



October 30, 2023

Statement on Legislative Interference at the Universities of Wisconsin

The American Political Science Association (APSA) is disappointed in the Wisconsin Legislature's withholding of pay raises for university employees as a negotiation tool to induce cuts for diversity, equity and inclusion spending at the Universities of Wisconsin (UW). [Reports](#) state that the Wisconsin Legislature is blocking pay raises of 4 percent this year and 2 percent next year for UW faculty and staff until the school system cuts spending for diversity, equity and inclusion activities by \$32 million. This unprecedented decision is irresponsible and harmful to the thousands of faculty and staff who make valuable contributions to public higher education across the state of Wisconsin and whose research discoveries are vital to Wisconsin's economy. Furthermore, this troubling assault on diversity, equity and inclusion programs jeopardizes the ability of the UW system to foster an inclusive and welcoming climate, and a diverse student body on campuses across the state.

This move by the Wisconsin Legislature suppresses the ability of the UW system to engage in crucial institutional programs, violating the basic principles of academic freedom. It also politicizes the employment of thousands of UW faculty and staff, including those who teach in and support social science-related departments, treating their employment as a bargaining tool. APSA opposes any attempts by state legislatures to suppress diversity, equity and inclusion programs at institutions of higher education or to otherwise infringe on academic freedom. As we affirmed in our [May 30, 2023 statement](#), these attempts diminish the student experience by threatening the "advancement of scholarship and education around issues pertaining to race, ethnic studies, gender, feminism, LGBTQ+ and queer studies, social justice, intersectionality, and other issues essential to a free, pluralistic, and inclusive democratic society."

APSA remains a steadfast supporter of the principles of academic freedom. We call on the Wisconsin Legislature to cease this attack on diversity, equity and inclusion and this reckless treatment of UW faculty and staff.

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Founded in 1903, the American Political Science Association is the leading professional organization for the study of political science and serves more than 11,000 members in more than 80 countries. With a range of programs and services for individuals, departments, and institutions, APSA brings together political scientists from all fields of inquiry, regions, and occupational endeavors within and outside academe to deepen our understanding of politics, democracy, and citizenship throughout the world.



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