

**University Senate**  
**May 5, 2025**

We, the University Senate of the University of Connecticut, in concert with the other Land Grant and Public flagship universities of New England, are uniting to declare our shared commitment to academic research, academic freedoms, and free speech. Given recent attacks on individual universities in the Northeast, it is vital that we make common cause, across institutions devoted to the public good, in defense of our shared values. At a time when there are external attempts to dictate university administration, it is vital that we defend our institutional commitment to shared governance and academic leadership. Our institutions are dedicated to strengthening the communities in which we are embedded. We collectively declare our commitment to our academic communities, the intellectual freedoms on which they are founded, and their role in serving and strengthening our state and local communities.

With those values in mind, we, as the University Senate of the University of Connecticut, of the Land Grant and Public flagship universities of New England, affirm the following statement:

***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 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, staff, 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 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:*

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.*
6. *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 without retaliation.*
7. *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. Initiatives that help to reduce such discrimination, when grounded in best practice, increase opportunities and ensure real meritocracy for all.*
8. *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. *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.*

Passed unanimously by voice vote