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# CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY

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## Testimony Before

Higher Education and Workforce Development Subcommittee of the  
House Committee on Education and the Workforce  
United States House of Representatives

Hearing on “Divisive, Excessive, Ineffective: The Real Impact of DEI on College Campuses”

**March 7, 2024**

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Chairman Owens, Ranking Member Wilson, and Members of the Subcommittee,

My name is Jay Greene. I am a senior research fellow at the Heritage Foundation. Before joining Heritage, I was Distinguished Professor of Education Policy at the University of Arkansas. The views I express in this testimony are my own and should not be construed as representing any official position of The Heritage Foundation.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, or DEI, may sound like a set of benign values. But in practice university DEI bureaucracies advance a worldview that undermines diversity, promotes exclusion, and opposes the equal treatment of individuals based on merit.

These DEI bureaucracies have grown quite large and powerful. In a recent report, my co-author, James Paul, and I analyzed the number of DEI staff at 65 universities that were members of Power 5 athletic conferences. We found that the average university had 45 DEI bureaucrats, or more than 1 for every 33 tenure-track faculty members.<sup>1</sup>

DEI bureaucrats are not professors engaged in the primary academic functions of teaching or research. Instead, they articulate and enforce an ideological orthodoxy on contested matters of race and sex. Rather than foster inquiry and debate in search of the truth, as universities have traditionally done,

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<sup>1</sup> Jay P. Greene and James D. Paul, “Diversity University: DEI Bloat in the Academy,” Heritage Foundation Backgrounder, No. 3641, July 27, 2021. <https://www.heritage.org/education/report/diversity-university-dei-bloat-the-academy>

DEI bureaucracies are designed to stifle inquiry and end debate with the ostensible purpose of protecting marginalized populations.

As the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education describes their own goals, they seek to build “a system of shared beliefs, values, norms, habits, and assumptions to advance EDI efforts.”<sup>2</sup> Bureaucratically enforced ideological orthodoxies like these “shared beliefs” may be desirable for religious organizations or political parties, but they are not appropriate for universities.

Even worse, the radicalism of DEI orthodoxies makes them more like those of cults than religious organizations or more like revolutionary movements than those of political parties. DEI orthodoxies are informed by Critical Race Theory and tend to divide people into oppressor and oppressed categories based on their group identities.<sup>3</sup> According to this worldview, oppressors deserve to have their privilege taken away while the oppressed deserve restitution for collective or historic wrongs. Justifying unequal treatment based on group identity can yield horrific results. We’ve particularly seen this in the recent spike of antisemitism on college campuses. If classification of a group as oppressor or oppressed is determined by its over or under-representation, the relatively high rate of Jews in universities supports their classification as oppressors. This is then used to justify imposing limits on opportunities for Jews in the name of equity. And harsh treatment of Jews can be justified as stripping them of “privilege.”

Protesters on college campuses chanting antisemitic slogans are not just using the language promoted by DEI, we have also unfortunately seen DEI officials actively involved in promoting hatred toward Jews. Their professional commitment to inclusion apparently does not extend to Jews.

These are not isolated incidents. James Paul and I analyzed the Twitter accounts of 741 university DEI staff to gauge their attitudes toward Israel and, for comparison, toward China.<sup>4</sup> We found that university DEI staff are obsessed with Israel and display such vehement hostility toward the Jewish state that it clearly crosses the line into serious antisemitism. DEI staff tweet almost 3 times as often about Israel as they do about China. When DEI staff tweet about Israel, 96% of those tweets were critical of the Jewish state, while 62% of their tweets regarding China were actually favorable toward that communist country.

This obsessive hatred toward Israel was evident not only in the disproportionate hostility DEI staff display toward Israel, but also in the excessive language typically used to criticize the Jewish state. DEI staff often used terms like apartheid, colonialism, genocide, and ethnic cleansing when discussing Israel.

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<sup>2</sup> “Standards of Professional Practice for Chief Diversity Officers in Higher Education 2.0,” National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education, March 2020.

