

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 59th Legislature (2023)

SENATE BILL 870

By: Bullard

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to higher education; providing general responsibilities of certain institutions of higher education; requiring certain institutions of higher education to adopt certain policy; providing for contents of policy; providing a cause of action to compel certain compliance; providing for award of certain fees and costs; providing for promulgation of rules; providing for codification; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 3251 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. Each institution of higher education within The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education has the general responsibility to:

1. Permit the diffusion of culture through general education;
2. Facilitate the discovery, improvement, and dissemination of knowledge;
3. Teach and train students for professions;

1 4. Provide for scientific, engineering, medical, and other  
2 academic research;

3 5. Protect intellectual exploration and academic freedom;

4 6. Strive for intellectual excellence;

5 7. Provide educational opportunity through postsecondary  
6 education and training;

7 8. Provide continuing education opportunities;

8 9. Foster a diversity of viewpoints; and

9 10. Maintain political, social, and cultural neutrality.

10 B. Each institution of higher education within The Oklahoma  
11 State System of Higher Education shall adopt a policy which shall:

12 1. Demonstrate a commitment to intellectual freedom and  
13 viewpoint diversity;

14 2. Prohibit the funding, promotion, sponsorship, or support of  
15 any office of diversity, equity, or inclusion;

16 3. Prohibit the funding, promotion, sponsorship, or support of  
17 any office that funds, promotes, sponsors, or supports any  
18 initiative or formulation of diversity, equity, and inclusion beyond  
19 what is necessary to uphold the equal protection of the laws under  
20 the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution; and

21 4. Prohibit the endorsement or dissuasion of, or interference  
22 with, any lifestyle, race, sex, religion, or culture.

23 C. Any person aggrieved by a violation of this section may  
24 bring an action for injunctive relief against an institution of

1 higher education within The Oklahoma State System of Higher  
2 Education to compel the institution to comply with the provisions of  
3 this section. If the person prevails in the action, the court shall  
4 award him or her reasonable attorney fees and court costs.

5 D. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education shall  
6 promulgate rules to implement the provisions of this section.

7 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2023.

8 SECTION 3. It being immediately necessary for the preservation  
9 of the public peace, health, or safety, an emergency is hereby  
10 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and  
11 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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