

House Bill 3348

Sponsored by Representative FLORES

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Directs each state institution of higher education to report to Legislative Assembly on steps institution is taking to ensure intellectual diversity and free exchange of ideas.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1 Relating to intellectual diversity.

2 Whereas this Act shall be known and may be cited as the Intellectual Diversity in Higher Ed-
3 ucation Act; and
4

5 Whereas intellectual diversity is the foundation of a learning environment that exposes students
6 to a variety of political, ideological and other perspectives; and

7 Whereas colleges and universities should welcome intellectual diversity and the free exchange
8 of ideas as values indispensable to a liberal education, teaching and program development; and

9 Whereas teachers should not take unfair advantage of the immaturity of students by indoctri-
10 nating them with their own opinions before the students have had an opportunity to examine other
11 opinions; and

12 Whereas academic decisions, including grades, should be based solely on considerations that are
13 intellectually relevant to the subject matter under consideration; and

14 Whereas members of the campus community who believe they have been treated unfairly on
15 academic matters must have access to a clear institutional process by which grievances can be ad-
16 dressed; and

17 Whereas political and ideological bias in hiring, promotion and tenure is unacceptable; and

18 Whereas intellectual diversity must be achieved in ways that protect such values as academic
19 freedom, shared governance and academic standards; and

20 Whereas faculty, administrators and the State Board of Higher Education should take the initi-
21 ative in meeting the challenge of intellectual diversity; and

22 Whereas there is a high degree of consensus on the principles set forth in a statement entitled
23 "Academic Rights and Responsibilities" that was issued by the American Council on Education on
24 behalf of 30 higher education organizations; and

25 Whereas surveys revealing ideological imbalance in the classroom, evidence of politicization and
26 public concern over this issue continue to mount; and

27 Whereas it is the responsibility of governing boards to ensure that institutional policies and
28 procedures promote, for all students and faculty, an open atmosphere in which a range of viewpoints
29 can be freely expressed; now, therefore,

30 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

31 **SECTION 1.** (1) **As used in this section, "intellectual diversity" means the foundation of**

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 a learning environment that exposes students to a variety of political, ideological and other
2 perspectives.

3 (2) Each state institution of higher education under the control of the State Board of
4 Higher Education shall report to the Legislative Assembly no later than February 1 of each
5 odd-numbered year. The report shall identify the steps the institution is taking to ensure
6 intellectual diversity and the free exchange of ideas at the institution.

7 (3) The report required by subsection (2) of this section shall address the specific meas-
8 ures taken by the institution to ensure and promote intellectual diversity and academic
9 freedom. The report may include any steps taken by the institution to:

10 (a) Conduct a study assessing the current state of intellectual diversity on its campus;

11 (b) Incorporate intellectual diversity into institutional statements, grievance procedures
12 and activities on diversity;

13 (c) Encourage a balanced variety of campus-wide panels and speakers and annually pub-
14 lish the names of panelists and speakers;

15 (d) Establish clear campus policies that ensure that hecklers or threats of violence do
16 not prevent speakers from speaking;

17 (e) Include intellectual diversity concerns in the institution's guidelines on teaching and
18 program development;

19 (f) Include intellectual diversity issues in student course evaluations;

20 (g) Develop hiring, promotion and tenure policies that protect individuals against dis-
21 crimination for political viewpoints and track any reported grievances in that regard;

22 (h) Establish clear campus policies to ensure freedom of the press for students and re-
23 port any incidents of student newspaper thefts or destruction;

24 (i) Establish clear campus policies to prohibit political bias in the distribution of student
25 fee funds;

26 (j) Eliminate any speech codes that restrict the freedom of speech; or

27 (k) Create an institutional ombudsman on intellectual diversity.

28 (4) The institution shall post the report on the website of the institution.

29