

I. The Federal Role in Higher Education:

Despite the absences of “higher education” or “education” in the United States Constitution, the federal government shares governance over higher education with state governments.¹ The role and influence of the federal government in higher education has evolved over time from providing land use rights for institutions to being a primary source of finances and regulations for higher institutions.¹ The below chart provides a history of significant legislative acts by the federal government to create and regulate higher education in the United States.

A TIMELINE OF THE FEDERAL ROLE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

1787	The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 provided land grants in the Midwest to develop schools and colleges.
1862	The first Morrill Land Grant Act established land grant public institutions in every state – <i>This act paved the way for the creation of the University of California.</i>
1890	The second Morrill Land Grant Act created land grant institutions for Black and African Americans in the South – <i>Also known as historically black colleges and universities (HBCU).</i>
1930s	A form of work-study was created during the Great Depression by the National Youth Administration to help assist 18-25 youths develop skills to find employment after they finished the educational program – <i>Similar to apprenticeships programs.</i> ²

¹ Natow, Rebecca S. Reexamining the Federal Role in Higher Education: Politics and Policymaking in the Postsecondary Sector. Teachers College Press, 2022.

² <https://narations.blogs.archives.gov/2011/06/24/family-tree-friday-the-national-youth-administration-1935-1943/#:~:text=NYA%20created%20a%20means%20for%20young%20men,for%20schools%20to%20nursing%20and%20junior%20clerks.>

1940s	During World War II financial grant partnerships were formed between higher education institutions and the federal government to produce research to aid in the war efforts.
1944	The GI Bill provided financial aid to war veterans to assist in re-assimilate into the work force through access to higher education.
AFTER WWII	Enrollment in higher education exponentially expanded with hundreds of new colleges being formed.
1954	Supreme Court Cases stated segregation in higher education institutions violated the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution.
1964	Adopted Title VI of the Civil Rights Act to prohibit discrimination in programs which receive federal funding.
1965	Adopted the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide federal student financial aid. The Act also established the authority for the federal government to regulate higher education institutions.
1972	Adopted Title IX to provide sex and gender discrimination in all education programs including higher education.
1973	Adopted Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act which established protections for students with disabilities.
1974	Adopted the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) to create protections around student records and data – established data protections still used today, requires students or guardians to provide permission before sensitive data is shared with others.
1980	The U.S. Department of Education (USDE) was established as a permanent agency with a secretary appointed by the President and confirmed by Congress.

1990	The Clery Act was established to require higher education institutions to report on crimes that occur on or near the campus.
1990s	The cost of attending college skyrockets and policy advocates turn to accountability in how funds are spent.
2014	The Gainful Employment Rule was adopted which requires career training programs to provide gainful employment for graduates.

Chart derived from “The Federal Role in Higher Education: A Q and A with Rebecca Natow.”³

The federal government has a large role in the oversight and funding of higher education institutions. Almost every regulatory or oversight condition placed on higher education institutions is tied to the acceptance of federal funding by the institutions. Federal funding is provided to higher education institutions in the form of student financial aid, research grants (which can be from any federal department), grants provided by the USDE based on student population or the type of education provided, or categorical funding for unforeseen disasters such as the FEMA funding for disasters or COVID-19 recovery funds.⁴ Each public higher education institution in the State receives federal funding in some form. Federal funding accounts for \$7.3 billion in the 2025-2026 State Budget for Higher Education.⁵

II. Sources of Federal Funding for California Higher Education Institutions:

Pell Grant - The Pell Grant is a financial aid award provided by the federal government to students who demonstrate exceptional financial need on their Financial Application for Federal Student Aid (FASFA) form and have not earned a degree from an accredited college or university. The maximum Pell Grant Award for the 2025-2026 academic year is \$7,395.⁶

³ <https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/easyblog/federal-role-higher-education-natow.html>

⁴ <https://www.ppica.org/publication/californias-higher-education-funding-landscape/>

⁵ <https://calbudgetcenter.org/resources/federal-funds-drive-one-third-of-californias-state-budget/>

