

OREGON ASSOCIATION OF SCHOLARS



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OAS Report Warns of Ideological Litmus Tests for Faculty at Oregon Universities

Oregon universities are introducing ideological litmus tests for faculty hiring and promotion in the form of mandatory “diversity statements”, the Oregon Association of Scholars said in a [report](#) issued today. The statements will deter leading scholars from coming to the state, cause a deleterious effect on research productivity, and serve as an ideological cudgel against scholars with alternative views, the report said. They represent a direct threat to academic freedom and research excellence in Oregon.

“State legislators and alumni donors should hesitate before committing funds to universities that show such contempt for freedoms and political pluralism in our state,” said Dr. Bruce Gilley, Professor of Political Science at Portland State University and President of the Oregon Association of Scholars. “By imposing an ideological litmus test on faculty hiring and promotion, Oregon universities will fall behind other leading national research universities that have rejected such discriminatory practices.”

The report, “The Imposition of Diversity Statements at Oregon Universities”, highlights recent changes at the University of Oregon, Oregon State University, and Oregon Health & Science University. It notes, for instance, that the University of Oregon will begin demanding “diversity statements” for new faculty hires in the spring 2017 academic quarter. This will be in addition to existing requirements for statements of “contributions to equity and inclusion” for faculty performance evaluations, and promotion and tenure decisions. It documents how these terms have been defined by the universities in narrowly partisan terms, forcing faculty to conform or be punished.

“The hiring and promotion of individuals based on their alignment with the partisan ideology of ‘diversity’ will undermine freedoms and equality on campus, deny opportunities to meritorious scholars, and allow some scholars to advance based on their political activism,” Gilley said.

The Oregon Association of Scholars calls on trustees at all three universities to block attempts to impose any ideological litmus tests on faculty hiring and promotion. In addition, state legislators, concerned alumni, and students concerned with the integrity of their universities should mobilize to make their voices heard in opposition.

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Report Link: <http://www.oregonscholars.org/wp-content/uploads/DiversityStatements.pdf>