

[HOME](#) / [ABOUT US](#) / [NEWSROOM](#) / [PRESS RELEASES](#)**PRESS RELEASE**

Office for Civil Rights Initiates Title VI Investigations into Institutions of Higher Education

MARCH 14, 2025

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights (OCR) opened investigations into 45 universities under Title VI following OCR’s February 14 [Dear Colleague Letter](#) (DCL) that reiterated schools’ civil rights obligations to end the use of racial preferences and stereotypes in education programs and activities. The investigations come amid allegations that these institutions have violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (1964) by partnering with “The Ph.D. Project,” an organization that purports to provide doctoral students with insights into obtaining a Ph.D. and networking opportunities, but limits eligibility based on the race of participants.

OCR is also investigating six universities for allegedly awarding impermissible race-based scholarships and one university for allegedly administering a program that segregates students on the basis of race.

“The Department is working to reorient civil rights enforcement to ensure all students are protected from illegal discrimination. The agency has already launched Title VI investigations into institutions where widespread antisemitic harassment has been reported and Title IX investigations into entities which allegedly continue to allow sex discrimination; today’s announcement expands our efforts to ensure universities are not discriminating against their students based on race and race stereotypes,” said **U.S. Secretary of Education Linda**

McMahon. “Students must be assessed according to merit and accomplishment, not prejudged by the color of their skin. We will not yield on this commitment.”

The universities now under investigation for allegedly engaging in race-exclusionary practices in their graduate programs include:

- Arizona State University – Main Campus
- Boise State University
- Cal Poly Humboldt
- California State University – San Bernadino
- Carnegie Mellon University
- Clemson University
- Cornell University
- Duke University
- Emory University
- George Mason University
- Georgetown University
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
- Montana State University-Bozeman
- New York University (NYU)
- Rice University
- Rutgers University
- The Ohio State University – Main Campus
- Towson University
- Tulane University
- University of Arkansas – Fayetteville
- University of California-Berkeley
- University of Chicago
- University of Cincinnati – Main Campus
- University of Colorado – Colorado Springs
- University of Delaware
- University of Kansas
- University of Kentucky
- University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
- University of Minnesota-Twin Cities
- University of Nebraska at Omaha
- University of New Mexico – Main Campus

- University of North Dakota – Main Campus
- University of North Texas – Denton
- University of Notre Dame
- University of NV – Las Vegas
- University of Oregon
- University of Rhode Island
- University of Utah
- University of Washington-Seattle
- University of Wisconsin-Madison
- University of Wyoming
- Vanderbilt University
- Washington State University
- Washington University in St. Louis
- Yale University

The schools under investigation for alleged impermissible race-based scholarships and race-based segregation are:

- Grand Valley State University
- Ithaca College
- New England College of Optometry
- University of Alabama
- University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
- University of South Florida
- University of Oklahoma, Tulsa School of Community Medicine

Background:

On February 14, OCR sent a [Dear Colleague Letter](#) to educational institutions receiving federal funding clarifying that, pursuant to federal antidiscrimination law, they must cease using race preferences and stereotypes as a factor in their admissions, hiring, promotion, compensation, scholarships, prizes, administrative support, sanctions, discipline, and other programs and activities. On March 1, the Department released [FAQs](#) to anticipate and answer questions that may have arisen in response to the DCL.

These OCR investigations are being conducted pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (1964), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in education programs and activities receiving federal funding. Institutions' violation of Title VI can result in loss of federal funds.

CONTACT

Press Office | press@ed.gov | (202) 401-1576 | Office of Communications and Outreach (OCO)

Office of Communications and Outreach (OCO)

Page Last Reviewed: March 14, 2025

Pay for College

[Fill out the FAFSA](#)

[529 Plans](#)

[Loan Forgiveness](#)

[1098 Tax Forms](#)

Educational Resources

[504 Plans](#)

[FERPA](#)

[IEPs \(Individualized Education Program\)](#)

Teaching Resources

[Become a Teacher](#)