<https://nadohe.memberclicks.net/assets/2020SPPI/ NADOHE%20SPP2.0 200131 FinalFormatted.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> “A Framework for Advancing Anti-Racism Strategy on Campus,” National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education, November 2021. <https://nadohe.memberclicks.net/assets/2023/NADOHE%20Anti-Racism%20Framework%20-%20Accessible.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Jay P. Greene and James D. Paul, “Inclusion Delusion: The Antisemitism of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Staff at Universities,” Heritage Foundation Backgrounder, No. 3676, December 8, 2021.

<https://www.heritage.org/education/report/inclusion-delusion-the-antisemitism-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-staff>

DEI has not only exacerbated hostility toward Jews, it has also generally inflamed racial tensions on campus. According to surveys administered at several universities, students report that campus climate is worse at universities with larger DEI bureaucracies. For example, the students at the University of Michigan, with 163 DEI staff, report being less satisfied with campus climate than those at Mississippi State, with only 12 DEI officers.<sup>5</sup>

According to Mark Perry’s analysis for *The College Fix*, the University of Michigan spends more than \$30 million per year on DEI for which it has experienced no improvement in racial climate.<sup>6</sup> A Claremont Institute analysis found that Texas A&M University spent more than \$11 million per year on DEI before state legislation dismantled DEI, and yet the percentage of black students reporting that they feel like they belong dropped from 82% in 2015 to 55% in 2020.<sup>7</sup> Annual DEI costs at many universities are in the tens of millions each year -- with Ohio State University spending more than \$20 million and the University of Wisconsin spending more than \$16 million – with nothing to show for these expenditures.<sup>8</sup>

Compliance with the civil rights obligations of universities can be done without gigantic DEI bureaucracies. Given that DEI has no legitimate purpose, wastes taxpayer money, and serves to inflame inter-group tensions, we need to dismantle it. At a minimum we need to starve universities of the funds that they use to build DEI bureaucracies.

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<sup>5</sup> Jay P. Greene and James D. Paul, “Diversity University: DEI Bloat in the Academy,” Heritage Foundation Backgrounder, No. 3641, July 27, 2021. <https://www.heritage.org/education/report/diversity-university-dei-bloat-the-academy>

<sup>6</sup> Jennifer Kabbany, “UMich now has more than 500 jobs dedicated to DEI, payroll costs exceed \$30 million,” *The College Fix*, January 9, 2024. <https://www.thecollegefix.com/umich-now-has-more-than-500-jobs-dedicated-to-dei-payroll-costs-exceed-30-million/>

<sup>7</sup> Steven McGuire, “How one college spends more than \$30M on 241 DEI staffers ... and the damage it does to kids,” *New York Post*, January 11, 2024. <https://nypost.com/2024/01/11/opinion/dei-boondoggle-costs-us-millions-and-harms-students-it-claims-to-help/>

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

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TABLE 1

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Personnel at Major Universities**

	University	DEI Personnel		University	DEI Personnel		University	DEI Personnel
1	Michigan	163	23	Louisville	50	44	Washington St.	32
2	Virginia	94	23	Penn St.	50	45	Clemson	31
2	Ohio St.	94	25	Oregon	49	45	Alabama	31
4	California	86	25	UCLA	49	45	Florida St.	31
5	Virginia Tech	83	27	Iowa St.	47	48	Florida	29
6	Stanford	80	28	Texas A&M	46	49	Arizona St.	28
7	Illinois	71	<b>AVERAGE</b>		<b>45.1</b>	50	Kansas St.	27
7	Maryland	71	29	Texas	45	50	Kansas	27
9	Syracuse	65	30	NC State	44	52	Oregon St.	26
10	Colorado	62	31	Purdue	43	52	Oklahoma St.	26
11	Utah	60	32	Texas Tech	42	52	Kentucky	26
11	Washington	60	33	Georgia Tech	41	52	Notre Dame	26
13	Arizona	59	34	USC	39	56	Mississippi	25
13	Iowa	59	35	Georgia	38	57	Wake Forest	24
15	Duke	57	35	Vanderbilt	38	58	Miami	23
15	Minnesota	57	37	Missouri	37	58	South Carolina	23
15	Wisconsin	57	37	Nebraska	37	60	Arkansas	21
18	North Carolina	53	37	LSU	37	61	West Virginia	20
18	Rutgers	53	40	Tennessee	36	61	Auburn	20
20	Northwestern	52	41	Oklahoma	35	63	Mississippi St.	12
21	Indiana	51	42	Pittsburgh	34	64	Texas Christian	7
21	Michigan St.	51	42	Boston College	34	64	Baylor	7

SOURCE: Author's research.

