



October 16, 2025

The Honorable Dave Yost
Office of the Attorney General of Ohio
30 E. Broad St., 14th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215
Via Email: [REDACTED]

Re: Investigation Request into the Ohio State University

Dear Attorney General Yost:

This is a request to investigate mandatory coursework at The Ohio State University (“OSU”) that appears to violate both the spirit and the letter of S.B. 1, the Advance Ohio Higher Education Act, which prohibits DEI trainings in Ohio’s colleges and universities.¹ The Act took effect on June 27, 2025.

Defending Education is a national grassroots organization with members across the country – including in Ohio – who are students of all ages, as well as parents of said students. A whistleblower provided the screenshot below from OSU which shows that a “race, ethnicity, and gender diversity” requirement still exists in the student registration portal as of October 14, 2025. This raises concerns about the university’s adherence to state law.

The screenshot shows the 'Track Progress' page for a Sophomore student. The page displays a list of required courses for Foundations, including 'Race, Ethnicity and Gender Diversity' (1 constraint), 'Writing and Information Literacy' (1 constraint), 'Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning/Data Analysis' (1 constraint), 'Literary, Visual and Performing Arts' (1 constraint), 'Historical and Cultural Studies' (1 constraint), and 'Natural Science' (fulfill any | at least 4 hours). The 'Race, Ethnicity and Gender Diversity' course is highlighted with a red box and a red '01' icon. The page also shows a search bar, a sidebar with navigation links, and a footer with system information.

¹ Advance Ohio Higher Education Act, 2025 Ohio Legis. 2 (codified in relevant part at Ohio Rev. Code §3345.0217), bit.ly/3IPDcTg.



Indeed, a policy memorandum issued by OSU on August 25, 2025, underscores that university leadership recognizes what compliance with this law entails. Section II.A.5 of that memo “[a]ffirms and declares that [OSU] will not encourage, discourage, require, or forbid students, faculty, or administrators to endorse, assent to, or publicly express a given ideology, political stance, or view of a social policy, nor will the institution require students to do any of those things to obtain an undergraduate or post-graduate degree.”² But the University’s policy requiring race-, ethnicity-, and gender-based coursework appears to go back on that promise.

Accordingly, we ask that the Office of the Attorney General of Ohio promptly investigate the mandatory coursework at The Ohio State University, act swiftly to remedy any unlawful policies and practices, and order appropriate relief.

Thank you for your prompt assistance with this request for investigation and resolution. Please contact me for further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "N. Neily", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nicole Neily
President
Defending Education

² *DEI, Intellectual Diversity, and Controversial Beliefs Under the Advance Ohio Higher Education Act*, The Ohio State University Office of Academic Affairs (archived Oct. 15, 2025), perma.cc/7F63-Z637.