

## PRESS RELEASE

June 14, 2020

For immediate distribution

### **Change.Org Petition Asks UCLA Chancellor Gene Block to Fire Management Dean Antonio Bernardo for Suppressing Academic Freedom**

On June 14, a petition at <https://www.change.org/p/22835027/preview> was unrolled on Change.Org calling for [UCLA chancellor Gene Block](#) to fire [Antonio Bernardo](#), Dean of UCLA's Anderson School of Management, for [suppressing](#) academic freedom, folding under Twitter pressure, and exposing UCLA to public ridicule, and to replace him with [Professor Al Osborne](#), the Interim Dean whom he replaced in 2019.

Dean Bernardo suspended instructor [Gordon Klein](#) after he suggested to students emailing him to ask that black students be exempt from bad grades on the final exam that their request was impractical and discriminated on the basis of skin color. Just one day earlier, the School had told instructors that, "If students ask for accommodations such as assignment delays or exam cancellations, I strongly encourage you to follow the normal procedures." [Gordon Klein is a](#) lawyer, CPA, and professional keyboard player who taught at UCLA for over 30 years, trained more than 8,000 accountants to pass the CPA exam, wrote a leading textbook on ethics in accounting, and served as the sole accounting expert for General Motors's bankruptcy and reorganization.

After a Twitter cancelling and [an online petition](#) with more than 20,000 signatures asked for Klein to be fired, Dean Bernardo characterized him [as having](#) "a disregard for our core principles, including an abuse of power," and "a disregard for our core principles". He called Klein's actions "troubling" and said [that](#) "all appropriate investigative offices" were looking into ways to deal with him. After suspending Klein, Dean Bernardo gave his students a longer exam time, a three-day window for taking it, and promised consideration of the "difficult circumstances" in the distribution of grades.

The petition to fire Dean Bernardo is the third in a series of petitions arising from the Gordon Klein affair. [The first](#), asking for him to be fired, had 20,994 signatures as of June 14. [The second](#), asking for him to be reinstated, had 57,309. Organizers of this third petition are hopeful that the Gordon Klein affair will be a turning point in social cancelling media, showing that if the target of a cancelling resists rather than giving in, the tables can be turned and it is the attackers who end up the losers. The organizers say, "The lesson people need to learn is to fight back. Once bullies realize it's more dangerous to fight than to leave you alone, they'll leave you alone." Whether they are correct remains an open question.

**Contact:** Dr. [Eric Rasmusen](#) (812) 345-8573 (EDT, Indiana), [erasmuse61@gmail.com](mailto:erasmuse61@gmail.com). Email best; phone number only as backup. Send questions in writing; oral communications are for background and clarification only. For the other side of the story, contact Antonio Bernardo at [antonio.bernardo@anderson.ucla.edu](mailto:antonio.bernardo@anderson.ucla.edu).

This press release is posted in [MS-Word](#) and [pdf](#) at <http://rasmusen.org/special/gordonklein>.