

# CATE



Coalition of American Traditions and Ethics

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## **Coalition Calls for a Renewed Focus on Western Civilization and Ethics Coursework in Texas Colleges and Universities**

*Asks lawmakers to study the value of fostering greater civic knowledge*

**AUSTIN** – As classes begin today at the University of Texas at Austin and other institutions around the state, a new coalition has launched an effort to enhance the quality of higher education in Texas. Responding to a diminishing emphasis on Western civilization coursework in Texas and elsewhere, the Coalition for American Traditions and Ethics (CATE) is encouraging Texas colleges and universities to develop coursework and programs that give students a strong background in American ideals, institutions, and traditions.

“There is an increasing demand for an emphasis on the fundamental values and principles of our country,” said Bill Noble, spokesman for CATE Texas. “We will work with lawmakers and other interested parties to achieve our goal to provide Texas college and university students a solid grounding in civic responsibility and ethical character.”

The coalition believes that Texas colleges and universities will have an opportunity to attract new students and professors and to stand out on the national level by establishing and developing these programs. Students will benefit from the skills they learn as employers increasingly seek graduates with a comprehensive education who also demonstrate civic responsibility and ethical behavior.

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“Coursework that captures American ideals, institutions and traditions from the Greek and Roman classics to the original documents of our country’s founding helps to develop a student’s critical thinking skills and makes them – and our state – more competitive in today’s global economy,” said Bill Hammond, president of the Texas Association of Business. “More importantly, thorough exposure to coursework exploring moral questions and the founding principles of our great country serves to prepare students to face the myriad of ethical challenges that arise in their day-to-day lives.”

In addition to encouraging Texas colleges and universities to create coursework and programs focusing on Western civilization and American traditions, the coalition is asking lawmakers to study the value and benefits of such coursework and programs and to determine the most appropriate structure for facilitating these programs on university campuses.

“We want all interested parties to have an opportunity to present their thoughts and ideas to lawmakers during an interim study of the issue,” said Noble. “We believe there can be strong agreement from across the political spectrum to the value and benefits of strengthening university students’ knowledge of the ideas and ethical principles that have contributed to the foundation of our country.”

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*The Coalition for American Traditions and Ethics in Texas (CATE) is a broad-based coalition including university faculty, civic leaders, students and employers united in an effort to promote the establishment of coursework and programs studying Western civilization and American traditions to foster the development of ethical character and civic responsibility among Texas college and university students. On the web at [www.HigherEduCATE.org](http://www.HigherEduCATE.org).*