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### DEI Personnel per 100 Faculty

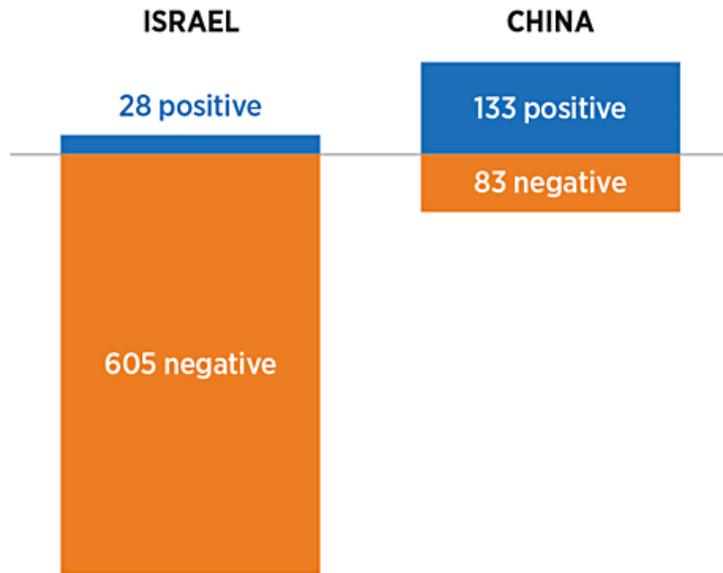
	University	DEI Personnel	Faculty	DEI per 100 Faculty
1	Syracuse	65	884	7.4
2	Virginia	94	1,454	6.5
3	Oregon	49	796	6.2
4	California	86	1,402	6.1
5	Michigan	163	2,827	5.8
6	Virginia Tech	83	1,490	5.6
7	Boston College	34	619	5.5
8	Stanford	80	1,502	5.3
8	Louisville	50	943	5.3
10	Maryland	71	1,372	5.2
11	Colorado	62	1,212	5.1
12	Georgia Tech	41	852	4.8
13	Vanderbilt	38	816	4.7
14	Iowa	59	1,326	4.4
15	North Carolina	53	1,278	4.1
15	Missouri	37	903	4.1
17	Illinois	71	1,777	4
18	Kansas St.	27	697	3.9
19	Iowa St.	47	1,224	3.8
19	Washington St.	32	834	3.8
19	Arizona	59	1,547	3.8
19	Northwestern	52	1,367	3.8
19	LSU	37	975	3.8
19	Ohio St.	94	2,484	3.8
19	Texas Tech	42	1,116	3.8
26	Utah	60	1,618	3.7
26	Oklahoma	35	944	3.7
28	Indiana	51	1,418	3.6
29	Nebraska	37	1,059	3.5
30	Duke	57	1,676	3.4
30	Wake Forest	24	710	3.4
<b>AVERAGE</b>		<b>45.1</b>	<b>1,341</b>	<b>3.4</b>
32	Clemson	31	950	3.3

