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"Northwestern Faculty Vote to Protect Students, Safeguard Academic Freedom from Unlawful Trump Edicts"

In an historic, landslide vote -- 338 to 83 -- Northwestern University's highest faculty legislative body voted to establish faculty oversight of the Board of Trustees and to defend academic freedom against edicts of the Trump administration. The [resolutions](#), drafted by the Northwestern chapter of the American Association of University Professors, are a rebuke to the Northwestern leadership's capitulations to the Trump administration and House Republicans. The resolutions call for protections for free speech, retractions of recent policies singling out one group for a special definition of discrimination and forced training modules, restrictions on the University's digital surveillance, support for faculty impacted by federal cuts, and withdrawal from federal immigration data-sharing programs. The tenth resolution mandates the creation of eight faculty visitor seats with full access to Board of Trustees meetings and records — a direct challenge to the Board's long-standing evasion of its obligation to shared governance.

"The Northwestern University Board of Trustees, President, Provost, Deans, and Faculty Senate have failed to effectively defend academic freedom and protect the faculty, staff, and students of Northwestern University from unlawful federal actions" and "have affirmatively instituted policies in compliance with unlawful demands of the federal government antithetical to core values of education and academic freedom," states the resolutions' preamble.

The resolutions direct use of the university's legal resources to protect the rights of faculty, students and staff from unlawful federal actions, including from censorship of teaching and research on history, identities, and diversity.

As campuses push back against threats to their autonomy, the Northwestern faculty resolutions are among the strongest to date and offer effective tools for other faculties seeking to defend the integrity of higher education.

The complete resolution can be read [here](#).

Quotes:

"This vote is a watershed moment," said Prof. Jacqueline Stevens, Northwestern AAUP president and political science faculty member. "The Board now will be considering specific policies to defend academic freedom at Northwestern. For the sake of the University and our democracy, we urge the Board to ally with their faculty and not an unlawful regime."

Rebecca Zorach, Faculty Senate Representative, Art History, "Achieving a quorum and this strong positive vote makes a momentous statement on behalf of faculty governance. The University is education and research; the Board of Trustees is not the University."

According to Northwestern AAUP treasurer Jorge Coronado, "The resolutions express powerfully that the faculty insist on oversight of the university's mission."

"Universities must stand together and forcefully resist attacks on our autonomy, legitimacy, and the integrity of our world-leading research and teaching. The Northwestern resolutions are a step in that direction," said Aaron Shaw, Associate Professor of Communication Studies and NU AAUP member.

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