

DISCUSSION & REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- Historically, the Supreme Court has always given more latitude for first amendment free speech rights on college campuses. What did the Supreme Court mean when it ruled in 1957 that, “Teachers and students must always remain free to inquire ...otherwise, our civilization will stagnate and die?” Considering that students and instructors have so much freedom to express themselves, why do you think that so many constituents of the university system, especially students, wish to impinge on and severely limit that freedom?
- Mr. Lukianoff informs us that, “At the University of Delaware, students were forced to undergo ideological reeducation as part of the university’s compulsory student orientation program.” What do you think ‘ideological reeducation’ is, exactly? Mr. Lukianoff further explains that, “The program was described as “treatment” for students with incorrect attitudes and beliefs. Students were taught to adopt highly specific university-approved views on politics, race, sexuality, sociology, moral philosophy, and environmentalism.” Do you think that a university, or someone in the university, should be the arbiter of what a ‘correct’ attitude and belief is? Do you think that by imposing a progressive, liberal ideology onto its students that the University of Delaware is serving its students well? Doesn’t this agenda directly counter the Supreme Court’s protection of a student’s right to ‘remain free to inquire?’ Why or why not?
- Mr. Lukianoff explains that universities are instituting regulations and policies that ban expression protected under the first amendment by enforcing ‘speech codes,’ and that, “...These codes include polices that ban speech that administrators find ‘insulting,’ or ‘offensive’. One absurd code that appeared at multiple universities banned ‘inappropriately directed laughter,’” and another absurd example that, “Recently at the University of Central Arkansas you were subject to disciplinary action if you said or did something deemed annoying to another student.” How does coddling students who claim to feel ‘offended’ or ‘annoyed’ help prepare them for the ‘real world? Do you think that administrators should be able to limit students’ freedom of expression due to such a subjective standard? Why or why not? What standard do you think that the University of Central Arkansas uses to deem something ‘annoying?’ What do you think the chances are of that standard be evenly applied?
- Further, we learn from Mr. Lukianoff that campus censorship “...teaches students that they have a right not to be offended. The moment society says that people have the right not to be offended, it has announced the end of the right to free speech,” and “...teaches them [students] not to think critically lest they arrive at a conclusion or express a thought that might offend someone.” Do you think that people should have a ‘right’ to not be offended? Why or why not? Do you think that ‘not possibly offending someone’ should be so much more heavily weighted as a ‘right’ than the actual right to freedom of expression guaranteed by the Supreme Court? Why or why not? Isn’t the university doing more harm by conditioning students to not think critically than good by ‘protecting’ them from speech they might not like?
- Mr. Lukianoff warns, “The rights embodied in the First Amendment shape American society. They foster America’s religious and cultural pluralism, spur scientific and scholarly innovation, and thus secure our remarkable prosperity. But today’s universities with their censorship, speech codes, and political correctness are putting the future of this unique

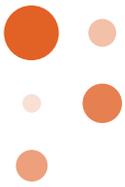
experiment in freedom at risk. This is the very opposite of what American Higher Education was founded to do.” Why do you think that so many in the university system value political correctness so much over free speech? What are the serious long-term consequences to American society of removing students right to remain ‘free to inquire?’

EXTEND THE LEARNING:

CASE STUDY: University of Delaware

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the article “University of Delaware Requires Students to Undergo Ideological Reeducation,” then answer the questions that follow.

- Which students did the University of Delaware target for imposing their ideology, and how did they do it? Why do you think that the University of Delaware felt compelled to actually coerce students rather than simply expose them to a particular set of beliefs?
- The RAs were given training and indoctrination of their own that included a codified version of progressive, politically correct nonsense, stating that, “[a] racist is one who is both privileged and socialized on the basis of race by a white supremacist (racist) system. The term applies to all white people (i.e., people of European descent) living in the United States, regardless of class, gender, religion, culture or sexuality.” What do you think would happen if an RA pointed out that not all white people are privileged or racist, and/or that non-whites can be racist too, and/or that even using such language in the materials was racist? What was so wrong, overall, about what the University of Delaware did? Why?
- The University of Delaware stated that one of its goals with this program was to have students achieve certain ‘competencies’ which included, “Students will recognize that systemic oppression exists in our society.” Do you think that this ‘reeducation’ program itself represented a systemic oppression of its own students, thus directly countering the exact problem the program claimed to be against? Why or why not? In what ways was this program damaging to students and their freedom?



QUIZ

THE LEAST FREE PLACE IN AMERICA

- 1. According to a study done by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, only ____ of college seniors strongly agreed with the question “Is it safe to hold unpopular positions on this campus?”**
 - a. 50%
 - b. 30%
 - c. 15%
 - d. 75%

- 2. What is speech code?**
 - a. A university regulation or policy that allows all students to speak freely.
 - b. A university regulation or policy that dictates proper grammar in speech.
 - c. A university regulation or policy that limits or bans expression, written or verbal, that is protected by the first amendment.
 - d. A university regulation or policy that ensures each student has the right to free speech.

- 3. In an extensive study by the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, they found that _____ of America’s top colleges maintain serious restrictions on written and verbal expressions that violate the First Amendment protections.**
 - a. 62%
 - b. 80%
 - c. 100%
 - d. 10%

- 4. Campus censorship teaches students:**
 - a. That they have the right not to be offended.
 - b. Poor intellectual habits.
 - c. That they have fewer rights than they actually have.
 - d. All of the above.

