



## Texas Curriculum Attacks Christianity and Liberty, Critics Fight Back

A deeply controversial and secretive education curriculum system known as “[CSCOPE](#),” a “customizable, online curriculum management system” used by more than two thirds of Texas schools, has come under heavy fire in recent weeks, with critics saying it promotes anti-Christian propaganda and so-called “[progressive](#)” values at odds with American traditions of liberty and self-government. Parents, teachers, experts, activists, and others were outraged. After lawmakers got involved, however, critics scored some partial victories against the program.



According to analysts and even some teachers who were forced to adopt the dubious scheme, CSCOPE is essentially a “[Marxist](#)” curriculum being used to brainwash Texas students. In one “World History” lesson for “social studies” that has received quite a bit of criticism, for example, students are ordered to design a “new communist flag” based on the symbols used by socialist regimes around the world.

During that same lesson, students are given a [handout](#) entitled “New Systems of Economic Thinking” and subtitled “The Big Ideas Emerging in the 18th and 19th centuries.” The deeply controversial document shows a man climbing up a set of stairs, with free enterprise and capitalism at the bottom described as an idea where “all people strive to fulfill their own needs and wants.”

The next step on the stairway is socialism at about the location where the upward-climbing man is located. Finally, at the very top comes communism, described in the handout as a system where “all people work together for everyone.” Critics slammed the document as pro-communist indoctrination, noting that communism and self-styled communist regimes were responsible for hundreds of millions of innocents murdered in just the last century.

“We capitalist are selfish greedy people aren’t we?” [wondered](#) conservative activist Ginger Russell rhetorically in a piece exposing the controversial lesson plan touting communism and socialism while making the free enterprise system appear outdated and negative to impressionable students. “Cscope is all about portraying communism in a positive light and the free enterprise/capitalist system as a selfish economic system.”

Another major concern highlighted by critics of the program is its alleged anti-Christian bigotry, an element of the curriculum that was blasted by more than a few concerned witnesses during a recent state Senate hearing on CSCOPE. Once again in a “World History” lesson in so-called “social studies,” young children are [introduced to Christianity as a “cult.”](#)

The program falsely suggests, for example, that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ described in the Bible are simply repackaged versions of Egyptian and Persian mythology — an absurd notion that has been [debunked](#) by countless scholars and theologians. The lesson also teaches students



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heretical doctrines, such as the claim that Jesus and his disciples “reinterpreted the laws of God.” Another assignment in the lesson refers to early Christians as a small cult accused of cannibalism.

According to CSCOPE spokespeople paid to defend the controversial curriculum, which has sparked a firestorm of controversy in recent weeks, religious content is all presented in a fair way. However, on the other hand, analysts noted that no known instances of Islam being criticized or ridiculed, for example, have been identified in the curriculum program’s material. Some critics even [called the curriculum system “pro-Islam”](#) during testimony at the state legislature and in interviews for news reports.

“It’s very pro-Islamic and it’s anti-Christian. It portrays Islam as being a very positive thing and it gives links for the children to go to that are anti-Christian,” [explained](#) leading anti-CSCOPE activist Russell, who teamed up with others to form the [Texas CSCOPE Review](#) dedicated to exposing the whole scheme. “Islam is not a religion. It’s a political ideology. And if you are raising our children in the public schools having a positive view of Islam, this is just horrible.”

Another issue that set alarm bells ringing among lawmakers, teachers, and parents was a CSCOPE lesson that teaches students the famous Boston Tea Party was an act of “terrorism” and its perpetrators “terrorists” — part of what critics said was an overarching theme in the material aimed at demonizing America’s founders. “The terrorists, dressed in disguise and apparently intoxicated, were able to escape into the night with the help of local citizens who harbor these fugitives and conceal their identities from the authorities,” [reads](#) part of the lesson plan.

For lawmakers, however, such wild rhetoric is highly inappropriate, to put it mildly. “It’s amazing that when you all called our Founding Fathers terrorists, in Texas, that you thought that wasn’t going to cause problems,” [noted](#) state Senator and Education Committee Chairman Dan Patrick, who grilled the scheme’s administrators and said he had not met a single teacher who was not critical of CSCOPE.

After a tidal wave of criticism surrounding the curriculum system reached the state legislature, Sen. Patrick held hearings January 31 and heard from a wide range of CSCOPE opponents. The system’s own officials defended the program. One major problem, however, was that, in violation of state law, teachers and school administrators were reportedly given a “[gag order](#)” — essentially mandating in the [terms of use](#) that all of the “educational” material remain hidden, even from parents, who according to state law have a right to see what their children are being taught.

One witness at the hearing, according to the Associated Press, even described the curriculum as “mind control.” A teacher cited in various media outlets [reportedly](#) cried as he testified about his decision to quit his job, saying he felt he was “aiding and abetting a crime” by being forced to use CSCOPE in his class. “Discontent is rampant across the state,” noted Texas director of Americans for Prosperity Peggy Venable.

Among the most prominent critics during the Texas Senate hearings was former State Board of Education representative Charlie Garza. “You can’t call anybody (at CSCOPE). There’s no oversight, yet you can make millions of dollars on things that’s not questionable? Where are the checks and balances? CSCOPE is immune to that,” [said](#) Garza, who called the actions “criminal.” Even as an elected official charged with education oversight, he could not get answers from CSCOPE despite repeated attempts, Garza added.

However, after the recent hearings in the state Senate, lawmakers and CSCOPE bosses have [agreed](#) that the controversial material should be reviewed and made public as a first step toward reform. More



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than a few — including some lawmakers — are calling for the whole scheme to be abolished. For now, though, the program’s administrators have promised to end the unlawful prohibition on letting taxpayers and parents know what children are learning.

An immediate review of the “social studies” component of the scheme, among the most controversial elements, has also been promised by a spokesperson for CSCOPE as a first step. Other aspects of CSCOPE will also be reviewed, and teachers will no longer be forced to follow the controversial curriculum verbatim, according to [news reports](#) about the sweeping changes being made after the problems were brought to light.

If oversight and accountability are not forthcoming, however, state Sen. Patrick and other critics said it would be time to scrap the whole scheme. “The future of the program will depend on CSCOPE keeping its commitments they have made and gaining the trust of the legislature, teachers and parents,” the state senator said in a widely praised statement released last week.

Texas, of course, has been one of just a handful of states resisting the [Obama administration’s attempt to force a deeply controversial national curriculum known as “Common Core” on America using taxpayer-funded bribes and other incentives](#). However, if some 70 percent of school districts in the Lone Star State are already using CSCOPE to “educate” students, the out-of-control federal government probably has no reason to worry about Texans’ resistance to Common Core anyway — at least not if serious reforms are not forthcoming.

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