⁶ <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/grants/pell>

The One Big Beautiful Bill, signed in July 2025, included changes to the existing Pell Grant program by 1) removes Pell Grant access for students who are receiving other non-title VI grant aid (aid from non-federal sources) 2) expands Pell Grant eligibility for short-term job training programs.⁷ In 2024-2025, 413,218 California Community College (CCC) students received Pell Grant for a total of \$1.8 billion award dollars ([Data from the CCC Data Mart](#)). In 2023-2024, 207,158 California State University (CSU) students received Pell Grants for a total of \$1.07 billion in award dollars ([CSU Legislative Report 2025](#)). In 2023-2024, 80,034 University of California (UC) undergraduate students received Pell Grants for a total of \$454.4 million in award dollars ([UC Information Center](#)).

Question: How will the changes in Pell Grant impact CCC and CSU students?

According to the UC Office of the President (UCOP), 74 students who had previously received Pell Grant funds will be ineligible.⁸

Student Loan Program – Federal student loans are provided through the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program which, is the largest loan program in the U.S. As of June 2025, the loan program provides loans to 42.3 million borrowers totaling \$1.665 billion in federal loan debt. Under this program, the federal government offers three different types of direct loans to students and their families.

- *Direct Subsidized Loans* – are need-based loans that are available to undergraduate students. The amount loaned to the student is determined by their financial need and the cost of attending their chosen university. A borrower utilizing this loan may borrow up to \$23,000 for undergraduate, and \$56,000 for graduate degrees and the USDE will pay the interest of the loan for a defined period of time.
- *Direct Unsubsidized Loans* – are available to undergraduate and graduate students regardless of financial need. While the receipt of the loan is not conditional upon need, the amount

⁷ <https://ticas.org/affordability-2/reconciliation-2025-pell/>

⁸ https://www.ucop.edu/federal-governmental-relations/_files/summary-of-federal-financial-aid-changes-from-reconciliation-bill-july-25-2025.pdf

loaned to the student is determined by their financial need and the cost of attending their chosen university. An undergraduate may borrow up to \$57,000 and a graduate may borrow up to \$138,500. The borrower is required to pay for the interest for the lifetime of the loan, but may elect to delay payment until after graduation.

- *Direct Plus Loans* – are available to either graduate or professional students, or to the parents of dependent undergraduate students, to cover the cost of attending a university not covered by other financial aid. The borrower is responsible for paying the interest on the loan immediately and there is no maximum for the amount which can be borrowed. A credit check is required for the procurement of this loan.

The One Big Beautiful Bill, signed in July 2025, included changes to the existing federal student loan program. The bill did the following:⁹

- Eliminated the Graduate Plus Loan Program and placed a cap on the borrowing capacity to up to \$100,000 for graduate students and for \$200,000 for professional students. Students are currently allowed to borrow up to the full cost of attendance each year;
- Limits the Parent Plus Loan program to \$65,000 per student. Currently, parents are allowed to borrow up to the full cost of attendance for the student.
- Placed a new aggregate lifetime loan amount of \$275,500 regardless of the amount repaid or forgiven;
- Terminated all repayment plans authorized under the income-contingent repayment statute; and,
- Replaced existing repayment plans with two new standard plans and a new income-based plan.

Question – How will the changes in the federal student loan program impact recruitment efforts by the CSU and UC for undergraduate and graduate programs?

⁹ <https://ticas.org/affordability-2/provisions-affecting-higher-education-in-the-reconciliation-law/>

Federal Funding through the State Budget – One third of the entire State Budget is provided by the federal government.⁵ In the 2025-2026, the federal government provided the public higher education segments the following funding (labeled as federal funds – not in state treasury):

- UC – \$5.61 billion.¹⁰
- CSU – \$1.728 billion.¹⁰
- CCC – does not list “federal funds” in the state budget.¹⁰

Question – What is the total amount of federal funding each public higher education segment receives from the Federal Government?

