

Senate Bill 1 Compliance Overview

PRESENTATION TALKING POINTS

Overview (Slides 1 and 2):

- The Advance Higher Education Act (SB 1) took effect June 27, 2025.
- A university-wide committee has engaged with students, faculty and staff to develop implementation guidance.
- The SB 1 Implementation Committee launched a website where you can find a timeline and comprehensive information about provisions and policies.
- Visit: go.osu.edu/SB1.
 - o In addition to housing all university guidance on SB 1 compliance, the website contains a news and updates section to more easily track what has recently been updated as well as all communications issued throughout the implementation process and beyond.

What SB 1 does NOT do (Slide 3):

- Academic freedom is a core value at Ohio State. This covers all aspects of intellectual endeavor – including faculty, instructors and GTAs.
- SB 1 does not restrict the freedom of faculty to teach, conduct research or publish research findings or to discuss in classrooms, in their own manner, any material that is relevant to the subject matter as defined in the course syllabus.
- SB 1 also does not prohibit controversial issues from being discussed in class, though it does require the university to “ensure the fullest degree of intellectual diversity” to allow students to reach their own conclusions.
- We’ll get into more detail about the intellectual diversity provisions later in the presentation, but I want to reinforce that academic freedom precedes any of these other provisions.
- Be sure to review the university’s academic rights and responsibility resources: <https://oaa.osu.edu/resources/academic-rights-and-responsibilities>.
- If you hear direction to change anything in your courses or instruction that contradicts these policies, please confirm with your college leadership before taking action.

What does SB 1 do? (Slide 4)

- The law has broad requirements for programs, operations and policies at Ohio's public universities, including Ohio State.
- 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.

Institutional Neutrality (Slide 5)

- SB 1 prevents universities from taking institutional positions on controversial political or global matters that extend beyond the university's operations.
- While this is largely consistent with the Philosophy on Institutional and Leadership Statements, the university made some updates to the philosophy, originally adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2023, in order to comply with SB 1.
- None of the revisions and clarifications change the main tenets of the philosophy, and the philosophy does not apply to academic teaching and research activities.

Intellectual Diversity (Slide 6)

- SB 1 does not prohibit controversial issues from being discussed in classes but requires the university to "ensure the fullest degree of intellectual diversity" 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 group faculty, staff and students representing multiple disciplines, colleges and units developed a standard, required syllabus statement.

Classroom Discussion (Slide 7)

- FAQs are available to help explain what is and is not permitted under the law.
- Best Practices (on slide)

Additional Policies (Slide 8)

- SB 1 requires the Board of Trustees to enact and update several policies, including faculty annual review, post-tenure review process and updated workload policies.
- Annual Review
 - o An updated interim policy has been approved by the Board of Trustees and went into effect August 25, 2025.
 - o OAA has released [guidance and a required annual review template](#).
- Post-Tenure Review
 - o A new track of the Faculty Rule 3335-5-04 disciplinary process was developed in consultation with Senate leadership to meet the statutory requirements, and the new rule and process (which are incorporated into Faculty Rule 3335-5-04.5) will be referenced in the updated [Faculty Annual Review, Post-Tenure Review and Reappointment policy](#).
- Faculty Workload Guidelines
 - o SB 1's faculty workload policy requirements are largely covered in the university's preexisting Faculty Workload Guidelines. These guidelines will be updated to include some additional items and referenced in the existing Faculty Appointments policy.
 - o OAA reviews and approves each unit-level workload structure, which is integrated into each unit's Pattern of Administration.
 - o OAA's review is triggered every time a new academic leader (dean and chair/director) is appointed or reappointed.
 - o Target reviews can also accelerate the incorporation of new elements.

DEI Prohibitions (Slide 9)

- SB 1 includes broad prohibitions on DEI, which is not defined in SB 1.
- The law defines "protected class" as race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or religion.
- These prohibitions do not restrict the freedom of faculty to teach, conduct research and publish research findings or to discuss in classrooms, in their own manner, any material that is relevant to the subject matter within an academic discipline as defined in the course syllabus.

