

## Statement in Support of the Core Mission and Values of Higher Education in the United States of America

Private and public higher education institutions in the United States have for over three centuries contributed to the public good, and the nation's global leadership position, through the advancement and sharing of knowledge, and by providing pathways for workforce development.

Research funding in universities is judiciously used to drive innovation, providing an exceptional return on investment that advances economic growth, health and well-being, scientific breakthroughs, national security, and cultural and civic development. Academic research and scholarly expertise not only advance knowledge but are also vital to excellent teaching and training, ensuring that the U.S. workforce of the future remains globally competitive.

Higher education in the United States continuously sets standards for international excellence and attracts students and colleagues from all over the world. The contributions of international scholars and students to U.S. higher education are integral to its leadership position.

U.S. higher education's global excellence and public impact require working and learning environments that ensure opportunities for all. Initiatives that reduce discrimination are part of that imperative.

As recent challenges to funding and programming threaten to dismantle the conditions, the outcomes, and the core values and mission of higher education, at great detriment to the public at large and the U.S.'s international reputation, the undersigned faculty governance bodies affirm the following:<sup>1</sup>

1. Public and private universities serve the public good and contribute to the U.S.'s national and global excellence, through teaching, research, and service.
2. Cuts to research funding in higher education will undermine scientific innovation, health, societal progress, and the U.S.'s leadership position, with long-lasting detrimental impacts.
3. Academic scholarship and research, through peer review and professional accreditation, lead to evidence-based expertise, not partisan viewpoints.
4. We support academic freedom and free speech, and those who exercise their rights thereto, citizens and non-citizens alike.
5. We oppose the targeted harassment of faculty members for their expertise/work.

<sup>1</sup> This resolution was inspired by the 2/19/25 [resolution](#) passed by the Faculty Senate of the University of Virginia, "Resolution on External Challenges to Faculty Roles and Responsibilities." It was drafted collaboratively by governance leaders at universities in the Big Ten Academic Alliance.

**Commented [1]:** And, I suggest, something about "preparation of the workforce for careers of the present and future".

**Commented [2]:** our Provost shared that she worries we might be seen as suggesting that higher ed provides the "only" pathway to workforce preparation

**Commented [3]:** Still I agree it is one of our most important functions!

**Commented [4]:** This sounds like research funding is supporting "civic development". In the present environment, this part of the statement will further encourage the decrease/removal of funding. Let's not add fuel to the fire here.

Instead, what is missing is that research funding provides vital workforce training.

**Commented [5]:** workforce training is in the next sentence.

As mentioned in my e-mail, I would be reluctant to remove any reference to culture and civics.

**Commented [6]:** I agree that we should keep the language about civics and cultural expertise because I prefer not feed into the discourse that universities should focus primarily/narrowly on workforce development.

**Commented [7]:** Are all of these words necessary? The additional words make this less clear to the public in terms of what they are reading and perhaps supporting.

What "conditions" of higher education? This has to be as clear to the reader as the originators to have a document that will be meaningful beyond our circle.

**Commented [8]:** As the intended audience does not view what is happening as harassment, it may be better to indicate what we support. And it seems like faculty work and peaceful protest are two different topics. I also do not believe that this will be reasonably received by most of the public if we are "demanding" anything.

"We support the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution which guarantees the right of people to peaceably to assemble, and all community members who engage in peaceful assembly, regardless of viewpoint, should have the opportunity to do so."

**Commented [9]:** I like the suggested addition; agree that faculty harassment and freedom of assembly are separate.

In terms of harassment of faculty (again, provided our colleagues agree on the general goal of this document), I'd like to see it stay. Members of my own faculty specifically mentioned this point as something they were really happy to see on the draft.

~~6. and of all community members who engage in peaceful protest and demand exposure to diverse viewpoints.~~

~~5-7. We support the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution which guarantees the right of people to peaceably assemble. All community members who engage in peaceful assembly, regardless of viewpoint or citizenship status, should have the opportunity to do so.~~

6-8. We recognize that the dedication and expertise of staff and administrators are vital to our collective success.

7-9. We agree with the Department of Education that discrimination based on race, color, or national origin (Title VI), sex (Title IX), and disability (ADA) is reprehensible, affirming our legal and moral obligation as educational institutions not to discriminate based on these or other identifying characteristics. DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) initiatives, when grounded in best practice, help to reduce such discrimination, by increasing opportunities and ensuring real meritocracy for all.

8-10. We affirm the essential role of transparent and collaborative shared governance in maintaining the integrity of our universities, and commit to its continued strengthening.

9-11. Lastly, we call upon faculty, students, staff, alumni, and community partners of our universities to unite in support of the core mission, values, and academic freedoms of higher education in the U.S.

Faculty Senate of the University of Washington (Senate endorsement vote x/x/2025)

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Commented [10]: We do, but what is the point here IF this document is for the broad public? The greater the number of words, and the less relevant to the overall points we want people to understand, the less likely the document will be read/understood.

Commented [11]: I agree that the purpose of this statement is unclear. Can we clarify why it's important for us to acknowledge the importance of staff and administrators? (Universities would not exist but for faculty, would not run effectively without staff...?)

Commented [12]: If this if for the public, this will be completely unclear. If this is simply for universities across the country, okay. But, what purpose does this serve?

Commented [13]: If our colleagues agree that this is primarily a document for faculty, I'd like to keep this

Commented [14]: Hello, I would agree with keeping it, shared governance has been a hot topic at USC  
1 total reaction  
Sara Watson reacted with 🙌 at 2025-04-01 02:18 AM

Commented [15]: Are we asking for support of these aspects, or in general of higher education? "in support of higher education . . ."?

Commented [16]: my sense is it's worth parsing these elements out

Commented [17]: I like the wording you landed on