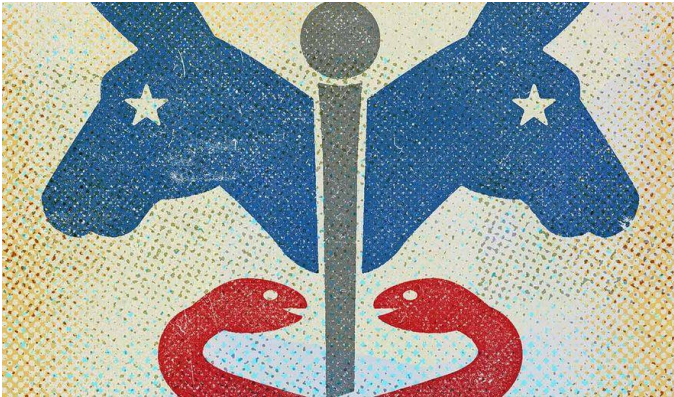


OMB proposal treats academics like what they are: Political operatives

The scientific community skews left

[Washington Times](#), by [Michael McKenna](#), July 15, 2026



The [Office of Management and Budget](#) proposed a rule a few weeks back that would change the way federal research funding is awarded, managed and terminated.

The proposed changes give presidential appointees the authority to restrict collaboration with hostile regimes. The rules would also preclude funding for publication

costs and conference travel, cancel ongoing grants, and generally place the interests of taxpayers on par with those in academia.

You are probably not surprised that the proposed changes have drawn complaints from the usual suspects, who darkly warn that treating scientific enterprises like everyone else will threaten U.S. scientific leadership and innovation.

Maybe they are right. Maybe team science is not really political. Maybe peer review is the only legitimate way to review scientific results. Maybe scientists are just misunderstood.

Or maybe OMB is onto something. More than 90% of political donations made by American scientists who contribute to federal campaigns go to Democratic candidates and organizations. It may shock you to learn that, among university professors specifically, only about 5% of donations go to Republicans.

It is worse at places such as the University of Pennsylvania and Harvard. In the Ivy League, Republicans receive just 2% of faculty donations. Truthfully, I am kind of amazed it is that much.

It was not always this way. From 1984 to 2000, Republicans received about 40% of donations from academics. In all fairness, there is a difference between donating and identifying oneself with a political side. Pew Research Center data indicate that about 55% of scientists identify as Democrats, 32% as independents and 6% as Republicans.

None of this is a surprise to anyone who has ever attended public school in any grade or any university. Everyone has experienced the obvious and pervasive political bias built into much of science and academia nowadays.

The bias makes some sense. Hyperrationality is often paired with a hostility to alternative ways of ordering one's life, including elemental things such as believing in God or refusing to believe that a woman can become a man (or vice versa) simply by declaring it so.

It was, after all, the medical community that gave us terms such as "birthing person" and "chest-feeding."

Moreover, anyone who can read or who was alive in 2020, 2021 and 2022 knows that some members of our scientific community intentionally misled us about the role of the U.S. government in research in China that led to the [COVID-19](#) pandemic. They also misled us about the efficacy of masks, vaccines and pretty much everything else related to COVID.

On a slightly less homicidal note, the scientific community has also been at the core of the climate change debacle. It is OK to have whatever opinion you want about climate change, but no one except the most hardened revolutionary or delusional political stooge could possibly believe that it poses a threat to humanity's existence. Yet here we are.

Finally, anyone even remotely familiar with the peer review process knows that, in many instances, it is little better than a sham. The problems are legion and so well-known that at least one website catalogs 65,000 instances in which the peer review process broke down.

The bottom line is this: No one has a right to taxpayer cash, no matter how virtuous they think they are.

In this country, if you want a chance to raid the bank, you need to go through a campaign and win an election. Only then do you get the combination to the safe.

Researchers and scientists have pretty much had the run of the place since the end of World War II. Until recently, that was a good thing. Over the past 25 years or so, however, they have become political machines, with corruption endemic to such institutions.

Time to treat them like the rest of the partisan rent-seekers.

The folks at OMB are right on target with their guidance. They should stay the course.