

Resolution Opposing the Federal "Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education"

Queens College Academic Senate

November 13, 2025

Whereas the federally proposed “Compact for Excellence in Higher Education” offers colleges and universities preferential consideration for federal funding in exchange for significant concessions in academic freedom, institutional integrity, scholarly diversity, and autonomous decision-making that will cede control in these areas to the federal government; and

Whereas intellectual autonomy is the foundational principle of institutions of higher learning, in that it creates meaningful curricula, produces valuable research, promotes innovation, upholds the principles of open inquiry and free speech, and educates future leaders without undue external interference; and

Whereas tying federal funding to political or policy compliance rather than scholarly merit undermines the integrity of the peer-review process and erodes – rather than increases – academic excellence; and

Whereas for faculty this "Compact" runs counter to First Amendment rights and principles of academic freedom; and

Whereas for institutions this "Compact" weakens institutional autonomy in fundamental ways by replacing self-governance on issues such as curriculum and admissions with federal mandates; and

Whereas for students this "Compact" threatens access to education through restrictions on federal loans and caps on foreign student enrollment; and

Whereas, for these reasons and others, this "Compact" is a significant impediment to the success of Queens College as an engine of equity and upward mobility; and

Whereas academic excellence will not result from capitulation to a “Compact” that shackles the independence, creativity, and pursuit of knowledge that has enabled American universities, some of the best centers of learning in the world, to provide enormous benefits to society at large; and

Whereas we make progress not by abandoning our principles but by upholding them;

Be it therefore resolved that the Queens College Academic Senate calls for the administrative leadership of Queens College and the City University of New York to reject this “Compact” as well as any similar proposal that compromises the mission, values, and independence of the college and the university.