

Jewish Discovery Center

A Project of Chabad-Lubavitch

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To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Jewish Discovery Center, a local Jewish organization serving the needs of both community members and college students in the Buffalo and the suburbs of Buffalo region, there is a concern I wish to discuss. Recently, a student attending SUNY @ Buffalo State College graduated from the Dietetics program. The remarkable thing about this student, is that she finished in eight semesters, what is expected, and typically does, take 12 semesters to complete.

Rightfully so, this student that I speak of was proud of herself. She was looking forward to her parents driving to Buffalo from eight hours away just to see their little girl walk with the other graduates. Unfortunately, after they drove that distance, their daughter was upset to tell them that she couldn't walk with her friends. You see, this young lady is a Jewish person. True to her religious beliefs, the various observances given to the Jewish people involving resting on Saturday prevented her from being able to attend the Commencement Ceremony.

This should not be a problem, except that the Commencement Ceremony is exclusively held on Saturdays. In short, a Jewish person attending SUNY @ Buffalo State College who wishes to proudly walk with his / her classmates on graduation must violate their religious beliefs, or else forfeit their hard-earned right to walk with their friends.

SUNY @ Buffalo State College has always demonstrated a diverse and tolerant environment worth being proud of, and for a stain such as this to mar the reputation of such a fine school is quite disappointing. The Jewish Discovery Center is deeply concerned about the possible anti-semitic statement being quietly suggested. It is our hope and expectation that something can be done by the administration to remedy this issue and allow students of all faiths to enjoy a public celebration of their hard work while attending a hard-working school.

Sincerely,

Avraham Tapp

Public Relations Director of the Jewish Discovery Center

President of the Jewish Student Organization at Buffalo State College