

HB 7

The Florida Legislature passed House Bill 7 during the 2022 legislative session. It declares certain types of employee and student training and instruction to be unfairly discriminatory as a matter of state law. Senate Bill 2524, also passed during the 2022 legislative session, imposes large financial penalties on any university that violates the HB 7 requirements.

This presentation is designed to inform you about the law as it relates to instruction and to provide you with recommendations to remain within the law's guidelines. It is also designed to reassure you that instructors may continue to address important academic subjects that reflect the core values of the university.

Indeed, UF encourages robust educational environments. Every student should be afforded the opportunity for exposure to a full spectrum of ideas, opinions, and beliefs. In that process, students will confront challenging concepts that lead to deeper insights and foster maturity.

What does HB 7 actually say?

*Instructors may discuss issues of race, color, national origin, or sex, but must do so in an objective manner.*

At its core, the bill's message is: "no one likes to be told what to think. And that includes students." The theme of the bill is that instructors should not present personal beliefs about a topic as the "right" point of view or compel or encourage students to adopt a specific belief.

We will illustrate this principle with some specific examples that are contained in HB 7. After we list the examples, we will discuss how to continue addressing these topics in the classroom.



*Instructors may not assert or suggest that one group is morally superior to another, when the groups are defined by race, color, national origin or sex.*

*Instructors may not suggest or assert that: A person, by simple virtue of his/her race, color, national origin or sex, is inherently racist, sexist or oppressive;*

*Or that someone's status as privileged or oppressed is necessarily determined by his/her race, color, national origin, or sex;*

*Or that an individual, by virtue of race, color, national origin, or sex bears responsibility and should feel guilt for past actions committed by members of his/her group;*

*Or that a person, by virtue of his or her race, color, national origin, or sex bears responsibility for, or should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment because of, actions committed in the past by other members of the same race, color, national origin, or sex;*

*Or that virtues such as merit, excellence, hard work, fairness, neutrality, objectivity, and racial colorblindness are racist or sexist or were created to oppress members of another race, color, national origin or sex.*

*All of these concepts may be discussed in instructional settings, providing instruction is given in an objective manner without endorsement of the concepts.*

Note what the previous slide says: HB 7 explicitly allows balanced and objective discussion of topics surrounding race, color, national origin, or sex, provided the discussion comes without the instructor's endorsement of a particular point of view.



Instructors should continue their roles as teachers and mentors, which include the responsibility to treat students with respect.

Instructors are encouraged to create classroom environments in which facts and theories are presented along with different interpretations and viewpoints.

Instructors are encouraged to facilitate free, vigorous, and open discussions which enable students to reach their own conclusions without instructor bias.

This means not imposing personal views about controversial topics.

This means effectively managing classroom discussion that can become heated. To help manage difficult dialogues in the classroom, please refer to the Center for Teaching Excellence page <https://teach.ufl.edu/resource-library/difficult-dialogues/> and more generally its resource library at <https://teach.ufl.edu/resource-library/>

We thank you for spending time reviewing HB 7 through this presentation. If you have questions about this material, please consult with your Dean's Office.