

Presentation of the Resolution to Establish Mutual Academic Defense Compacts Endorsed by the UMass Amherst Faculty Senate

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- Present current efforts to oppose the unprecedented government overreach and political interference now endangering American higher education
- Present a specific effort organized by our colleagues at UMass Amherst
- Request suggestions for how we can support these efforts

A Call for Constructive Engagement by the AAC&U

"As leaders of America's colleges, universities, and scholarly societies, we speak with one voice against the unprecedented government overreach and political interference now endangering American higher education. We are open to constructive reform and do not oppose legitimate government oversight. However, we must oppose undue government intrusion in the lives of those who learn, live, and work on our campuses. We will always seek effective and fair financial practices, but we must reject the coercive use of public research funding."

National Faculty Governance Efforts

- March 28th, Rutgers Faculty Senate passed a resolution urging establishment of a Mutual Academic Defense Compact (MADC) amongst the Big10 universities. Faculty of nine of the eighteen Big10 universities have voted to join.
- April 10th, UMass Amherst Faculty Senate passed a resolution urging the creation of two MADCs: one for Public and Land-Grant University and one for Massachusetts Institutions of Higher Education. Faculty of two universities have voted to join each of these compacts.
- An "informal group currently ... including Ivies and leading private research universities""have assembled a private collective to counter ... attacks on research funding and academic independence". WSJ 4/27



UMass Amherst MADC Tracker

<https://www.umass.edu/senate/madcs-tracker>

The UMass Amherst Resolution Urges:

- "Participating institutions shall commit meaningful support—financial, legal, organizational, and/or strategic—to a shared or distributed defense infrastructure designed to respond immediately and collectively to attacks by the governmental actors on any member institution."



UMass Amherst Senate Resolution

<https://www.umass.edu/senate/news/resolution-establish-mutual-academic-defense-compacts-defense-academic-freedom-free-expression>

The UMass Amherst Resolution Urges:

- "These compacts shall facilitate the mobilization of institutional resources—including legal counsel, governance experts, public affairs professionals, faculty governance leaders, research capacity, and media relations—to coordinate a unified and robust response, including but not limited to:
 - "Legal representation and, where appropriate, countersuit actions;
 - "Public communication strategies to counter misinformation and defend academic principles;
 - "Filing of amicus briefs, publication of expert testimony, and other legal interventions;
 - "Legislative advocacy and coordinated policy engagement at the state and federal levels;
 - "The development of collaborative strategies and frameworks to diversify funding streams beyond the federal government; and
 - "Rapid-response research and public-education initiatives."

Three Goals of Mutual Academic Defense Compacts

- To ensure uniform response to assaults
- To provide pooled legal resources and ensure coordinated legal responses
- To coordinate public messaging and ensure unified statements of support from all members

We Have an Opportunity to Support the Concept and Creation of Mutual Academic Defense Compacts

Possible future action:

That the Rules Committee bring forth a endorsement for a vote at the next Faculty Council meeting, crafted with input from the Faculty and Administration, laying out the recommendation of the Faculty as to whether and how we should proceed with Mutual Academic Defense Compacts.