

From: Eric Rodene [Redacted]
Sent: Friday, July 9, 2021 6:35 PM
To: James Pillen
Subject: Board of Regents resolution on Critical Race Theory

Regent Pillen,

I am contacting you about the resolution on Critical Race Theory. I wanted to say that I support the sentiment of the resolution, but I do want to let you know that I've been seeing a lot of opposition to it in UNL's ASUN Senate. I am a graduate student at UNL and also a member of Senate, but I am not reaching out to you in any official capacity.

Currently what I'm hearing is that some Senators may feel compelled enough to speak during public comment, but presently they are being told to speak only on their own behalf and not ASUN's. I know the UNL Student Regent is talking with the Chancellor's Office and the other Regents on this topic. While many individuals may have a fundamental opposition to banning Critical Race Theory, I suspect for others there is an uncertainty as to exactly what content the resolution opposes. I can foresee concerns over this stifling academic freedom. For instance, because I am a graduate student, two questions I can see might be what would this resolution mean for a research assistant studying racism, or a teaching assistant in History whose curriculum includes the topic of slavery or the American Civil War?

I think if clear definitions can be made as to what type of content or educational methods the resolution opposes, this may help to allay some individuals' concerns. Or perhaps the resolution should explicitly condemn certain controversial aspects associated with the teaching of Critical Race Theory, such as the stifling of opposing ideas and their free discussion, without actually naming Critical Race Theory itself. Above all, I think it will be important if the resolution explicitly upholds the importance of academic freedom, freedom of thought, and expression of opposing ideas. Students should not be shamed, ostracized, or suffer poor grades due to their personal beliefs or how they might differ from others'.

Sincerely,

Eric Rodene