

**ACADEMIC SENATE
OF
THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY**

AS-3408-20/FA (Rev)
January 23–24, 2020

**ACADEMIC SENATE CSU (ASCSU) ENDORSEMENT OF THE AMERICAN
ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS (AAUP) STATEMENT “*IN DEFENSE
OF KNOWLEDGE AND HIGHER EDUCATION*”**

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of the CSU is in receipt of the document “*In Defense of Knowledge and Higher Education*”; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the ASCSU assert that sentiments expressed within this document are congruent with the mission and values of the California State University (CSU) concerning education as a common and public good and the foundational importance of facts and expertise to the national conversation; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the ASCSU assert that it is incumbent on the CSU to remind the public of these principles; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of the CSU endorse this AAUP statement; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the ASCSU distribute this resolution to the CSU Board of Trustees; CSU Chancellor; CSU campus Presidents; CSU Provosts/Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs; CSU Emeritus and Retired Faculty and Staff Association (CSU-ERFSA); California State Students Association (CSSA); and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).

RATIONALE: *According to the AAUP statement, In Defense of Knowledge and Higher Education, dated November 2019, “Without knowledge no nation can govern its economy, manage its environment, its public health, produce goods or services, understand its own history, or enable its citizens to understand the circumstances in which they live.” This foundational statement undergirds the statement prepared by the Association’s Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure, which was approved by the committee in October 2019.*

This statement is timely as it acknowledges the perils of the time in which we live, a time marked by negative perceptions and labels on education. The

authors push back against the notion of the “academic elite,” instead pursuing the recognition that “this is research and education, not intimidation and elitism.” Research and education are inextricably linked. As such, having government establish policy on “the basis of informed, dispassionate investigation” is critical to the success of any public policy-making agenda. Yet, in the US researchers are dissuaded from engaging in research on issues related to climate change, white supremacist domestic terrorism, gun violence, abortion, or contraception by policies that deter and prohibit analysis and study. What is more, we have witnessed at the federal level removal of extant data and the government publications in which they are found.

“Knowledge is a public good. Because it serves the common good, it should be available for use by all.” Yet, “the faith that American higher education produces expert knowledge that benefits the entire society has diminished. Indeed, the unequal and unfair distribution of educational opportunity may well have played a significant role in making expertise appear more like a privilege of the wealthy than an expression of their interest and a disinterested contribution to the public good. But facts are facts. We need the knowledge, the technology, the art, and the culture that in a modern society are so deeply dependent on our colleges and universities. We also need a more equal and accessible system of education.”

Colleges and universities deserve public support to the extent that American society requires expert knowledge...expert knowledge has fueled American progress. Without expert knowledge, we lose our ability to know the past, the future, and technology differences and similarities we share as human beings.”

Reference: AAUP. (2019). In Defense of Knowledge and Higher Education.

Approved Without Dissent - March 19-20, 2020