Research Funding – Nearly every federal agency provides grant funding for specified research. In order to access the research funding, higher education institutions or their designated faculty, must apply for the grant and meet specified criteria. The two agencies credited with the bulk of research funding for higher education institutions are the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation. In the last several months, the federal government has cancelled numerous grants to various higher education institutions based on claims the institutions are not in compliance with federal anti-discrimination laws. Most of these grants have been reinstated by various courts; however the fluidity of the grant funding has disrupted research at the campus-level.¹¹

According to the UC, the system receives \$5.7 billion in research funding from the federal government each year.¹² According to the UC Data Center, federal awards to the UC were down 11.2% in fiscal year 2024.¹³

¹⁰ [Department of Finance](#)

¹¹ <https://calmatters.org/education/2025/09/ucla-research-grants/#:~:text=A%20federal%20judge%20in%20California,speech%20and%20academic%20freedom%20rights.%E2%80%9D> and <https://www.highereddive.com/news/nih-temporarily-restores-uc-grants-under-court-order/801855/#:~:text=Dive%20Brief,duration%20of%20the%20court%20case>.

¹² https://ucop.edu/communications/_files/uc-and-the-federal-government.pdf

¹³ <https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/about-us/information-center/awards-and-proposals>

At a CSU Board of Trustees meeting in January 2025, it was reported that the CSU's research funding had expanded to \$812 million in the 2022-2023 fiscal year. Federal agencies contributed 63% of the research funds with the following agencies providing the following funds:

- \$161 million from the Department of Health and Human Services;
- \$114 million from the Department of Education;
- \$75 million from the National Science Foundation;
- \$31 million from the Department of Agriculture; and,
- \$29 million from the Department of Defense.¹⁴

By the September 2025 meeting, 130 grants allocated to the CSU were cancelled by federal agencies.¹⁵

Questions – What type of research has been most impacted by the federal cuts and subsequent restoration of funding?

In addition to the “cancellation” of funding to the CSU and UC, have researchers from these institutions found an increase in denial of grants to the institutions?

How will the cancellation of research grant dollars impact the ability for the CSU and UC to recruit faculty, administrators, and students to the universities?

Non-Research Grant Funds – In addition to research grant funds, the federal government provides grant funds through the USDE to support student services. The department provides discretionary grants for:

- *The improvement of postsecondary education* – which are grants provided to support and evaluate innovative educational reform ideas;

¹⁴ <https://www.calstate.edu/csu-system/board-of-trustees/past-meetings/2025/Pages/January-28-29-2025.aspx>

¹⁵ <https://www.calstate.edu/csu-system/board-of-trustees/past-meetings/2025/pages/september-7-10-2025.aspx>

- *International and foreign language education* – which are grants provided to improve foreign language instruction, professional development, and curriculum development; and,
- *Grants for Historically Black College Universities and Predominately Black Institutions (HBCUs)*.¹⁶

Within the last nine months, the USDE has cancelled several non-research grants that have impacted California colleges and universities:

- *Child Care Access Means Parents In school (CCAMPIS) program* – Since 2011, the USDE has provided grants to postsecondary education institutions to support or establish campus-based child care programs and/or before-and after-school services for low-income parents. Past recipients of the grant included 46 different CCC, CSU, and UC campuses. The average award in fiscal year 2023 was \$317,108. In September 2025, the U.S. Department announced some recipients would have their CCAMPIS grant discontinued due to concern the recipients' policies and practices were in conflict with the federal government's policies.¹⁷ According to the CSU, Cal State LA lost their CCAMPIS funding of \$450,000.¹⁸

Question – Did any other CCC, CSU, or UC campuses lose their CCAMPIS funding due to changes in the eligibility requirements?

What child care services will be reduced or lost due to the cut in federal funding?

