

From: Ciara Warden [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, July 12, 2021 11:21 AM
To: Timothy Clare; Jack Stark; Elizabeth O'Connor; Robert Schafer; Paul Kenney; Robert Phares; Barbara Weitz
Subject: CRT Vote

Non-NU Email

Dear Board:

As an independent clinical Social Worker and PhD student of UNO, I am requesting that the NU Board of Regents formally rebuke Regent Jim Pillen and motion to indefinitely postpone a vote on his resolution which seeks to ban the use of the Critical Race Theory (CRT) framework in NU classrooms.

It is made clear in the conflicting points in Regent Pillen's resolution that he does not have a clear understanding of what CRT is and how it is used pedagogically. Removing the framework of CRT would irreparably damage NU's college departments' ability to effectively instruct our student body on Social Justice, one of the 12 tenets of Social Work and an invaluable concept when learning how to effectively work with people in the community.

Furthermore, your own Grace Abbott Social Work (GASSW) department would be put at risk of losing their Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accreditation, an accreditation held continuously since 1940, as they would be unable to effectively teach one of their nine Competencies, Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice.

The loss of this accreditation would certainly critically damage the program, the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO), and the NU system. GASSW instructs students on the UNO, University of Nebraska-Kearney (UNK) and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) campuses. A large majority of their graduates choose to stay in Nebraska, providing critical services not only in the Omaha metro and Lincoln areas, but also in our smaller cities and towns that would not have access to these licensed and degreed professionals without our program. If this resolution is passed, these crucial services will slowly become unavailable, and Nebraskans statewide will suffer for it. Finally, GASSW is one of the fastest growing departments in CPACS and brings in significant revenue for the university.

Regent Pillen's assertion that, "we oppose discrimination in any form" is a core tenant of Social Work, and something that everyone who identifies as a Social Worker lives by. However, his resolution seeks to accomplish the opposite. It aims to silence the voices of those that have been systemically and socially discriminated against. It tries to marginalize and erase the generational experiences of millions of our fellow Americans. I invite Regent Pillen to first discuss with us CRT and its pedagogical uses before he seeks to critically destabilize one of the programs that he has been elected to protect.

Thank you,

Ciara Warden, LISW

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UNO Gerontology PhD Student