise some absurdly obscure point of law. Some criminals even gain star status: Cop-killer Mumia Abu-Jamal, for instance, has delivered commencement address by tape recording to more than one school.

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