- *Minority Serving Institution Grants* - The concept of a minority-serving institution was established in the wake of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as a tool to provide educational equity to institutions who were serving predominately underrepresented groups in higher education. Originally comprised of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) and Tribal Colleges and Universities, the term has been expanded by amendments to the Federal Higher Education Act of 1965 to include Predominately Black Institutions (PBI), Hispanic-

¹⁶ <https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/grants-higher-education>

¹⁷ <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2025/09/02/education-department-cuts-ccampis-funding-some-colleges>

¹⁸ <https://www.calstate.edu/weekly-updates/Pages/default.aspx#825>

Serving Institutions (HSI), Asian American, Native American, and Pacific Islander-Serving Institution Program (ANNAPISI), and Alaska Native-Serving and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions (ANNH). Once a higher education institution receives one of the above designations as a Minority-Serving Institution (MSI), the institution would then qualify to apply for competitive grants and additional federal funding. On September 10, 2025, the USDE announced “that it will end discretionary funding to several Minority-Serving Institutions (MSI) grant programs that discriminate by conferring government benefits exclusively to institutions that meet racial or ethnic quotas. This action follows the U.S. Solicitor General’s determination in July that the Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI) programs ‘violate the equal-protection component of the Fifth Amendment’s Due Process Clause,’ and that the Department of Justice would not defend them in ongoing litigation.”¹⁹ The announcement ended funding for the following MSI grant programs:

- Strengthening Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions (Title III Part A);
- Strengthening Predominantly Black Institutions (Title III Part A);
- Strengthening Asian American- and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (Title III Part A);
- Strengthening Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions (Title III Part A);
- Minority Science and Engineering Improvement (Title III Part E);
- Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions (Title V Part A); and
- Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans (Title V Part B).¹⁸

The USDE estimated \$350 million in grant funding were cancelled.¹⁸

In subsequent press releases, the CCC, CSU, and UC all indicated the cancellation of MSI funding would impact California colleges and universities.

¹⁹ <https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/us-department-of-education-ends-funding-racially-discriminatory-discretionary-grant-programs-minority-serving-institutions>

The Chancellor's Office of the CCC indicated the system has lost \$31.2 million in MSI grant funding in the current fiscal year and if the grants are not restored it could result in a total loss of \$61.4 million. The CCC system has 99 HSI colleges, 49 MSI colleges, and 12 ANNAPISI colleges.

The CSU Chancellor's Office indicated in a monthly update to Committee Staff that "29 discretionary MSI grants, totaling approximately \$43 million, were discontinued across 19 CSU campuses. These federal cuts will halt critical student supportive services throughout the CSU. The Chancellor's Office is reviewing legal options."

Nine UC campuses are designated as ANNAPISI universities and five are designated as HSI universities. The total loss of funds for the UC equates to \$12.1 million.

Question – What is the total loss in MSI grant funding for the CCC, CSU, and UC? What programs will be impacted by the loss of funds?

- *Teacher Quality Partnership and Supporting Effective Educator Development Grants* – Appropriated by Congress, these grants were designed to assist in the creation of new teacher education pipelines for qualified teachers in rural and urban areas. In February 2025, the USDE terminated grants awarded to K-12 teacher preparation programs nationwide. The total cancellation of funds equaled \$148 million and affected CSU Los Angeles, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Chico State, and UCLA. California is currently suing for the restoration of the funds.²⁰

Question – What were the teacher grants used for at the universities listed above and how does the loss of funds impact the ongoing efforts to reduce the teacher shortage in California?

New Priorities for Federal Funding – On November 10, 2025, the USDE announced seven priorities for the use of funds under the "Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary

²⁰ [Attorney General Bonta Secures Early Court Decision Stopping Trump Administration's Unlawful Termination of K-12 Teacher Preparation Pipeline Grants | State of California - Department of Justice - Office of the Attorney General](#)

Education.” Applications for the fund opened on November 10 and the grants are expected to be awarded by December 31, 2025. The new priorities are as follows:

- *\$50 million for Artificial Intelligence* – priority will be given to projects that use AI as a tool to improve teaching, learning, and student success in education and projects that broaden access to AI and computer science courses;
- *\$60 million for Civil Discourse* – priority will be given to support respectful deliberation and debate on college campuses;
- *\$7 million for Accreditation* – funding will be given directly to support colleges and universities in their efforts to change the accrediting agency and to support the development/launch of new accrediting agencies; and,
- *\$50 million for Short-Term Programs* – priority will be given to institutions that will create or expand short-term programs that are aligned with workforce goals.²¹

