

Written Testimony of Julie Haught
Before the Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee
Senator Jerry Cirino, Chair
May 17, 2023

Chair Cirino, Vice Chair Rulli, Ranking Member Ingram, and Members of the Workforce and Higher Education Committee:

My name is Julie Haught, and I am a professor of English and Gender Studies at Bowling Green State University, where I have taught for over 30 years. I do not represent Bowling Green State University, but rather am submitting testimony as a private citizen in opposition to Senate Bill 83.

As a life-long resident of Ohio and a first-generation college-student, I am honored to teach at a public university in Ohio. As I learned from my own undergraduate education and as I teach BGSU students, our strength is found in the rich diversity of our experiences and viewpoints. For this reason, I am concerned with Senate Bill 83's overreach in micro-managing how diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are covered within course materials.

Limiting DEI requirements in curriculum contingent upon approval of the Chancellor will have a chilling effect on the intellectual integrity of course materials and will create an unintended bureaucratic boondoggle. Faculty have years of specialized training in their disciplines as well as expertise in working with students. As such, they are the parties best positioned to determine whether DEI requirements are essential to the integrity of their degree programs. Thus, the limitations imposed by SB 83 will harm faculty's capacity to prepare students as critically-thinking graduates and, where applicable, informed citizens within a pluralistic democracy.

Additionally, SB 83's requirement that the Chancellor approve any exemptions to the ban on required DEI training will create additional layers of bureaucratic labor that could be better used in service to making higher education in Ohio a competitive marketplace to attract Ohio students as well as national and international students.

For the reasons outlined above, I oppose SB 83.

Thank you.

Julie Haught, Bowling Green, OH