

AUDIT PROPOSAL

Reviewing Whether Select State Universities Require Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion-Related Courses for Graduation

SOURCE

This audit proposal was requested by Representative Rebecca Schmoe and the Legislative Post Audit Committee.

BACKGROUND

In 2025, the Kansas legislature passed a law that required the Secretary of Administration to certify that state agencies have taken steps to eliminate certain diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) activities. This included steps such as eliminating any positions related to DEI, eliminating related mandates and training, canceling grants related to DEI, and other activities. However, the law did not define DEI. In July 2025, the Secretary of Administration confirmed to the State Finance Council that all state agencies complied with the law.

The Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) provided guidance to state universities to help them comply with this law. KBOR provided a definition of DEI to universities to help them identify prohibited activities. KBOR defined DEI as activities that are intended to intentionally give preferences to individuals or groups, to the exclusion of others, on the basis of race, color, or national origin. As part of that guidance, KBOR specifically noted that activities related to curriculum, instruction, or research were not prohibited. As such, universities were not expected to alter course content or graduation requirements.

Legislators have expressed interest in learning about whether universities require DEI-related coursework for graduation.

AUDIT OBJECTIVES AND TENTATIVE METHODOLOGY

The audit objective listed below is the question we would answer through our audit work. The steps listed for the objective convey the type of work we would do. These may change as we learn more about the audit issues.

Objective 1: Do selected state universities require DEI-related coursework for graduation in certain degree programs? Our tentative methodology would include the following:

- Review state law and KBOR guidance to develop a definition for what coursework may be considered as being related to DEI.
- Select 3 state universities to review. For a selection of degree programs at those universities, work with university staff to determine what courses students are required to take to graduate from each program. We would focus on degrees where DEI-related courses would not be expected (for example, math, engineering, etc.)

- For the selected degree programs, review course syllabi and talk to university professors and other staff as needed to gain an understanding of the content of the required courses.
- Compare the required courses for each degree program to our definition of DEI-related coursework to identify whether and how many DEI-related courses the selected degree programs require for graduation.
- For any degree programs that require DEI-related courses, talk with university officials to understand why those courses are required for graduation.

ESTIMATED RESOURCES

We estimate this audit would require a team of **3 auditors** for a total of **4 months** (from the time the audit starts to our best estimate of when it would be ready for the committee).