

## Wachs Responds to Republican Attack on UW-Madison

Written by Wisconsin Assembly Democrats

Thursday, 22 December 2016 15:08 - Last Updated Friday, 23 December 2016 07:36

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***Republicans complain about course named “The Problem of Whiteness” which is being offered in the spring semester as a part of the African Cultural Studies Department.***

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MADISON - On Wednesday, December 21st, Rep. **Dana Wachs** (D-Eau Claire) responded to comments made by Republican legislators about a course being offered at UW-Madison. The course is titled “The Problem of Whiteness” and is being offered in the spring semester as a part of the African Cultural Studies Department.



“It’s disheartening that Republicans only seem to care about the University of Wisconsin when they are offended by what is being taught, and not when it comes to properly funding our UW System to compete in today’s economy,” said Wachs, the ranking Democrat on the Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities. “We should be embracing that we have students and professors who are taking a hard look at the issues affecting our world and encourage them to do so without the constant threat of even more cuts to their funding.”

Earlier this week, frequent UW System critic Sen. Steve Nass was joined by Rep. David Murphy, chair of the Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities, in condemning this course offering. In a statement Murphy said “I am extremely concerned that UW-Madison finds it appropriate to teach a course called, ‘The Problem of Whiteness,’ with the premise that white people are racist.”

In a statement responding to this criticism, UW-Madison said “We believe this course, which is one of thousands offered at our university, will benefit students who are interested in developing a deeper understanding of race issues. The course is a challenge and response to racism of all kinds.”

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“I know that certain issues are uncomfortable for some of us in our society to discuss, but shouldn’t those be the issues that we work the hardest to address?” added Wachs. “Republican legislators need to stop viewing UW-Madison as some sort of liberal enemy to be defeated and recognize the true economic, social, and cultural value that it has brought to our state and country for decades. They can continue to defend these attacks on both funding and curriculum as ‘standing up for taxpayers’ but Wisconsin is a better place economically, socially, and culturally when we have a strong University system and flagship university like UW-Madison.”