# University of Virginia faces DOJ demand over elimination of DEI programmes



In a significant development at the University of Virginia (UVA), the institution's governing board took a decisive step earlier this month by voting to dismantle all diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) offices and terminate DEI programmes across its statewide campuses. This decision, announced in early March, garnered considerable attention and garnered praise from Republican Governor Glenn Youngkin, who had supported the move.

Following the board's directive, University President Jim Ryan was tasked with providing an update within 30 days on the university's compliance with the mandate to end DEI initiatives. However, recent reports suggest that Ryan has yet to deliver a comprehensive report on the progress made, prompting intervention from the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ).

On Monday, the DOJ issued a demand letter to Ryan, requiring the university to furnish proof by May 2 that all DEI programmes have been fully eradicated. The letter, signed by Harmeet Dhillon, assistant attorney general for the department’s civil rights division and a UVA alumnus, cites complaints that UVA has not implemented the board's directives and has allegedly refused to produce the requested report.

The letter explicitly demands that UVA certify the cessation of DEI activities across every division, department, unit, system, programme, and school—including the School of Law, School of Medicine, and Nursing School. It further requests detailed information about which departments and programmes have been terminated, as well as the status of personnel formerly involved in DEI roles. The DOJ seeks clarification on whether these positions and titles have been eliminated or if those individuals remain affiliated with the university in any capacity, paid or unpaid.

“The Department of Justice expects your complete candor and prompt response to this request,” the letter states.

This development comes amidst President Ryan’s public resistance to earlier efforts by the Trump administration to curtail DEI, marking him as the only public university president who joined hundreds of private college leaders in condemning what they viewed as executive overreach during President Trump’s tenure.

Further underscoring the university’s evolving stance on equity policies, the UVA Board of Visitors convened a special meeting this week at which it passed a resolution to rescind previous measures established by a Racial Equity Task Force in 2000 that had supported racial quotas. The resolution acknowledged that while ending DEI programmes constitutes a meaningful first step, additional efforts are necessary to promote open inquiry at the institution.

In line with this view, the board approved the formation of a working group comprising members of the board, university administrators, faculty, and a student representative. This group is tasked with exploring non-partisan initiatives aimed at fostering open inquiry, encouraging constructive dialogue across differing perspectives, and nurturing the development of a civic mindset among the university community.

Bacon’s Rebellion, a Virginia-based watchdog group, reported that the substance of the resolution suggests a lack of trust by the Board of Visitors in President Ryan's management of the transition, indicating a preference for closer oversight of the process.

The College Fix is reporting these developments at the University of Virginia, which illustrate the shifting landscape of diversity-related policies at the institution and the increased scrutiny from federal authorities concerning compliance with the board’s directives.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/news-releases/2025/march/name-1042455-en.html> - Governor Glenn Youngkin praised the University of Virginia's Board of Visitors for unanimously voting to dissolve the Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) and Community Partnerships, ending illegal discriminatory practices at the school, eliminating illegally discriminatory programs, and transferring non-discriminatory programs to other university offices.
2. <https://www.c-ville.com/uva-bov-dissolves-office-of-diversity-equity-inclusion/> - The University of Virginia Board of Visitors voted unanimously to dissolve the Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Community Partnerships, citing a January 21 Trump executive order and communication from the U.S. Department of Education as contributors to the decision.
3. <https://www.axios.com/local/richmond/2025/03/25/virginia-colleges-dismantle-dei> - Virginia universities and colleges, including the University of Virginia, are dismantling their Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programs and policies in response to the threat of losing federal funding if they don't eliminate these initiatives.
4. <https://www.whro.org/education-news/2025-03-12/uva-gmu-respond-to-trump-admin-demands-over-diversity-initiatives> - The University of Virginia's Board of Visitors voted to close its DEI office, with the resolution stating that all legally permissible programs, research, and activities should proceed as normal, though it remains unclear what the board considers legally permissible.
5. <https://www.c-ville.com/next-steps-unclear-amid-shuttering-of-uvas-dei-office/> - Following the dissolution of the University of Virginia's DEI office, community partners are uncertain about the future of their collaborations with the university, as no communication has been received regarding the Board of Visitors' resolution.
6. <https://www.nas.org/blogs/statement/statement-university-of-virginia-votes-to-dissolve-dei-office> - The National Association of Scholars praised the University of Virginia's Board of Visitors for unanimously voting to dissolve the Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) and Community Partnerships, ending illegal discriminatory practices at the school, eliminating illegally discriminatory programs, and transferring non-discriminatory programs to other university offices.
7. <https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMimgFBVV95cUxOWTUyR1JEZHR1MXZQemFKSFJwLXZHMGVFcTkwd0h1a2ZMb1AwTFRMRHVrMWN6OFJNVXB3SC1PSTVrTkJmMlAtamwwaGhzYVlrS2tKOTlkQXRYMFdqNHhFaGdiMWdIQXpvN1NsbnRiVWxMVDJGYlhHQ3E5RWJtOVlDZ3JsSjIwbHJuay1fU3dXVk03dHFyUUh5SVFn?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en> - Please view link - unable to able to access data