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## UDel Tolerance 'Treatments' Come Under FIRE

By: Joe Murray , The Bulletin

A controversial program requiring students living in university housing at the University of Delaware to undergo diversity training and tolerance treatments has caused one civil rights organization to publicly demand the program, which it labeled "ideological re-education," to be dismantled.

"The University of Delaware's residence life education program is a grave intrusion into students' private beliefs," stated Greg Lukianoff, president of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE). Arguing the program is unconstitutional, Mr. Lukianoff explained, "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."

The program, which is run by the university's office of Residence Life, is a curricular study in which students are required to adopt university-sanctioned views on personal issues such as race, sexual orientation, morality and environmentalism.

The program's training document defines a racist as "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 program concludes that under this definition, "people of color cannot be racists ... ."

Students are also asked questions about when they discovered their racial and/or sexual identities and required to publicly demonstrate they have adopted the university's views on such issues by either advocating for an "oppressed" group or taking action to create a "sustainable world." Students resisting such tasks or expressing concern about diversity training are written up as being the "worst" subjects and their responses are shared with supervisors in the office of Resident Life.

While there is no specific penalty for student's failure to cooperate, Samantha Harris, legal director for FIRE, argues the university's policy of sharing the responses of non-conformists potentially results in the shunning of such students.

"Students are concerned their responses to such questions may be shared with (Resident Life) supervisors," stated Ms. Harris. The civil rights advocate also points out the university makes it known they expect students to attend these meetings.

"They (students) are simply told by (resident assistants) they have to make-up these sessions, either with another group or one-on-one with a RA," stated Ms. Harris. "We know for a fact RA's have told students these (sessions) are mandatory." Ms. Harris is also concerned about the clinical nature of these programs, especially because informed consent is absent.

In its internal memorandums, the university labels the program a "treatment," writing, "A researcher must document that the treatment/intervention was faithfully applied," and makes it a point to research whether the program's curriculum is changing the attitude and behavior of the subject student.

University officials did not return phone calls from The Bulletin.

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