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# Secular universities now demand a ‘profession of faith’

By **Christian Schneider**  
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Royce Hall on the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) campus.

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Many religious universities have historically used “statements of faith” to uphold their religious mission. But while such policies are on the wane, a different sort of religious statement is increasingly common at secular colleges — namely, the statement of diversity.

Professors and other faculty members are asked to pledge their commitment to “equity” and “inclusion” and to demonstrate how they have acted to fulfill this

pledge in the past. And much as with the religious version, the goal of these policies is to ensure uniformity of belief.

Consider the University of California, Los Angeles. To be considered for tenure-track positions, applicants are required to write a full statement outlining their commitment to diversity. According to UCLA guidelines, the extent to which a professor promotes equity, diversity and inclusion is a key factor in making progress on the tenure track.

Promoting these ideals “is inseparable from how the University of California conceives of ‘merit,’” the school says. UC Riverside, UC San Diego and UC Berkeley all require similar diversity statements.

At Vassar, tenure-track candidates have to report their “contributions to social justice.” Applicants at the University of Minnesota-Duluth must “demonstrate ability to support the university’s commitment to equity and diversity.” Vanderbilt, the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Washington and the University of Nebraska all instruct their professors on how to write -effective diversity statements.

Many schools have instituted other systems to promote the latest woke ideologies. At Villanova University, a new policy asks students to rate their teachers on whether they have demonstrated “cultural awareness” and created an “environment free of bias based on individual differences or social identities.” Faculty at Harvard’s School of Engineering and Applied Sciences were recently required to submit reports detailing their actions in support of “diversity, inclusion and belonging.” Teachers’ ability to demonstrate wokeness will affect the assignment of future bonuses, per the school’s dean.

City middle schools radically reshaped admissions offers after diversity push  
Parents say Richard Carranza calls them racist for opposing diversity program  
'Educational genocide': NYC schools are leaving black and Hispanic students behind

Trump campaign adviser asks how many black people worked for Lincoln  
Strangely, groups that often take Christian colleges to task over their statements of faith are silent on the pernicious effects of the secular -variety. In 2016, for example, when Wheaton College in Illinois fired a faculty member for expressing views that ran afoul of its theological beliefs, the American Political Science Association called into question the school’s “commitment to academic freedom.” Yet the APSA, which itself has a department dedicated to diversity, hasn’t publicly weighed in on whether forcing faculty to sign -diversity statements infringes their freedom of expression.

Such concerns are valid, because the statements of diversity are vague in the extreme. Left unsaid is what, exactly, “diversity” means and how to achieve it. Does the commitment to diversity mean giving extra help to minority students? Does it mean speaking out in favor of tenure for transgender faculty, even if they haven’t earned it on the merits? Or is simply providing a classroom where students are free to learn enough to satisfy the -requirement?

There’s also a concern that the push for diversity only extends so far, excluding the ideological variety that is arguably most important for a college education. Conservative-leaning teachers know the commitment to diversity rarely extends

to ideological diversity. And given universities' growing insistence that students anonymously report professors for any perceived "micro-aggression," right-leaning professors have ample reason to fear they will be targeted for punishment.

Individual professors are straining to make their voices heard.

"Requiring such statements in applications for appointments and promotions is an affront to academic freedom," tweeted Jeffrey Flier, a distinguished professor of physiology and medicine at Harvard. The requirement "diminishes the true value of diversity, equity [and] inclusion by trivializing it." Portland State philosophy professor Peter Boghossian, who considers himself a liberal, argues that the new regime uses "'diversity' to mean 'homogeneity of opinion.'"

It remains to be seen whether and how professors will be punished under these statements of faith. Perhaps some may soon be forced to part ways with their colleges. Progressive exiles from conservative Christian institutions -can land cushy jobs in secular universities. It's doubtful the diversity apostates will be similarly blessed.

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