



INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

2023-2024 Faculty Senate

Whereas Indiana State University already protects and values intellectual diversity, academic freedom, and freedom of speech, per our University mission to “take action to honor the diversity of individuals, ideas and expressions, ensuring that they are genuinely recognized, valued, and lived”;¹ and,

Whereas Indiana Senate Bill 202 would limit the ability for Indiana State University students to “succeed within a culture of inclusion and support that provides the skills and knowledge to impact Indiana and beyond”¹ thus diminishing the University to prepare career-ready graduates for the Indiana workforce; and

Whereas Indiana Senate Bill 202 will negatively affect the ability of Indiana’s public institutions to recruit and retain high-quality faculty, staff, and students, as well as limit the institutions’ ability to secure external funding and collaborate across states; and,

Whereas Indiana State University hosts several programs that require specialized accreditation, which require content and pedagogy related to inclusion, in direct opposition to the instructional and evaluative parameters outlined in Indiana Senate Bill 202; and,

Whereas Indiana State University has already created and implemented non-tenure, pre-tenure, and post-tenure faculty review processes, thus rendering Indiana Senate Bill 202 redundant, adding to the bureaucratic burden of state institutions, and undermining the objectives the Bill seeks to achieve; and,

Whereas Indiana Senate Bill 202, which would establish a separate and politicized evaluation process that allows faculty to be terminated or demoted based on perceived past or “likely/unlikely” future behavior, regardless of the results of the existing review process, is highly ambiguous and thus dangerously open to interpretation and implementation; and,

Whereas the Indiana State University Board of Trustees is held to specific fiduciary, evaluative, and administrative responsibilities that are fundamental to the operations of the institution but that are distinct from the evaluative responsibilities of faculty with content and pedagogical expertise; and,

Whereas Indiana Senate Bill 202 does not provide due process for faculty, with the sole mechanism for appeal routed through the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, which includes political appointees and is ill-equipped to exercise evaluative authority over individual faculty; and,

¹ Indiana State University. Mission. Available at: <https://www.indstate.edu/about/mission>. Accessed on: February 15, 2024.

Whereas Indiana Senate Bill 202 will encourage students, faculty, and staff to report on one another in ways that hinder intellectual diversity, academic freedom, freedom of speech and expression, and will pressure members of the academic community to align their teaching, their scholarship, and their other activities to ideological orthodoxies that are not evidence-informed; and,

Whereas Indiana State University already has multiple avenues in place for students to share concerns about faculty practices, including an anonymous end of semester evaluation, student Ombudsperson, and grievance and discrimination reporting processes within departments and colleges, as well as the University; and,

Whereas no scientifically sound, generalizable, or peer-reviewed evidence has been cited to support the need for Indiana Senate Bill 202, and moreover Indiana State University faculty score highly on student evaluations regarding approachability, respect for students, and positive interactions, thereby demonstrating a positive and safe place to learn; and

Whereas Indiana Senate Bill 202 undermines the tradition of shared governance established at Indiana State University; and,

Whereas Indiana Senate Bill 202 is an unfunded mandate, and early estimates of the fiscal impact suggest it would cost the taxpayers millions of dollars to operationalize across the state;

Therefore be it resolved: The Indiana State University Faculty Senate is opposed to Indiana Senate Bill 202.

Approval of Resolution (20-0-0) on Thursday, February 15, 2024