Protected Class Prohibitions (Slide 10)

- Anything that is “for” or “intended to benefit” or “especially appropriate for” one or more protected class groups is prohibited by SB 1, specifically:
 - o Any orientation or training course regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion.
 - o Diversity, equity, and inclusion offices or departments.
 - o Using diversity, equity, and inclusion in job descriptions.
 - o Titles/positions of Chief Diversity Officer or Diversity Officer.
 - o Contracting with anyone whose role is or would be to promote admissions, hiring, or promotion based on the specified protected classes.
 - o New scholarships that use diversity, equity, and inclusion in any manner.
 - o Merely changing the name of any DEI office, department, orientation, training, or position while continuing to “serve the same or similar purposes,” or use “the same or similar means.”
- ODHE released its formal guidance and posted some of the required forms for the state-administered process for **exceptions** in SB 1.
 - o Ohio State is finalizing the internal steps required before submitting an exception request to ODHE and will share that information when available.
 - o No exception requests may be submitted to ODHE without following Ohio State’s internal process first.
 - o Until Ohio State’s internal process is in place, please review the information ODHE is sharing and begin gathering what you may need.

Complaint and Reporting Process (Slide 11)

- SB 1 requires the university to address complaints alleging SB1 violations in the same manner as alleged violations of the **Campus Free Speech policy**.
- The university created **an SB1 complaint process** that mirrors the **campus free speech complaint process**, references the rights SB 1 affords to members of our community and describes 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 and through new employee materials and student orientation materials.

Political and Ideological Restrictions in Hiring and Admissions (Slide 12)

- 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 Offices of Human Resources, Academic Affairs, and Legal Affairs have also worked to review and update faculty and staff hiring processes to reflect the additional requirements in these sections.

Partnerships with China (Slide 13)

- 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 were made to the university's Gift Acceptance Policy to reflect SB1's prohibition on gifts, donations, and contributions from the PRC.
- Faculty are no longer allowed to accept federal funding from the PRC, including research grants from the National Natural Science Foundation of China.
- Academic partnerships have been defined internally as a formal agreement between Ohio State and an academic or research institution located in China.
- 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.

Additional Provisions (Slide 14)

- **Invited Speakers**
 - o SB 1 requires Ohio State to share a list of speakers who were invited to participate in university-sponsored events and were paid speaker fees, honoraria, or other emoluments more than \$500 in the past month.
 - o Events sponsored by registered student organizations are not included in the list, consistent with state law.
 - o This process is being managed by Business and Finance with partnership from fiscal officers in colleges and units.
 - o This information is being posted on the SB 1 Compliance website on a monthly basis.
- **Statement of Commitment**
 - o SB 1 requires Ohio State to include a legislatively defined “Statement of Commitment” anywhere the university mission statement appears.
 - o As required, the statement is included in all offers of admission to students and offers of employment to faculty.
- **Low-Enrollment Degrees**
 - o The Office of Academic Affairs is working with colleges that offer degrees which fall under the law’s provisions to explore options around restructuring, realignment or potential elimination.
 - o Current students in any degree program that may be eliminated will be able to finish their degree.
 - o A process will be created to review degree enrollments annually.

2026 Provisions (Slide 15)

- Syllabi
 - o Requires that syllabi for each course offered for undergraduate credit is posted and publicly accessible. During spring semester, a group of faculty will pilot the recommended technology to allow for this to occur in a uniform way.
- Required American government or history course
 - o Requires that all students in undergraduate degree programs complete a three-credit hour course in the subject of American civic literacy.
 - o Begins with graduates in spring 2030.

Resources (Slide 16)

- Office of Faculty Affairs/Office hours
 - o Throughout the AU25 semester, the Office of Faculty Affairs will hold a series of open office hours for faculty and instructors to answer questions on a variety of academic and instructional topics, including SB 1. Each session will include representatives from Faculty Affairs, the Drake Institute for Teaching and Learning, and the Center for Ethics and Human Values. These sessions are open to all faculty and instructors, including graduate teaching associates.
 - o Office hours (more information and dates for the entire semester: <https://oaa.osu.edu/news/2025/08/20/facultyinstructor-resources-and-support>)
 - **Faculty/Instructor Open Office Hours**
August 29, 2025 | 1:00 - 3:00 pm
 - **Faculty/Instructor Open Office Hours**
September 5, 2025 | 1:00 - 3:00 pm
 - **Faculty/Instructor Open Office Hours**
September 12, 2025 | 1:00 - 3:00 pm
 - **Faculty/Instructor Open Office Hours**
September 19, 2025 | 1:00 - 3:00 pm
 - **Faculty/Instructor Open Office Hours**
September 26, 2025 | 1:00 - 3:00 pm
- SB 1 Compliance website – will be updated as new information or additional guidance is developed
- One-pager
- Center for Ethics and Human Values – guide for facilitating civil discourse in the classroom – with SB 1 intellectual diversity considerations
- Drake Institute for Teaching and Learning

Questions? (Slide 17)