

# The American Conservative

## ‘Oppression Studies’ Liberates Trump

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Robby Soave highlights a perfectly horrible proposal that may become policy at American University. Excerpt:

Members of the Washington, D.C.-based private university’s faculty are engaged in the process of “reimagining” the university’s core curriculum: the courses that all students, regardless of major, must take in order to graduate. Core curriculums are a way for universities to make sure that everyone on campus absorbs a common set of skills and values deemed fundamental to a liberal arts education—they often include basic instruction in writing, history, and mathematical reasoning, for instance. American plans to modernize its curriculum by 2017, and has convened a task force of professors to complete the process. A draft of their proposed curriculum is available [here](#).

Under the proposal, the new core curriculum would require students to enroll in several worrisome courses that the Cato Institute’s Walter Olson has [astutely labeled](#) “oppression studies.” The task force calls them “Complex Problems” and “AU Experience,” but “oppression studies” is certainly the more fitting name. From the draft:

Although many Complex Problems courses will draw heavily on the social sciences (in the analysis of such issues as inequality, social violence, and health care access), others will be grounded in the sciences (climate change, dementia) or arts and humanities (art and politics, post-colonial expression).

The AU Experience courses are similarly one-note, and will pay “special attention to issues of diversity, inclusion, and community.” Reading assignments, according to the draft, will focus on “oppression and resistance,” “historical violence, such as the early slave trade and genocidal conquests,” and the “experiences of marginalized groups and struggles for human rights.” For good measure, course materials will fixate on “how entrenched systems of inequality marginalize some groups and privilege others.”

This is not to say these aren't important and fascinating topics—they are, and students should study them, if they want to. But it's one thing to make these courses available to students who have an interest in explicitly left-wing topics. It's quite another to require the study of a specific viewpoint and subjugate all other academic concerns.

And that's just the beginning. The proposal also calls for a dramatic—and mildly terrifying—transformation of life in the residence halls. No longer will students shack up together at random: instead, AU would assign students to particular housing based on which “oppression studies” courses they are taking.

Read the whole thing. Seriously, you need to. This has a lot to do with why people support Trump. They know that the academic elites despise them and their culture, and are going to try to educate their children into hating themselves and their culture. Can Trump stop AU or any other university from doing this? Of course not, and we would not want to live in a country where POTUS has that kind of power. But a vote for Trump is a vote against the class that's doing this p.c. indoctrination. They know that Trump doesn't give a rat's rear end about p.c. — and they love that about him. Shoot, when I read the Robby Soave piece, my knee-jerk response was, “Give 'em hell, Trump!”

Understand: that is not a good *reason* to vote for Trump, but put it in context of a new AP poll showing that over 60 percent of Americans have **little or no confidence** in the political establishment's ability to solve the nation's problems. How much confidence do you have in the educational establishment's ability to solve our educational problems? That is, how much confidence do you have in them to deal effectively with the runaway cost of higher education, plus the quality of education undergraduates and graduates are receiving. I have confidence in particular institutions — Baylor, for example — but in general? No. And this AU initiative, as well as the administrative capitulation on college campuses last fall to left-wing cultural radicalism, leaves me with little to no confidence in our institutions of higher education.

Again: **this is not a justification for voting Trump.** But if you think that the various establishments in this country aren't working in your interests, and indeed may be working against your interests (as in the Orwellian AU program, in which students indebt themselves to the tune of over \$40,000 per year to be educated into why they should despise themselves or others along racial and cultural lines), this is all fuel for the, “Screw it, I'm voting Trump” bonfire.

It is breathtaking how the elites are tearing this country apart. If you find it impossible to understand how anybody would support Trump, think of AU, and think of that fatmouthing kid screaming and cursing at the professor on the square at Yale this fall. That professor, Christakis, stood there and took it. They all do. Trump would not. You think that's a crude analysis. Maybe. But if you don't understand why it makes *emotional* sense to many people, you are deluding yourself.

**UPDATE:** Please spare me the accusations that I'm trying to justify a vote for Trump. For one thing, you don't know who I'm voting for, and you won't know. I'm not even a registered Republican, so I can't vote in my state's GOP primary. I find it incredible that Trump has gotten

as far as he's gotten, and I am trying very hard to learn the lessons of why people like me have been so out of touch with why so many Republican voters like Trump, despite what many of us see as his grave flaws. I'm not asking anybody to support Trump; that's not my business. I am asking you to try to see things through the eyes of Trump supporters. That's what I'm trying to do, so I can better understand my own country, and where it's headed, for better and for worse. It wouldn't really have occurred to me prior to now that the p.c.-driven chaos on campuses these days, which I've been denouncing for some time, would have translated into a vote for Trump. I think I get it now.