

Faculty Senate Resolution Number S-2025-17

TO: Dwayne Smith, Ph.D., Interim President, Southern Connecticut State University
FROM: Natalie Starling, Ph.D., President, SCSU Faculty Senate

The attached Resolution of the Faculty Senate is entitled:

RESOLUTION Regarding Calling Upon Stakeholders to Establish a Plan for Mutual Defense Compacts

This resolution was approved by Faculty Senate on: May 7, 2025

☐ This resolution is presented for APPROVAL

☒ This resolution is presented for INFORMATION

In accordance with the CSU-AAUP Contract (Article 5.10), "When the Senate makes a written recommendation to the President, the President shall acknowledge and respond to the recommendation in writing within fifteen (15) days of receiving the Senate's recommendation."

After considering this resolution, please indicate your action on this form and return it to the President of the Faculty Senate.

Natalie Starling

Natalie Starling, Ph.D., President, SCSU Faculty Senate

05/09/2025

Date

cc: Julia Irwin, Ph.D., Interim Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs

ACTION OF THE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT

Resolution for Approval

☐ Resolution APPROVED

☐ Resolution DISAPPROVED (Attach statement)

Resolution for Information

☒ Resolution NOTED (applies to Informational Resolutions only)

Dwayne Smith
Dwayne Smith (May 9, 2025 14:37 EDT)

Dwayne Smith, Ph.D., Interim President, SCSU

05/09/2025

Date

Statement



FACULTY SENATE

Resolution for Information Calling Upon Stakeholders to Establish a Plan for Mutual Defense Compacts

Whereas, Southern Connecticut State University exists for the primary purpose of furthering academic excellence;

Whereas, The Faculty Senate is the official governing body for shared governance;

Whereas, The Faculty Senate represents a longstanding tradition of furthering academic excellence, supporting the wide range of faculty activities that include commitment to democratic values and shared governance;

Whereas, The Faculty Senate recognizes its role within the Connecticut State University (CSU) system in representing SCSU faculty as one of four members that constitute the CSUs (Central Connecticut State University (CCSU), Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU), SCSU, and Western Connecticut State University (WCSU));

Whereas, The Faculty Senate recognizes its role within the wider community of higher education institutions in Connecticut, New England, and the United States;

Whereas, institutions of higher education in Connecticut, New England, and the United States—public and private, large and small—share a longstanding commitment to academic freedom, democratic governance, civic responsibility, and the pursuit of knowledge for the public good;

Whereas, Connecticut, alongside other states, is home to a diverse and nationally respected higher education ecosystem that serves hundreds of thousands of students and employees tens of thousands of educators, researchers, and staff whose work supports innovation, critical inquiry, social mobility, individual and community well-being and engagement;

Whereas, The Faculty Senate recognizes its role includes a shared responsibility to strive toward collective awareness of and support for the efforts of the other institutions to further academic excellence and the aforementioned shared goals and responsibilities; and

Whereas, the preservation of one institution's integrity is the concern of all, and an infringement against one institution shall be considered an infringement against all; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Faculty Senate of Southern Connecticut State University urges stakeholders, the Board of Regents (BOR), the CSU Chancellor, SCSU President, together with CSU faculty, to formally propose and help establish a Connecticut Higher Education University Mutual Academic Defense Compact (CTHEUMADC) among all institutions that would like to participate; and be it further

Resolved, That this compact shall facilitate the mobilization of institutional resources—including legal counsel, government experts, public affairs professionals, faculty governance leaders, research capacity, and media relations—to coordinate a unified and robust response, including but not limited to:

- Public communication strategies to counter disinformation and misinformation and defend academic freedom and principles;
- 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;
- Rapid-response research and public-education initiatives; and
- Development of strategies and tactics for resisting government attacks on faculty academic freedom and efforts to intervene in faculty decision-making about the content of curriculum, research, and creative activity; and be it further

Resolved, That the Faculty Senate of Southern Connecticut State University urges stakeholders, the Board of Regents (BOR), the CSU Chancellor, SCSU President, together with CSU faculty, to gather information about legal representation and other legal interventions (e.g., filing amicus briefs, publication of expert testimony, other legal interventions) related to the establishment of mutual defense compacts; and be it further

Resolved, That the CSU Chancellor and BOR take leading roles in the convening of summits of faculty and administration leaders to initiate the implementation of this compact and affirm the collective commitment to defend academic freedom, freedom of expression, freedom of thought, institutional autonomy, and the public mission of higher education in Connecticut; and be it further

Resolved, That this resolution be transmitted to the leadership of all public and private colleges and universities across the state of Connecticut, as well as their shared governance bodies.