

DEI Dodge? Watchdog Asks Feds to Investigate UNC

Evidence shows employees being “a little sneaky” to keep discrimination going under other names.

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) industry has made billions convincing U.S. businesses, institutions and governments that practicing discrimination today and tomorrow is the way to atone for yesterday’s discrimination. Their consultations could help organizations recognize their inherent racism/sexism/homophobia/transphobia etc. and institute hiring and promotional regimes to absolve them of those sins.

By and large, Americans have come to see DEI as a poisonous gift and, in the realm of education, courts have ruled it violates Title VI and Title IX of the Civil Rights Act. Yet even as institutions formally swear off DEI, they wink at it quietly continuing under other names. Accuracy in Media (AIM) recently [released](#) undercover [videos](#) that [exposed](#) potential Title VI and Title IX violations and [efforts](#) to conceal them at the University of North Carolina (UNC) system. Government watchdog Protect the Public’s Trust (PPT) has written to ask the U.S. Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, and Justice to investigate exactly this sort of subterfuge.

In May 2024, the UNC Board of Governors voted to repeal its DEI policies, replacing it with a new policy more properly focused on “equality.” Outwardly the schools appeared to comply. UNC Wilmington, for example, closed its Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion and eliminated its chief diversity officer position. But the closure created no layoffs and the chief diversity officer remained a faculty member. An official with Wilmington’s LGBTQIA Resource Center was recorded saying UNC Wilmington was “trying to be a little sneaky, I feel like, with certain things in the plan.” Although it acknowledged the recording, UNCW seems to have done nothing to address the actions it revealed.

Elsewhere in the UNC system, officials were caught on tape making similar admissions. A UNC Charlotte employee said there are no “outward” DEI jobs, there are “covert” positions available, and she uses “finesse” to get around the DEI ban. They “renamed, we’ve reorganized, we’ve recalibrated, so to speak.” “Because language changes...but the people [doing DEI work] don’t change.” A UNC Asheville employee said she has to “keep it quiet” to do DEI work. “You know...until more or less, they get mad at us. But they haven’t done it yet, so.” A Western Carolina University official said the school had a “strategy” to “embed” DEI and was “still absolutely doing all of that work.”

“One would think that higher education would be among the first institutions to recognize that discrimination is wrong,” said PPT Director Michael Chamberlain. “But, unfortunately, not only is it one of the last, colleges and universities are engaging in all manner of deception to continue the insidious practice. If higher ed is to restore the trust it has lost, addressing such behaviors is paramount.”