	University	DEI Personnel	Faculty	DEI per 100 Faculty
33	NC State	44	1,377	3.2
33	Tennessee	36	1,132	3.2
35	Rutgers	53	1,687	3.1
35	Alabama	31	1,005	3.1
37	Oklahoma St.	26	864	3
37	Oregon St.	26	871	3
39	Wisconsin	57	1,949	2.9
39	Notre Dame	26	892	2.9
41	UCLA	49	1,774	2.8
41	Michigan St.	51	1,851	2.8
43	Mississippi	25	940	2.7
44	Florida St.	31	1,172	2.6
44	Minnesota	57	2,171	2.6
44	USC	39	1,494	2.6
44	Arkansas	21	806	2.6
48	Texas	45	1,795	2.5
48	Purdue	43	1,751	2.5
50	Georgia	38	1,647	2.3
50	Kansas	27	1,180	2.3
50	Miami	23	1,018	2.3
53	Texas A&M	46	2,079	2.2
53	West Virginia	20	923	2.2
55	Pittsburgh	34	1,616	2.1
55	South Carolina	23	1,114	2.1
55	Washington	60	2,910	2.1
58	Arizona St.	28	1,383	2
59	Auburn	20	1,070	1.9
60	Kentucky	26	1,505	1.7
60	Mississippi St.	12	720	1.7
60	Penn St.	50	3,027	1.7
63	Texas Christian	7	466	1.5
64	Florida	29	2,178	1.3
65	Baylor	7	702	1

CHART 1

## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Staff Tweets about Israel and China

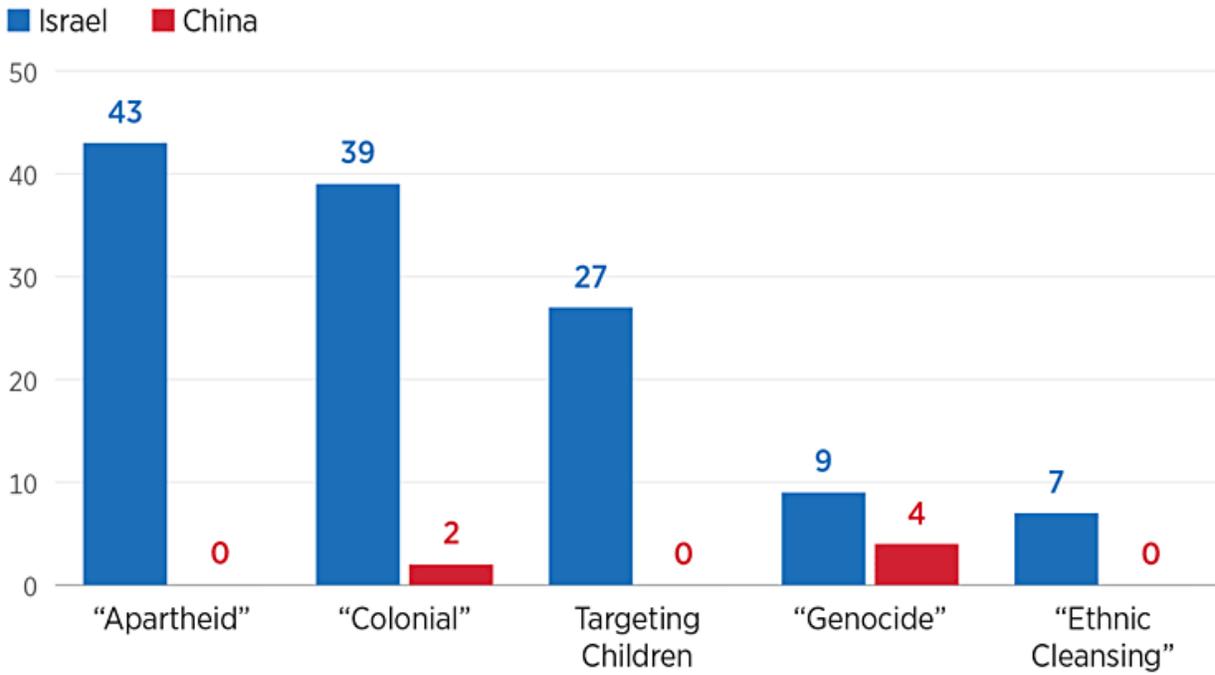
**SOURCE:** Authors' calculations based on search of 741 Twitter accounts belonging to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion staff members at U.S. universities. For more information, see the methodology.



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CHART 2

## Frequency of Terms Found in Tweets by DEI Staff Members at Major Universities



**SOURCE:** Authors' calculations based on search of 741 Twitter accounts belonging to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion staff members at U.S. universities. For more information, see the methodology.

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