

After reviewing Ohio Senate Bill 1 (the "Advance Ohio Higher Education Act"), I can highlight several key issues with the legislation, particularly regarding the concept of "indoctrination."

### **Key Issues with the Bill**

#### **1. Limitations on Academic Freedom:**

- The bill prohibits diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) offices, training, and policies at state universities
- It forbids faculty from "seeking to indoctrinate any social, political, or religious point of view" without clearly defining what constitutes "indoctrination"
- It requires universities to promote "intellectual diversity" but gives the state significant control over defining what this means

#### **2. Problematic Definition of "Indoctrination":** The bill uses "indoctrination" in Section 3345.0217(B)(4), stating faculty "shall not seek to indoctrinate any social, political, or religious point of view." This usage is problematic because:

- The term "indoctrination" is not clearly defined in the bill
- Academic teaching necessarily involves presenting viewpoints, theories, and frameworks
- The distinction between education and "indoctrination" is subjective
- Without clear definitions, this could enable politically motivated restrictions on teaching

#### **3. Ban on Faculty Unions:**

- Section 4117.14(D)(1)(n) classifies full-time faculty as employees prohibited from striking
- This significantly weakens faculty bargaining power

#### **4. Trustee Term Changes and Power Structure:**

- Reduces trustee terms from nine to six years for appointments after July 1, 2025
- Centralizes more power in boards of trustees with less faculty input

#### **5. Restrictions on DEI Programs:**

- Eliminates DEI offices, training, and language in job descriptions
- Prevents universities from offering certain scholarships related to DEI

### **Why "Indoctrination" Is Used Incorrectly**

The bill's use of "indoctrination" is problematic for several reasons:

1. **False Dichotomy:** The bill creates a false binary between "indoctrination" and "education," ignoring that all education involves sharing perspectives and frameworks.
2. **Conflation with Academic Discourse:** What the bill labels as "indoctrination" is often simply academic discourse on complex social topics. Teaching about structural racism, gender theory, or economic inequality isn't indoctrination—it's exposing students to important frameworks for understanding social issues.
3. **Selective Application:** The concern about "indoctrination" appears selectively applied to certain topics (particularly those related to DEI) rather than being a consistent principle applied to all viewpoints.
4. **Chilling Effect:** Without clear definitions, the prohibition against "indoctrination" could discourage faculty from teaching controversial or challenging material for fear of violating the law, creating a chilling effect on academic freedom.
5. **Political Framing:** The use of "indoctrination" frames university education as politically motivated rather than recognizing that higher education necessarily involves engaging with different perspectives and developing critical thinking about those perspectives.

The legislation ultimately uses the concept of "indoctrination" as a political tool rather than addressing genuine educational concerns, potentially undermining academic freedom and shared governance in Ohio's public universities.

Additionally, we have therapy dogs to serve our students every semester. For many they are a gift, many of our dogs are. Therapy dogs are Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The apathy in this bill is astounding. Who is going to tell these sweet beings they are out of work?

I could go on for pages and pages, but, mark my words, you will see an exodus of talent, intelligence and vital peoples from THIS STATE if you allow this to move on.

With all due respect,

Professor Davis