

# Colleagues, students rip automotive professor

**By Andrew Dyer**

*Assistant Arts Editor*

Students and faculty in the college automotive department have a litany of complaints about a professor they claim falsifies academic records, abuses students, openly insults colleagues and refuses approved accommodations for disabled students.

Professor of Automotive Technology Jose Ibarra openly feuds with colleagues and is dismissive of his students, according to a group of automotive students who have complained to administrators and, eventually, The Sun. Several students said Ibarra boasts in class that his tenured status grants him impunity and that he routinely uses large portions of class time to vent personal grudges against faculty, particularly Automotive Program Coordinator Professor David Preciado. A U.S. Army veteran accused Ibarra of denying his disability accommodations approved by the SWC Disability Support Services (DSS) office.

David Eldridge, a U.S. Army veteran who has returned to college to study automotive science, was authorized a DSS accommodation that includes periodic five to 10 minute breaks during class. Eldridge said Ibarra denied the accommodations, a violation of district policy and the Americans with Disabilities Act. SWC DSS Director Dr. Malia Flood said professors are not authorized to deny accommodations to eligible students.

"I asked Professor Ibarra to sign my DSS paperwork," Eldridge said. "He took it in the back then came back out and said 'No, no, I can't do that.'"

Eldridge said Ibarra began to question the nature of his disability and his request for accommodations in the middle of class in front of the other students.

"(Ibarra) said 'Five to ten minutes? No. That's too long. That's just unacceptable. We can't do this,'" Eldridge said.

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# Ibarra: Professor described as hostile, apathetic by students

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Since Eldridge made DSS aware of the problem, he said, there has been no further resistance from Ibarra.

Eli Espino, an adjunct automotive instructor, said he and part-timers have not been as fortunate. He said Ibarra creates a profoundly negative work environment.

“He’s very hostile,” Espino said. “He’ll openly state he hates adjunct professors. He thinks part-timers are worthless.”

Espino teaches Engine Performance II. He said students coming in from Ibarra’s classes are not prepared.

“They know nothing,” said Espino. “I start basically from where he should have started his class. I have to give a refresher course for everything they did not learn, which is pretty much everything.”

Several students said Ibarra was an easy A and claimed they were coached throughout their tests. Automotive technology major Xavier Gonzalez was among them.

“He would tell us what the answer was after the question,” said Gonzalez. “He would walk us through everything. It’s a diploma mill.”

Several students also questioned Ibarra’s competence. When he first took his class to the lab this semester, students said Ibarra was unable to operate the equipment.

“He couldn’t get (the alignment machine) started,” said Misael Reyes, an



Alonzo Ackerman/Staff

**ROUGH RIDE** — Automotive professor Jose Ibarra (right) has been the target of multiple complaints for his antagonistic behavior towards adjuncts and students.

automotive technology major. “We spent the whole day trying to get it to work. I spent a lot of money to attend college. I want to drop the class, but (I’d lose) financial aid.”

Students also complained about the falsification of academic records. Automotive lab work is directed through job sheets required by the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF) certification

program. Students said Ibarra told them to fabricate data.

Automotive student Aaron Nueva said much of the paperwork and forms students complete is a sham.

“He would have us fill out job sheets before we went to do the actual job,” Nueva said. “People would ask, and he’d say ‘Look it up’ or ‘Just put values that are around what it should be.’”

Gonzalez said his other automotive

professors always made sure students performed the lab work before they completed job sheets.

“The (other) professors do them with us during lab,” Gonzalez said. “Ibarra is just being lazy.”

Ibarra is dismissive and disrespectful toward his full-time colleague, Preciado, said students in the program.

“He talks a whole bunch about Mr. P,” said Reyes. “I don’t know what’s going on with them, but he doesn’t like (Preciado) at all.”

Preciado said he no longer cares what Ibarra says about him.

“It used to bother me a lot and I’ve tried to get it corrected, but I got to the point with the comments to let them in one ear and out the other,” he said. “Because of the tenure teachers have, it is very difficult to resolve issues.”

Preciado said he directs students with complaints to Dean of Athletics and Exercise Science Terry Davis, who supervises the automotive program.

Students said they were frustrated by the off-topic nature of Ibarra’s lectures.

“We honestly don’t care (about personality issues), we’re paying to take this class to learn,” Gonzalez said. “I don’t want to be Dr. Phil hearing about (stuff). I want to learn.”

Gonzalez said he does not think Ibarra wants to be here.

“I feel like he thinks that since he’s tenured he can take it easy and do the bare

minimum,” Gonzalez said. “It made me realize he’s just here for a paycheck. He told us how people tried to get him fired. It has nothing at all to do with the class and it’s completely unprofessional.”

Espino, who also works as a Master Technician at Pep Boys, said he has seen this type of employee before.

“He reminds me of an employee that knows where the minimum is to not get fired and that is their goal,” Espino said. “He has no passion for teaching. He has no desire to improve students.”

Preciado and Espino said Davis has not adequately addressed issues in the automotive department.

“(Dean Terry Davis) doesn’t want that headache,” Espino said. “(Ibarra) is an H.R. nightmare. He’s basically a bomb that when he goes off, he’s going to stain everyone in the department. Does (Davis) want to tarnish himself with the aftermath of this? No, he doesn’t. Nobody does.”

Ibarra was contacted by The Sun several times over a period of two months for

an opportunity to respond to the charges, and when visited by reporters during his office hours refused to comment and threatened to call the campus police.

Davis was contacted three times over the same period. He would not comment via

email and his secretary refused multiple times to schedule interviews or to put him on the telephone with reporters.

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**- Eli Espino  
Automotive Technology  
Instructor**

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