



Sabrina Conza <sabrina.conza@thefire.org>

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## OU DEI Statement 6-23-21

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OU News <ounews@ou.edu>

Wed, Jun 23, 2021 at 11:29 AM

Reply-To: OU News <ounews@ou.edu>

To: "media@thefire.org" <media@thefire.org>, Sabrina Conza <sabrina.conza@thefire.org>

Cc: OU News <ounews@ou.edu>

Hello Daniel Burnett and Sabrina Conza,

Please see below statement from Dr. Belinda Higgs Hyppolite in response to your June 22 [article](#).

*The University of Oklahoma unequivocally values free expression and the diversity of all viewpoints. In fact, these are central elements of the university's strategic plan and at the core of what makes a great university. In no way does OU endorse or condone censorship of its students. OU is a place where students are taught how to learn, not what to learn. Every effort is made to ensure students feel that they belong.*

*The workshop in question is one of many professional development workshops put on by the English Department's Composition Program. Participation in any given workshop is voluntary. The workshop topics were selected in response to aspects of teaching that are challenging. The curriculum of the workshop is designed to address how instructors respond to and handle racist comments within the classroom environment. The university will always protect the right to free speech and expression.*

--Dr. Belinda Higgs Hyppolite  
Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer  
The University of Oklahoma

Thanks,  
Kesha

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**Kesha Keith**

Director of Media Relations|Marketing and Communications

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