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**Subject:** Senate Bill 1 implementation updates

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**From:** Provost Ravi V. Bellamkonda <ADMIN-Provost@osu.edu>

**Sent:** Thursday, May 29, 2025 3:36 PM

**Subject:** Senate Bill 1 implementation updates

Dear Colleagues:

Since our last update, the university has set up its [SB 1 Compliance website](#). The launch of this resource for implementation progress and related information – including a timeline and a statement of commitment as required by the law – has been shared with faculty, staff and students through the On Campus e-newsletter and website. However, we encourage you to share it as a resource with your own teams and colleagues at any time. As you know, continuing engagement and awareness throughout our Ohio State community are vital to these efforts (see the Engagement section of the website for examples of the multiple leadership groups and representative areas of the university involved; this will continue to expand as implementation work continues). To that end, please also continue to share that all faculty, staff and students can reach out to [legislativequestions@osu.edu](mailto:legislativequestions@osu.edu) with questions about SB 1 or any other enacted legislation. The SB 1 compliance website will be updated and expanded as the work of the implementation team progresses. Please see several additional updates below.

Thank you,

Ravi Bellamkonda, Anne Garcia and Stacy Rastauskas

### **Intellectual diversity/Classroom discussion provisions**

The implementation team continues to analyze the various forms of SB 1's focus on "intellectual diversity" and how the university demonstrates its commitment to it in various academic areas, including classroom discussions, syllabi and more. A group of 15 faculty, staff and students representing multiple disciplines, colleges and units have met twice so far and are developing a syllabus statement and FAQs around these requirements as well as collecting additional resources to support compliance. These materials are expected to be shared with the university community in advance of SB 1's effective date.

### **Website and materials guidance and disclaimer language**

Multiple workstreams continue to be involved in creating guidelines and evaluation criteria for assessing if a program or activity needs to be discontinued or adjusted to comply with Ohio law and federal guidelines regarding DEI. Examples of how to adjust a range of materials including websites, program descriptions, event descriptions and position descriptions to accurately reflect how they comply with the law will also be included with this guidance.

At the same time, because of the breadth and depth of the university's web presence, the implementation team is also developing general disclaimer language that can be placed on websites as a temporary measure while the broad guidance is being finalized. That disclaimer language is expected to be shared soon.

### **Cultural and awareness recognitions and events**

The implementation team has received a variety of questions regarding cultural and awareness recognitions and events such as Black History Month, Women's History Month, Pride Month - which begins June 1 - and Juneteenth. As cultural and awareness recognitions and observance of federal holidays are permitted under federal guidelines as well as SB 1, university guidance is as follows:

- Events, programs, recognitions and university participation in cultural awareness months/days and federal holidays is allowed. Any event or program related to these activities needs to clearly communicate that it is open and welcoming to all without respect to protected class. The event, program or recognition cannot be “for” or “intended primarily to benefit” an underrepresented group.
- The above types of events and recognitions can be communicated on university channels such as websites, email and social media. However, communications or messaging that take a position, engage in advocacy for or expand on the cultural or awareness month beyond recognizing it – either via university channels (including email and social media) or when speaking or making a statement in a university capacity are paused as additional portions of SB 1 related to university statements on controversial topics or issues are analyzed.
- It is important to note that the above guidance does not prohibit any individual person’s ability to make statements or represent their own, individual views, or the freedom of faculty to teach, conduct research and publish research findings.

Again, please direct questions in your colleges and units to [legislativequestions@osu.edu](mailto:legislativequestions@osu.edu).

#### **Data collection request**

Last week, deans and other senior leaders received a request for assistance with gathering documents and other materials as it relates to the SB 1 prohibition on offering any orientation or training course regarding diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as contracting with consultants or third-parties to promote admissions, hiring or promotion on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

As a reminder, members of the implementation team asked that all such materials be submitted by 5 p.m. on Monday, June 2. A Microsoft Teams folder has been set up for each college or unit to submit their documents.

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**From:** Provost Ravi V. Bellamkonda  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 5, 2025 1:34 PM

**Subject:** Senate Bill 1 implementation updates

Dear Colleagues:

Work continues to finalize policies and guidance ahead of SB 1's effective date on June 27. Since our last update, we have been in touch with the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) regarding the provisions of SB 1 for which they administer processes and approvals. ODHE plans to release formal guidance as well as post some of the required forms and templates on their website in the coming weeks.

The implementation committee continues to broaden its outreach efforts to seek additional feedback and socialize plans from a wide range of stakeholders. We encourage you to share the information in these updates with your leadership teams and continue to direct people to the [legislativequestions@osu.edu](mailto:legislativequestions@osu.edu) inbox with questions about SB 1 or any other enacted legislation.

The SB 1 compliance website will continue to be updated and expanded as work progresses. In response to questions, this week the names of the implementation committee members were added to the site. We will again stress that the committee is engaging a wide range of additional stakeholders in their work, so these names represent the people leading workstreams, not the overall engagement and socialization occurring. Please see several additional updates below.

Thank you,

Ravi Bellamkonda, Anne Garcia and Stacy Rastauskas

#### **DEI/Controversial Issues/Intellectual Diversity Policy**

SB 1 requires the Board of Trustees to adopt, and the institution to enforce, a policy stating certain specified terms, including but not limited to prohibitions around DEI, controversial issues, and intellectual diversity. The statutory text has been adapted to the university policy format, and as the university has no discretion over the statutorily required terms in the policy, the decision was made to submit it to the Board for approval at the August meeting outside of the normal interim policy process.

