



**Resolution of the Jackson State University Faculty Senate Defending Academic Freedom to Teach About Race, Gender Justice and Critical Race Theory
Adopted by the Faculty Senate January 27, 2022**

WHEREAS state legislative proposals are being introduced across the United States that target academic discussions of racism and related issues in American history in schools, colleges, and universities.

WHEREAS the Jackson State University Faculty Handbook affirms in the Statement of Academic Freedom, the importance of academic freedom to the proper functioning of universities, “ The university faculty member is a citizen, a member of a learned profession, and a part of the educational institution. When such a professional speaks or writes as a citizen, there should be freedom from institutional censorship or discipline. The faculty member is entitled to full freedom in teaching, research, service, and in the publication of results subject to the adequate performance of other academic duties as well as the rights of academic freedom belonging to the university and the students.”

WHEREAS the term “divisive” is indeterminate, subjective, and chills the capacity of educators to explore a wide variety of topics based on subjective criteria that are inapposite from the goals of education and the development of essential critical thinking skills;

WHEREAS educating about systemic barriers to realizing a multiracial democracy based on race or gender should be understood as central to the active and engaged pursuit of knowledge in the 21st century to produce engaged and informed citizens;

WHEREAS over seventy organizations, including the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU), issued the Joint Statement on Legislative Efforts to Restrict Education about Racism and American History (June 16, 2021) stating their “firm opposition to a spate of legislative proposals being introduced across the country that target academic lessons, presentations, and discussions of racism and related issues in American history in schools, colleges and universities . . . In higher education, under principles of academic freedom that have been widely endorsed, professors are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject. Educators, not politicians, should make decisions about teaching and learning.”

WHEREAS The mission of Jackson State University, an Historically Black College and University and comprehensive urban research university, is to provide quality teaching, research and service at the baccalaureate, masters, specialist, and doctoral levels to diverse populations of students and communities using various modalities to ensure that they are technologically advanced, ethical, global leaders who think critically and can address societal problems and compete effectively.

WHEREAS Jackson State University houses, The Institute of Social Justice and Relations, The Margret Walker Alexander Center, The Fannie Lou Hammer Institute, and the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO) Education Center, all of which work to challenge minds and change lives affirming the importance of racial and social justice in higher education.

WHEREAS in a nation that has for centuries struggled with issues of racial inequity and injustice, many students do not have adequate knowledge of BIPOC and LGBTQI history and the policies that contributed to inequities, Jackson State University has a responsibility and opportunity to help build equity and social justice.

RESOLUTION:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Jackson State University Faculty Senate resolutely rejects any attempts by bodies external to the faculty to restrict or dictate university curriculum on any matter, including matters related to racial and social justice, and will stand firm against encroachment on faculty authority by the legislature or the Boards of Trustees.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Jackson State University Faculty Senate stands with our K-12 colleagues throughout the country who may be affected by this pernicious legislation when they seek to teach the truth in U.S. history and civics education.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Jackson State University Faculty Senate calls upon the Jackson State University administration to affirm that they reject any attempts by bodies external to the faculty to restrict or dictate university curriculum, pedagogy, andragogy on any matter, including matters related to racial and social justice, and will stand firm against encroachment on faculty authority by the legislature or the Boards of Trustees.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate affirms the [Joint Statement on Efforts to Restrict Education about Racism](#), authored by the AAUP, PEN America, the American Historical Association, and the Association of American Colleges & Universities, endorsed by over seventy organizations, and issued on June 16, 2021.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Jackson State University Faculty Senate calls on other representative bodies at the university, such as the Staff Senate and the Student Government Association, to support this Resolution.

Background:

- Scholarly Groups Condemn Laws Limiting Teaching on Race (New York Times, June 16, 2021)
- Texas 'critical race theory' bill limiting teaching of current events signed into law (ABC13, June 16, 2021)
- Republicans Want Federal Funding Cuts to Schools Using '1619 Project'—But There's a Twist (Education Week, June 15, 2021)
- Critical race theory battle invades school boards — with help from conservative groups (NBC News, June 15, 2021)
- Teachers across the country protest laws restricting lessons on racism (Washington Post, June 12, 2021)
- 'Children deserve to be taught': Teachers in 22 cities are planning protests over laws restricting racism lessons in schools (USA Today, June 11, 2021)
- 'Critical Race Theory Is Simply the Latest Bogeyman.' Inside the Fight Over What Kids Learn About America's History (TIME Magazine, June 24, 2021)
- Uncovering Who Is Driving The Fight Against Critical Race Theory In Schools (LISTEN) (Fresh Air, June 24, 2021)
- How the media's helping GOP fuel critical race theory hysteria (Press Run, June 23, 2021)
- Critical race theory has been around for decades — why's it a powder keg now? (LISTEN) (Marketplace, June 22, 2021)
- VIDEO: Creator of term 'Critical Race Theory' Kimberlé Crenshaw explains what it really is (MSNBC/The Reid Out, June 21, 2021)
- VIDEO: The truth about 'critical race theory': co-founder breaks down GOP gaslight (MSNBC/The Medhi Hasan Show, June 20, 2021)
- Fox's anti-"critical race theory" parents are also GOP activists (Media Matters, June 17, 2021)
- Critical Race Theory: What It Means for America and Why It Has Sparked Debate (Wall Street Journal, June 17, 2021)
- Why are states lining up to ban critical race theory? (University World News, June 12, 2021)
- The New York Times' Culture-War Definition of Free Speech (Melissa Gira Grant, The New Republic, June 8, 2021)
- Guest Blog: Where Does the Bizarre Hysteria About 'Critical Race Theory' Come From? Follow the Money! (Inside Higher Ed, June 3, 2021)
- https://www.chronicle.com/newsletter/race-on-campus/2021-12-14?cid=gen_sign_in
Opinion: Why Conservatives Really Fear Critical Race Theory (Christine Emba, The Washington Post, May 26, 2021)
- (VIDEO) What critical race theory is really about (CNN/Don Lemon Tonight, May 17, 2021)
- Race on Campus: She's Teaching Critical Race Theory, Despite a State Law (Fernanda Zamudio-Suarez (Chronical of Higher Education, December 14, 2021)