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Mark Ramsey, guest column: Call it censorship at Baylor

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In the first “imperative” of Baylor 2012, a vision of critical thinking is stated.

“Baylor will seek to maintain a culture that fosters a conversation about great ideas and the issues that confront humanity and how a Christian world-view interprets and affects them both.”

Baylor has made great progress toward many 2012 goals. But it just took a giant leap backward on this keystone concept, which is academic freedom for students and faculty.

Baylor University literally has censored a “distinguished instructor” who has been conducting computational studies of what Darwinian evolution can and cannot accomplish.

Robert Marks’ Web site was hosted on Baylor servers (as professors are permitted to use). However, after someone objected, Baylor took Marks’ Web page down.

This was in direct violation of an agreement hammered out just days before that included Marks changing the title of the material and featuring a disclaimer that it represented his views only and not Baylor’s.

This censorship is based not on poor scholarship or bad data but on a disagreement about the research’s conclusions.

The conclusions were not deemed to be particularly favorable to the notion that Darwin was right and no intelligence was required in the creation of the world and everything in it.

A Baylor spokesman said that taking the page down has nothing to do with content and everything to do with rules relating to Baylor’s official endorsement of ideas. Right.

That Baylor would be so unbold as to cower before those who advocate a secular society must give its supporters pause.

One would think that scholarship consistent with the beliefs of the vast majority of both Americans in general and Baptists in particular would be something Baylor would cultivate, not censor.

The geology department’s Web page on evolution is instructive. It recommends several sources whose work are in direct conflict with clear teaching of most Baylor parents’ and students’ beliefs.

“Suggested reading” includes Stephen J. Gould (the most vocal atheist in America until his death), Richard Dawkins (the most vocal living atheist on the planet who openly mocks all religion and whose “weasel” computer program is a joke compared to Professor Marks’ work), and Eugenie Scott, director of the National Center for Science Education, a so-called think-tank devoted (and partially publicly funded) to promoting

evolution and discrediting non-evolutionary beliefs.

Curiously, the pages on the geology site end with the certification that: "The information on this page was written and approved by the faculty of the Geology Department at Baylor University."

If the beginning of the Baylor 2012 vision is to be attained, and the Christian mission preserved, it is imperative that Baylor stand up to the pressure of the Darwinists.

Mark Ramsey, a mechanical engineer residing in Spring, Texas, is the founder of Texans for Better Science Education.

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