

Issued Date: November 24, 2025

From: Director Bonnie Glenn
Office of Police Accountability



Case Number: 2025OPA-0254

Allegations of Misconduct & Director's Findings

Named Employee #1

1. **Allegation #1:** 5.001 - Standards and Duties POL-10. Employees Will Strive to be Professional

Finding: Not Sustained - Unfounded

This Closed Case Summary (CCS) represents the opinion of the OPA Director regarding the misconduct alleged and therefore sections may be written in the first person.

Executive Summary:

It was alleged Named Employee #1 (NE#1), a field training officer (FTO), was unprofessional by calling her student officer (Student #1)¹ a "goober" and saying the derogatory term "retarded."

Administrative Note:

On October 17, 2025, the Office of Inspector General certified OPA's investigation as thorough, timely, and objective.

Summary of the Investigation:

OPA reviewed an internal Blue Team complaint regarding Student #1. The complaint documented a meeting held between Student #1 and his chain of command in the training unit and referenced an email written by NE#1.

NE#1 was assigned as Student #1's FTO for about a week in May 2025. On Monday, May 19, NE#1 wrote an email to the training unit about Student #1's comments that he was "feeling targeted" and that NE#1 was a "racist." NE#1 documented telling Student #1 that she was not comfortable with his jokes about her being a racist, but he persisted. She also documented

Student #1 making comments such as “Dominicans hate Puerto Ricans” and asking an officer who identifies as Puerto Rican if they “even spoke Spanish.” NE#1 documented that Student #1 said she was a racist because she called him a “goober.”

On May 20, Student #1’s chain of command met with him to discuss NE#1’s comments. The meeting was documented in a Blue Team entry by Sergeant #1. Sergeant #1 wrote that Student #1 clarified he did not believe NE#1 was racist and, instead, thought the two of them were joking. Sergeant #1 documented Student #1 repeatedly claiming his comments were jokes, to which Sergeant #1 explained it was inappropriate to joke about bias issues and protected classes. Student #1 asked if it was permitted for NE#1 to call him a “goober.” Sergeant #1 explained that “goober” was a “term for someone making a silly mistake,” and that the two issues were not an apples-to-apples comparison. Sergeant #1 documented speaking to Student #1 about other disciplinary concerns. Sergeant #1 told Student #1 he would be assigned to a new FTO. Student #1 then alleged NE#1, “said the word ‘retarded’ multiple times.” Student #1 asked, “Why can she say that, but I cannot joke around?” Student #1 said NE#1 did not address this word at him. Student #1 also asked—without elaboration—if the word “marijuana” was racist and reiterated that his comments concerning Puerto Ricans and Dominicans were intended as jokes.

OPA interviewed Student #1. Student #1 described a situation when he and NE#1 drove in emergency response to a call, prompting NE#1 to call Student #1 a “goober.” Student #1 stated he felt this was an insult directed at him. Student #1 provided no other specifics on this interaction. Student #1 also said he heard NE#1 say the words “retard” or “retarded” about three times. He said NE#1 never directed these words at him, but used them to describe situations and, once, referred to a person as, “a retard.” Student #1 said this was directed at an unknown community member who would not have been able to hear the comment. He provided no other specifics of these comments when asked about when these statements were made. Student #1 stated he did not believe NE#1 meant these words as an insult, but that they were “just loosely worded.”

OPA interviewed NE#1. NE#1 stated she was only Student #1’s FTO for about five days, but that they had multiple issues during that time which she documented in her May 19 email. Regarding the “goober” comment, NE#1 recounted the two of them seeing another officer forget to turn off their emergency lights, prompting NE#1 to state, “what a goober.” NE#1 said that, later, Student #1 forgot to turn off his emergency lights, prompting her to say, “Now you’re the goober.” She defined goober to mean “goofy” or “silly,” and did not intend it as an insult. NE#1 stated Student #1 responded to being called a “goober” by saying, “that’s racist.”

NE#1 denied saying the words “retard” or “retarded,” adding, “That’s not a normal word in my vernacular that I would have said.” She denied using that word during her employment with SPD and she specifically denied the allegation she directed it at a community member. NE#1 stated she felt NE#1’s allegations were an act of retaliation due to her reporting concerns to the Training Unit.

Analysis and Conclusions:

Named Employee #1 – Allegation #1

1. 5.001 - Standards and Duties POL-10. Employees Will Strive to be Professional

It was alleged that NE#1 was unprofessional by calling Student #1 a “goober” and using the derogatory term “retarded.”

SPD Policy 5.001-POL-10 requires that SPD employees “strive to be professional.” The policy further instructs that “employees may not engage in behavior that undermines public trust in the Department, the officer, or other officers” whether on or off duty. SPD Policy 5.001-POL-10. Furthermore, the policy states: “Any time employees represent the Department or identify themselves as police officers or Department employees, they will not use profanity directed as an insult or any language that is derogatory, contemptuous, or disrespectful toward any person.” *Id.*

OPA finds that, more likely than not, based on the evidence provided, the allegation did not occur or did not occur as alleged.

First, OPA finds that the term “goober” is generally not an offensive nor insulting term and, as used here, was not unprofessional. Both Student #1 and NE#1 recounted NE#1 calling officers who forgot to deactivate their emergency lights “goobers.” This appears to be a lighthearted way of pointing out this absent-minded mistake. See Merriam-Webster Dictionary, www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/goober (“goober” is slang for a “naïve, ignorant, or foolish person”).

Second, OPA finds NE#1’s denial that she used the derogatory word “retarded” to be more credible than Student #1’s allegation. Student #1 only brought this issue up after he was confronted about his own behavior and did so in a way to excuse his own conduct (“Why can she say that, but I cannot joke around?”). Student #1 also did not provide any specifics of the instances when he alleged NE#1 used the word. Additionally, OPA found a number of NE#1’s recollections to be illogical and unsubstantiated—such as finding the term “goober” to be racist and asking if the word “marijuana” was racist. Finally, OPA notes that NE#1 has been employed by SPD for about ten years without any significant related disciplinary history. Comparatively, Student #1 was employed by SPD for about a year and was counselled about potential misconduct on multiple occasions. This included an instance of driving in an HOV lane and claiming, by way of excuse when he was pulled over, that he was unfamiliar with HOV lanes since he was from New York. This is despite the fact he was previously employed by NYPD. OPA takes notice that New York City specifically uses HOV lanes.²

Accordingly, OPA recommends this allegation be Not Sustained – Unfounded.

Recommended Finding: **Not Sustained – Unfounded**

fn 1: Student #1 is no longer employed by SPD.

fn 2: HOV Lanes, NYC311, <https://portal.311.nyc.gov/article/?kanumber=KA-02801>, and Motorists & Parking, New York City DOT, www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/motorist/motorist.shtml#rules.