

I write to you as Kent State faculty in Peace Studies, I am of course only speaking for myself, not our department or the university. But it is relevant to share that our department is a living memorial to the students killed on May 4, 1970. As such we work to teach students how to transform conflicts. I am deeply concerned about this legislation. To teach students how to manage conflicts, and how to connect across difference, we need to be able to talk about issues they disagree on, including racism, climate change, and so much more. We will not be educating effective leaders of tomorrow if they are afraid to practice even *discussing* these issues in the classroom. We teach students in our department how to engage in productive conflict, but students *already* shy away from difficult conversations. Any whiff of censorship of classroom conversations will have a chilling effect and hurt students' education.

As we go off an enrollment cliff we will have to do major restructuring of our institutions (Kent State is in this process already). Because many universities are top heavy with V.P.s and other administration, faculty unions will be key for ensuring worker fairness. To hobble us right at this moment is likely to lead to larger and larger classes, again, hurting students and their learning.

Thank you for considering the issues deeply and fairly on the committee,

Dr. Sara Koopman

Associate Professor

School of Peace and Conflict Studies

Kent State University, Kent, Ohio