

# Action Alert | SB 83 *The Ohio Higher Education Enhancement Act*

Far from enhancing Ohio's institutions of higher education, SB 83 would likely:

- Make it difficult to attract and retain the best and brightest faculty from around the nation and the world.
- Make it difficult to attract and retain out of state and international students.
- Motivate Ohio Students to attend college out of state.
- Add to the cost of education.

## SB 83: The Ohio ~~Higher Education Enhancement~~ Anti-Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging Act

SB 83 (3345.0216, 3345.0217, 3345.87) bears more than a passing resemblance to Florida's "Anti-Woke" laws.

- \* It requires the university to "allow and encourage learners to reach their own conclusions" about "controversial" matters, *beliefs*, or *policies* such as *climate change*, *diversity*, *equity*, and *marriage*; and require "intellectual diversity rubrics" for courses, evaluations, and learning outcomes.
- \* Requires the university to "not endorse, oppose, comment, or take action" on *concepts*, *beliefs*, and *policies* such as *allyship*, *social justice*, *sustainability*, *gender identity*, & *expression* prohibiting us from acknowledging the existence of continued, systematic racism and sexism.
- \* Bans affinity groups on campus, prohibiting the University from engaging in most (if not all) actions aimed at increasing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging on our campuses.
- \* Prohibits the University from "funding, facilitating, or providing support" for "any position, material benefit, policy, program, or activity" for students, faculty, or staff by any group identity (other than U.S. citizen) thus shuttering important support systems including DEI, TRIO, the LGBTQ & Women's Centers, BUS (and >59 other student organizations), our Anti-Racism Task Force, and others.

## SB 83: The Ohio ~~Higher Education Enhancement~~ Undermine Academic Freedom Act

SB 83 includes language that would have a chilling effect on academic freedom.

- \* Mandates specific content on syllabi (including instructor bio) and requires public posting 7 days prior to course start "searchable by keywords and phrases".
- \* Includes several extremely vague definitions (*controversial belief*, *specified concept*) that render it impossible for faculty to know whether something they are saying in the classroom would violate relevant portions of the law. (3345.0217.A.1-4)
- \* It prohibits faculty and staff from "inculcate[ing] any social, political, or religious point of view" (3345.0217 B.4) without making clear what constitutes a social, political, or religious point of view. (e.g., Is teaching evolution in a biology class inculcating a specific religious point of view?)
- \* It calls for sanctions against anyone violating any of these very vaguely worded provisions, including termination without respect for tenure.

## SB 83: The Ohio ~~Higher Education Enhancement~~ Increasing Government Regulations and Administrative Costs Act

SB83 increases extreme micro-management by the State in the localized affairs of the University. Implementing these regulations would add a significant amount of administrative overhead and contribute to administrative bloat.

- \* This includes specific legislative control over the behavior and conduct of the chancellor, board of trustees, president, provost, deans, faculty, and staff including internships, work study, fellowships, grants, offices, programs, residence life, and committees.

- **Take note students! Every dime spent by the University implementing the provisions of this bill is a dime of your tuition not being spent on your education!**
- **Currently in Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee. Hearings begin March 22<sup>nd</sup>!**
- **Let's Make Our Voices Heard** (<https://www.ohiosenate.gov/legislation/135/sb83>)