The draft is being circulated with the University Policy Review Committee and Senate faculty leaders for review and comment prior to Board approval and will be presented at the July Academic Affairs and Student Life Committee meeting and then to the full Board for adoption at its August meeting.

#### **Intellectual Diversity/Classroom Discussion**

SB1 does not prohibit controversial issues from being discussed in classes but requires the university to "ensure the fullest degree of intellectual diversity" in courses and allow students to reach their own conclusions around controversial issues. To identify these protections for students and to support faculty in structuring classroom instruction appropriately, a standard syllabus statement and a series of FAQs around what is and is not permitted under the law are being developed. The implementation committee is also collecting and will provide a series of existing university resources about how to conduct open discussions for faculty. These resources will be published on the SB 1 website.

## **Political/Ideological Restrictions in Hiring/Admissions**

The university has worked over the last several years to update its admissions and hiring policies in a way that complies with SB 1. Following the 2023 U.S. Supreme Court decision *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard*, the university's admissions practices and guidance documents used by admissions reviewers were updated. The Office of Human Resources, the Office of Academic Affairs, and the Office of Legal Affairs have also worked to review and update faculty and staff hiring processes (e.g., removal of diversity statements in hiring) to reflect the additional requirements in these sections.

Model language is being developed for use in Patterns of Administration and other documents to ensure that SB 1 requirements are reflected properly in all required university documents. This language will be included on the implementation portion of the SB 1 website, when available.

## **Complaint and Reporting Process**

SB 1 requires the university to have a process to address complaints regarding violations of the [Campus Free Speech Policy](#) and inform students and employees of its protections. The university's current process already fulfills the requirements for a process to investigate complaints about alleged intellectual diversity violations. The university will amend the Campus Free Speech Policy's Complaint Investigation, Hearing, and Resolution [Process](#) to reference the rights SB 1 affords to members of our community and describe how they can file a complaint. As required by the law, all current employees and students will be informed about SB 1 protections and related policies via email linking to the SB 1 website; through new employee materials; and in future student orientation materials.

SB 1 also requires ODHE to issue guidance on "the form and manner by which the state institution shall submit a policy or report to the chancellor when the institution is required to do so," that applies to this section of the law. Ohio State will closely evaluate this forthcoming guidance to determine if there are any additional reporting requirements related to this provision.

## **Partnerships with China**

SB 1 requires the university to develop processes and/or guidance for limiting gifts and donations from China and for evaluating and reporting academic partnerships with Chinese institutions. In alignment with federal guidance, the People's Republic of China (PRC) includes Hong Kong and Macau, but excludes Taiwan.

Minor updates will be made to the university's Gift Acceptance Policy to reflect SB 1's prohibition on gifts, donations, and contributions from the PRC. Additionally, faculty will no longer be allowed to accept federal funding from the PRC, including research grants from the National Natural Science Foundation of China. Under SB 1, there is an exemption for philanthropic and unrestricted grants as well as tuition from Chinese citizens from the prohibition. Screening processes are already in place to determine if a donation or gift is from the PRC government.

Academic partnerships have been defined internally as a formal agreement between Ohio State and an academic or research institution located in China. Of the types of agreements listed by Office of International Affairs (OIA), the workgroup determined that any new or renewed Memorandum of Agreement, Memorandum of Understanding, International Cooperative Graduate Degree Agreement, Service Agreement, Affiliation Agreement, and Student Exchange Agreement must be reported to the Chancellor of ODHE if the partnering academic or research institution is located in China. OIA will be responsible for reporting any new or renewed partnerships to the Chancellor.

The university is also ensuring the effectiveness of current safeguards in place to ensure compliance with SB 1 requirements related to conflicts of interest/commitment, export controls, visiting scholar agreements and foreign visitor processes.

## **Implementation guidance**

As shared previously, the university will provide comprehensive guidance regarding changes to programs, websites and materials required by SB 1. The guidance will be a web-based resource on the SB 1 website and will be continually updated as more detail is available leading up to and after the initial implementation date of June 27.

While this work is ongoing, we are providing language that can be placed on existing websites and news stories to indicate that Ohio State programs, events and activities, etc. are under review and that all programming at Ohio State is open to all without respect to a specified protected class. This interim measure will help signal that while content has not been removed or updated, we are actively working toward compliance with the law. It is not required to put language on news stories or other items that cover activities from before June 27, 2025, but this language is being provided in case there could be confusion about activities that occurred in the past.

- Website banner language: *Ohio State is in the process of revising websites and program materials to accurately reflect compliance with the law. While this work occurs, language referencing protected class status or other activities prohibited by Ohio Senate Bill 1 may still appear in some places. However, all programs and activities will be administered in compliance with the law as of June 27, 2025.*
- Storytelling banner language: *This article/story covers activity that took place before June 27, 2025, when Ohio Senate Bill 1 took effect.*
  - *To add after June 27, if needed: UNIT/COLLEGE has discontinued diversity, equity and inclusion activities in compliance with the law and is no longer doing/holding X.*

The university will continue to broadly communicate through On Campus and other channels when the website is updated with new information and guidance.