



University of New Mexico Staff Council 2025 Resolution, July 15th

Name: Staff Council Support for a Mutual Academic Defense Compact to Protect Academic Freedom, Free Expression, Institutional integrity and the Research Enterprise.

Authors: Joseph M. Lane, Grade 11; Grace Faustino, Grade 15; Angela Beauchamp, Precinct 4; Damion Terrell, Precinct 15;

Approved on:

1. WHEREAS, on April 29, 2025, the University of New Mexico (UNM) Faculty Senate adopted the Resolution to Establish Mutual Academic Defense Compacts in Defense of Academic Freedom, Free Expression, Institutional Integrity, and the Research Enterprise, affirming the critical need for proactive, collective action in the face of mounting external threats to the academy and all who work within it; and
2. WHEREAS, the defense of one institution's integrity is the concern of all, and an attack on any part of the university—faculty, staff, or students—is an attack on the whole, making staff support for the Mutual Academic Defense Compact a stand for job security, professional respect, and the shared values that make higher education possible; and
3. WHEREAS, on March 21, 2023, the UNM Staff Council unanimously passed its Resolution on Defending Academic Freedom for Faculty and Staff, expressing steadfast support for the principles of academic freedom, open inquiry, and shared governance as essential to the University's mission and to the well-being of all employees; and
4. WHEREAS, Other colleges and universities have passed similar resolutions such as the Resolution to Establish a Mutual Defense Compact for the Universities of the Big Ten Academic Alliance in Defense of Academic Freedom, Institutional Integrity, and the Research Enterprise; and
5. WHEREAS, staff at the University of New Mexico play vital roles in supporting and advancing the institution's research enterprise—including through direct participation in research projects, scholarly communication, data stewardship, and grant administration—and are thereby equally subject to the risks posed by federal research policy shifts, funding disruptions, and political interference; and
6. WHEREAS, targeted executive orders impact the structure and funding of student affairs programs, leading to job insecurity for the staff who directly interact with students, including our most vulnerable first generation, underrepresented, transgender, international, and undocumented students; and
7. WHEREAS, the recent actions by the Executive Branch of the United States government—including the arbitrary cancellation of research grants—have threatened the continuity of employment, undermined institutional autonomy, and diminished the professional standing of both faculty and staff. at public universities nationwide, including UNM; and

8. WHEREAS, the proposed executive order of May 2025 aimed at defunding the Corporation for Public Broadcasting places at risk UNM's public media affiliates, including KUNM and KNME-TV, and jeopardizes the jobs, journalistic missions, and community service of the staff who serve those outlets and the broader New Mexico public; and
9. WHEREAS, escalating governmental interventions, particularly at the federal level, pose grave and growing threats to the core values of American public higher education—values that include institutional independence, the integrity of the research process, and the freedoms of inquiry, expression, and association vital to a democratic society, and to the job security and professional dignity of all university employees; and
10. WHEREAS, America's public and land-grant universities—including the University of New Mexico, as a flagship public research institution—have long upheld a tradition of civic duty, cross-institutional collaboration, and steadfast defense of academic and democratic principles;
11. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the University of New Mexico Staff Council formally supports the creation of a Public and Land-Grant University Mutual Academic Defense Compact (PLUMADC) to safeguard the principles of academic freedom, research integrity, and free expression, and urges the President of the University of New Mexico to champion and help implement such a compact in partnership with peer institutions across the state and nation; and
12. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that under such compacts, participating institutions should commit to providing meaningful support—including financial, legal, organizational, and/or strategic resources—toward the development and maintenance of a shared or distributed defense infrastructure capable of responding swiftly, collectively, and effectively to government-initiated attacks on any member institution; and
13. BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the UNM Staff Council calls upon the President of the University of New Mexico, in coordination with the New Mexico Council of University Presidents (CUP), to establish a New Mexico Higher Education Mutual Academic Defense Compact (NMHEMADC)—a state-level coalition designed to provide a united, proactive front in defense of the missions, autonomy, and academic communities of New Mexico's public colleges and universities.

Copies of this Resolution shall be sent to the UNM Board of Regents; Dr. Garnett Stokes, President; Teresa Costantinidis, Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration; Dr. Barbara Rodríguez, Interim Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs; Dr. Mike Richards, Executive Vice President for HSC and CEO of the UNM Health System; Dr. Assata Zerai, Vice President for Equity and Inclusion; Cinnamon Blair, Chief Marketing and Communications Officer; Kevin Stevenson, Vice President for Human Resources; Heather Jaramillo, Director of Equal Opportunity & ADA Coordinator; Dr. Valerie Romero-Leggott, Vice President and Executive Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer, HSC; Sidney Mason-Coon, University Policy Officer; Faculty Senate c/o Roberta Lavin, Faculty Senate President; and The Daily Lobo.