

FAS Senate

AN ELECTED BODY OF THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND
SCIENCES
YALE UNIVERSITY

April 28, 2022

Yale Faculty Senate Resolution on Educational Gag Orders
Approved by the FAS Senate on April 28, 2022

WHEREAS, the Senate of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences of Yale University (FASS) was established as an elected representative body by a vote of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences;

WHEREAS across the United States, state legislative proposals are being introduced to limit discussions of racism and LGBTQI discrimination. Focusing on limiting the teaching of “divisive concepts”, these laws restrict education both about historical facts, and as subject matter for multiple theoretical disciplines and approaches that grapple with these realities, past and present;

WHEREAS, academic freedom is defined by the American Association of University Professors as “the freedom of a teacher or researcher in higher education to investigate and discuss the issues in his or her academic field, and to teach or publish findings without interference from political figures, boards of trustees, donors, or other entities.”

WHEREAS it is not possible to teach history or many other subjects without encountering “divisive concepts”, concepts that include white supremacy and Nazism, and to excise such concepts from the historical curriculum is, in the words of W.E.B. Du Bois: “to transform history into propaganda”, a transformation incompatible with the knowledge- and truth-driven mission of the university;

WHEREAS academic freedom includes the freedom to teach a wide variety of theoretical approaches;

WHEREAS Legislation that limits the ability of educators to draw on theoretical approaches addressing social inequalities is a clear and blatant violation of academic freedom;

WHEREAS educating about systemic barriers to realizing a multiracial democracy based on race or gender should be understood as central to the active and engaged pursuit of knowledge in the 21st century to produce engaged and informed citizens;

THEREFORE, the FAS Senate of Yale University resolves as follows:

We stand in frank and full opposition to any and all attempts to restrict or dictate university curriculum on any matter, including matters related to racial and social justice.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED

That we stand in solidarity with educators throughout the country who may be affected by this pernicious legislation, which is so inimical to the fostering of critical thought and the knowledge required to be a free self-governing people.