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The Core Concern: Political Correctness
Those who oppose the diversity requirement have raised various objections, but the core concern is that a particular ideological or political orthodoxy is being forced upon undergraduates.

It’s not about Political Correctness but Getting Smarter
If this were true, I too would be concerned. But I think that’s a fundamental misunderstanding, which all sides should reject. The requirement isn’t that students must think a particular way. Instead, we the faculty are deciding that issues of equity, diversity, and disparity are worth studying widely. In other words, we are setting pedagogical priorities--that in modern Los Angeles and California, a graduate of an elite public university should have rigorously grappled at least once with such issues.

Consider How Much We Don’t Know
This pedagogical priority might seem inane if we had absolutely nothing new to learn. But there’s so much we don’t know. To take just one recent example, FBI Director James Comey identified "unconscious bias" as one cause of the different ways that certain Americans are treated by the police. But do we even know what that means?

What does it mean to be "unconscious"? Is that an allusion to Freud? Is it the same as "implicit"? If bias is unconscious, how do we measure it? What's a "bias" anyway? Is it animus or hate? Is it merely an attitude or a stereotype about social groups? Do we still call it a bias if the stereotype is complimentary? Should it be called a bias if it's probabilistically "accurate"? By the way, how do we pick the proper reference group? And does such "accuracy" guarantee legality or ethicality?

I could go on at similar length about other topics such as the social construction of race, cumulative disadvantage, intersectionality, microaggressions, structural racism, stereotype threat, the factors of balkanization, forward-looking versus backward-looking defenses of affirmative action, etc.

Worthy Intellectual Work
My basic point is that there’s plenty of hard stuff here worthy of serious critical inquiry by our students. Disparity, inequality, intergroup conflict, and injustice pose some of the toughest challenges of our time. Think Ferguson today. Remember Los Angeles in 1992. Unfortunately, as citizens, we aren’t very good at talking about these issues. Shouldn’t a great public university "up our game" on
that front? For me, the diversity course requirement does just that, which is good enough reason to earn my vote.

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