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CU bake sale targets affirmative action

By [Marcos Mocine-McQueen](#)[Denver Post Staff Writer](#)

BOULDER - A student bake sale at the University of Colorado has triggered a debate over affirmative action and free speech.

All over the price of a cookie.

The College Republicans are holding an affirmative-action bake sale today. Under original plans, students were to be charged based on their ethnicity and gender.

"Our contention is that affirmative action (in college admissions) is highly offensive, and we're only hoping to parody that," said Antonia Gaona, 22, president of the Equal Opportunity Alliance.

The bake sale prices originally would have worked like this: White and Asian students would have been charged \$1 per cookie; Hispanics, 50 cents; blacks, 25 cents; and "other" minority groups would have received a cookie for free.

But when the school learned of the price structure, officials cried foul, saying the bake sale could not go forward, citing federal and state law.

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"The problem was the differential pricing," said Pauline Hale, a spokeswoman for the university. "Charging students different prices based on ethnicity and gender violated a number of laws, namely the Civil Rights Act of 1964, state statute and university rules."

The College Republicans prepared to challenge the university's decision in federal court, claiming their free speech rights were being violated. That effort came to an end when the group and school reached a compromise.

The bake sale will go on, but the College Republicans

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will have a single price for all students, and their parody price list will be for "suggested donations."

The College Republicans' efforts have drawn the support of off-campus groups such as the Campus Accountability Project.

"The students wanted to draw attention to one of the biggest problems with affirmative action, which is that it pits one student against another," said Jessica Peck Corry of the Campus Accountability Project, which helped the students publicize their fight.

Other student groups are preparing counter-rallies and protests against the bake sale.

Nicole Houston, president of the Black Student Alliance, said she objects to the message of the bake sale, although it allows students to see what "minority students face every day."

"I don't want to take the see-no-evil, hear-no-evil, speak-no-evil stance," Houston said. "I don't want to sweep it under the carpet. We find ourselves having to be civil rights leaders instead of just having to be students."

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