

**Northern Arizona University
Faculty Senate
Senate Resolution**

Approved 10-21-2025

Resolution Introduced by: Kate Ellis

Title of Resolution: Resolution advising against signing the Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education

Whereas: NAU has a deep commitment to admissions for all students who demonstrate college readiness and has developed numerous programs to provide equal opportunities, regardless of a student's identity; NAU does not treat "certain groups as categorically incapable of performing," but instead makes it possible for more students to access the transformative power of a college education. Higher education promotes the health and sustainability of democracy (Perrin & Gillis, 2019; Sanborn & Thyne, 2013);

Whereas: A true "marketplace of ideas" comes when we make possible a "free trade of ideas" as Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. said in 1919, where many different ideas compete for truth in open exchange, and are never restricted by government censorship;

Whereas: The Compact proposes replacing the disciplinary and pedagogical expertise and integrity of faculty with a federally mandated, one-size-fits all set of values. NAU Faculty, as highly trained experts on the social, intellectual, and economic needs of society must remain dynamic and independent to meet the challenges of tomorrow;

Whereas: This proposed Compact runs counter to Shared Governance and to the autonomy of our Institution and Faculty. Restrictions on curriculum, admissions, and hiring do not serve the rapidly evolving social and economic needs of NAU's students or the communities we serve;

Therefore: The Faculty Senate at Northern Arizona University advises against NAU signing on to the Compact for Excellence in Higher Education.

References

- Apergis, N. (2018). Education and democracy: New evidence from 161 countries. *Economic Modeling*, 71, 59 – 67. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econmod.2017.12.001>
- Perrin, A. J. & Gillis, A. (2019). How college makes citizens: Higher education experiences and political engagement. *SOCIUS*, 5, 1 -16. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2378023119859708>
- Sanborn, H. & Thyne, C. L. (2013). Learning democracy: Education and the fall of authoritarian regimes. *British Journal of Political Science*, 44(4), 773 – 797. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123413000082>