- 5. American Higher Education was founded to:**
 - a. Teach students to think critically.
 - b. Give students academic freedom and the right to express their opinions.
 - c. Keep students in line with a specific ideology.
 - d. Advance education.



QUIZ - ANSWER KEY

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<https://www.thefire.org/university-of-delaware-requires-students-to-undergo-ideological-reeducation/>

University of Delaware Requires Students to Undergo Ideological Reeducation

By [admin](#) October 30, 2007

NEWARK, Del., October 30, 2007—The University of Delaware subjects students in its residence halls to a shocking program of ideological reeducation that is referred to in the university's own materials as a "treatment" for students' incorrect attitudes and beliefs. The Orwellian program requires the approximately 7,000 students in Delaware's residence halls to adopt highly specific university-approved views on issues ranging from politics to race, sexuality, sociology, moral philosophy, and environmentalism. The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) is calling for the total dismantling of the program, which is a flagrant violation of students' rights to freedom of conscience and freedom from compelled speech.

"The University of Delaware's residence life education program is a grave intrusion into students' private beliefs," FIRE President Greg Lukianoff said. "The university has decided that it is not enough to expose its students to the values it considers important; instead, it must coerce its students into accepting those values as their own. At a public university like Delaware, this is both unconscionable and unconstitutional."

The university's views are forced on students through a comprehensive manipulation of the residence hall environment, from mandatory training sessions to "sustainability" door decorations. Students living in the university's eight housing complexes are required to attend training sessions, floor meetings, and one-on-one meetings with their Resident Assistants (RAs). The RAs who facilitate these meetings have received their own [intensive training](#) from the university, including a "diversity facilitation training" session at which RAs were taught, [among other things](#), that "[a] racist is one who is both privileged and socialized on the basis of race by a white supremacist (racist) system. The term applies to all white people (i.e., people of European descent) living in the United States, regardless of class, gender, religion, culture or sexuality."

The [university suggests](#) that at one-on-one sessions with students, RAs should ask intrusive personal questions such as "When did you discover your sexual identity?" Students who express discomfort with this type of questioning often meet with disapproval from their RAs, who write reports on these one-on-one sessions and deliver these reports to their superiors. One student identified in a write-up as an RA's "worst" one-on-one session was a young woman who stated that she was tired of having "diversity shoved down her throat."

According to the [program's materials](#), the goal of the residence life education program is for students in the university's residence halls to achieve certain "competencies" that

the university has decreed its students must develop in order to achieve the overall educational goal of “citizenship.” These competencies include: “Students will recognize that systemic oppression exists in our society,” “Students will recognize the benefits of dismantling systems of oppression,” and “Students will be able to utilize their knowledge of sustainability to change their daily habits and consumer mentality.”

At various points in the program, students are also pressured or even required to take actions that outwardly indicate their agreement with the university’s ideology, regardless of their personal beliefs. Such actions include displaying specific door decorations, committing to reduce their ecological footprint by at least 20%, taking action by advocating for an “oppressed” social group, and taking action by advocating for a “sustainable world.”

In the Office of Residence Life’s internal materials, these programs are described using the harrowing language of ideological reeducation. In [documents](#) relating to the assessment of student learning, for example, the residence hall lesson plans are referred to as “treatments.”

In a [letter](#) sent yesterday to University of Delaware President Patrick Harker, FIRE pointed out the stark contradiction between the residence life education program and the values of a free society. FIRE’s letter to President Harker also underscored the University of Delaware’s legal obligation to abide by the First Amendment. FIRE reminded Harker of the Supreme Court’s decision in *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette* (1943), a case decided during World War II that remains the law of the land. Justice Robert H. Jackson, writing for the Court, declared, “If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion or force citizens to confess by word or act their faith therein.”

“The fact that the university views its students as patients in need of treatment for some sort of moral sickness betrays a total lack of respect not only for students’ basic rights, but for students themselves,” Lukianoff said. “The University of Delaware has both a legal and a moral obligation to immediately dismantle this program, and FIRE will not rest until it has.”

FIRE is a nonprofit educational foundation that unites civil rights and civil liberties leaders, scholars, journalists, and public intellectuals across the political and ideological spectrum on behalf of individual rights, due process rights, freedom of expression, and rights of conscience on our campuses. FIRE would like to thank the Delaware Association of Scholars (DAS) for its invaluable assistance in this case. FIRE’s efforts to preserve liberty at the University of Delaware and elsewhere can be seen by visiting www.thefire.org.

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<https://www.thefire.org/cases/university-of-delaware-students-required-to-undergo-ideological-reeducation/>

University of Delaware: Students Required to Undergo Ideological Reeducation

Category: [Freedom of Conscience](#)

Schools: [University of Delaware](#)

Following an intense campaign led by FIRE and national media attention, the University of Delaware dropped an ideological reeducation program that was referred to in the university's own materials as a "treatment" for students' incorrect attitudes and beliefs. The program's stated goal was for the approximately 7,000 students in Delaware's residence halls to adopt highly specific university-approved views on politics, race, sexuality, sociology, moral philosophy, and environmentalism. The residence life education program made mandatory, among other things, one-on-one meetings between students and their Resident Assistants (RAs) where students were asked intrusive questions, such as "When did you discover your sexual identity?" FIRE informed the school that forcing university views on students through this comprehensive manipulation of the residence hall environment was morally repugnant as well as unconstitutional, a clear assault on individuals' freedom of conscience. With the assistance of the Delaware Association of Scholars, FIRE quickly persuaded former President Harker to eliminate the program. Since that initial victory, however, there have been continued attempts to reinstate the coercive elements of the ResLife program.