

APPROVED BY SENATE

04/28/2025

RS.25.01

April 28, 2025

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE

PRE-FILED RESOLUTION

(Final; Action)

RS.25.01      Resolution to Join a Mutual Academic Defense Compact (MADC) for the Universities of the Big Ten Academic Alliance

WHEREAS recent and escalating politically motivated actions by governmental bodies pose a significant threat to the foundational principles of American higher education, including the autonomy of shared governance, the integrity of academic freedom, education, and research, along with the protection of free speech;

WHEREAS the Trump administration and aligned political entities have targeted individual institutions with legal, financial, and political incursion designed to undermine their public mission, silence dissenting voices, and/or exert improper control over academic inquiry;

WHEREAS the Big Ten Academic Alliance represents values beyond athletic competition, including a longstanding tradition of academic collaboration, educational and research excellence, and a commitment to democratic values and shared governance;

WHEREAS the Big Ten Academic Alliance includes 18 universities with thousands of instructors serving over 520,000 students;

WHEREAS the preservation of one institution's integrity is the concern of all, and an infringement against any member university of the Big Ten shall be considered an infringement against all;

WHEREAS on March 28, 2025, the Rutgers University Senate approved a "[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](#)," calling on "the President of Rutgers University to formally propose and help establish a Mutual Academic Defense Compact (MADC) among all members of the Big Ten Academic Alliance;"

WHEREAS on April 1, 2025, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Faculty Senate [endorsed the Rutgers resolution](#), on April 8, 2025, the Indiana University Bloomington Faculty Council [approved a resolution calling on its university leadership](#) to join the Mutual Academic Defense Compact (MADC), on April 15, 2025, the Michigan State University Faculty Senate [adopted a](#)

[similar resolution](#), on April 17, 2025, the University of Washington Faculty Senate [adopted a similar resolution](#), and on April 20, 2025, the University of Michigan Faculty Senate [also adopted a similar resolution](#);

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Senate calls on the President of the University of Illinois system and the Chancellor of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign to join and take any necessary steps to establish a Mutual Academic Defense Compact (MADC) among all members of the Big Ten Academic Alliance;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** under this proposed compact, all participating institutions should commit meaningful funding to a shared or distributed defense fund, to be used to provide immediate and strategic support to any member institution under direct political or legal infringement;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that as a participating institution, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign should make available, at the request of the institution under direct political infringement, the services of their legal counsel, governance experts, and public affairs offices to coordinate a unified and vigorous response, including but not limited to: legal representation and countersuit actions; strategic public communication; amicus briefs and expert testimony; legislative advocacy and coalition-building; related topical research as needed;

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Senate calls on the President of the University of Illinois system and the Chancellor of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign to join and take any steps necessary to establish additional mutual defense agreements or compacts that form among groups of our partner institutions and coalitions (e.g. the [“Resolution To Establish Mutual Academic Defense Compacts In Defense Of Academic Freedom, Free Expression, Institutional Integrity, And The Research Enterprise”](#) approved by the University of Massachusetts Amherst Senate on April 10, 2025, calling for an Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities compact).

Respectfully submitted and co-sponsored by:

Shawn Gilmore, English (LAS)

David Beck, History (LAS)

Chelsea Birchmier, Graduate Student, Psychology (LAS)

Kathryn Clancy, Anthropology (LAS)

Eleanor Courtemanche, English (LAS)

Jon Hale, Education Policy, Organization & Leadership (EDUC)

Lilah Leopold, PhD Candidate, Art History/Art & Design (FAA)

Erik S. McDuffie, African American Studies (LAS)

Faranak Miraftab, Urban and Regional Planning (FAA)  
Ellen Moodie, Anthropology (LAS)  
David O'Brien, Art History/Art & Design (FAA)  
Pollyanna Rhee, Landscape Architecture (FAA)  
Gilberto Rosas, Anthropology and Latina/Latino Studies (LAS)  
Charles Roseman, Evolution, Ecology, and Behavior (LAS)  
Taher Saif, Mechanical Science and Engineering (ENG)  
Lindsey Stirek, Art & Design (FAA)  
Roderick I. Wilson, East Asian Languages and Cultures (LAS)  
Augustus Wood, School of Labor and Employment Relations (LER)