III. Executive Orders Affecting Higher Education:

In a presentation to the CSU Board of Trustees, the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Federal Relations, Jeff Cullen stated over 170 different executive orders from President Trump have impacted higher education.¹⁵ This administration has primarily used executive orders to redefine and shape how regulations and existing laws are administered and enforced by departments and agencies. Examples of Executive Orders impacting higher education institutions include, but are not limited to:

- *Executive Order 14287* – [Protecting American Communities from Criminal Aliens](#) – Includes a provision that has the U.S. Attorney General identifying and taking appropriate action to stop the enforcement of State and local laws that provide in-state higher education tuition to “illegal immigrants” but not to out of state American citizens. Several states have

²¹ <https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/us-department-of-education-releases-seven-priorities-under-fund-improvement-of-postsecondary-education>

been sued over state laws that provide in-state tuition to “illegal immigrants”; however, legal action has not been taken against California with regards to this executive order.

- *Executive Order 14279* – [Reforming Accreditation to Strengthen Higher Education](#) – Seeks to remove accreditors who engage in “unlawful discrimination” by requiring higher education institutions to have diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policies as part of the accreditation process;
- *Executive Orders 14201 and Executive Order 14168* – Removes gender equity definitions and institutes a binary policy with regards to sex. Seeks to remove the ability for transgender athletes and students to participate in the gender-specific sport of their choice and to use the gender-based facility of their choice;²²
- *Executive Order 14174* – [Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit Based Opportunity](#) – Orders all agencies to enforce longstanding civil-rights laws and to combat illegal private-sector DEI preferences, mandates, policies, programs, and activities.

Question – What are the implications of the executive orders on the day to day activities of college campuses?

IV. Investigation by the Federal Government affecting California Colleges and Universities:

- *University of California* –
 - *Systemwide Investigation* – In March 2025, the U.S. Department of Justice opened a civil investigation into the UC system to determine if the system had engaged in a pattern of discrimination by permitting hostile work environments on campuses.²³ No outcome has been reported nor determined in this investigation.

²² <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/01/30/2025-02090/defending-women-from-gender-ideology-extremism-and-restoring-biological-truth-to-the-federal> and <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/02/11/2025-02513/keeping-men-out-of-womens-sports>

²³ <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/us-justice-department-launches-investigation-university-california-under-title-vii-civil>

- *Systemwide Investigation* – In June 2025, the U.S. Department of Justice opened an investigation into the UC system’s hiring practices due to allegations that the UC 2030 Capacity plan calls for the hiring of diverse faculty. The U.S. Department of Justice is alleging the plan is calling for race-and sex-based employment quotas which is against antidiscrimination laws.²⁴ No outcome has been reported nor determined in this investigation.
- *UC Berkeley* – In April 2025, the USDE announced an investigation into UC Berkeley’s foreign funding disclosures and whether the university’s disclosures to the federal government were accurate and/or complete. The press release has been marked as historical information; however, the outcome of the investigation is unknown.²⁵
- *UC Berkeley, UCLA, and UC Irvine* – In March 2025, the USDE announced an investigation into UC Berkeley, UCLA, and UC Irvine to determine if the universities used racial quotas over equality of opportunity in their admission procedures.²⁶ No outcome has been reported nor determined in this investigation.
- *UC Berkeley* – In February 2025, the USDE opened an investigation into whether the University was properly protecting students from discrimination and harassment. The impetus for the investigation was due to widespread reports of antisemitic harassment on campus.²⁷ In September 2025, the University shared un-redacted case files from the University’s civil rights office and police incident reports tied to the complaints.²⁸ The campus released the names and contact information of 160 employees and concern has

²⁴ <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-opens-investigation-university-california-system-race-and-sex-based>

²⁵ <https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/us-department-of-education-returns-section-117-foreign-funding-enforcement-office-of-general-counsel-announces-investigation-uc-berkeley>

²⁶ <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/attorney-general-pamela-bondi-launches-compliance-review-investigation-admissions-policies>

²⁷ <https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/us-department-of-education-probes-cases-of-antisemitism-five-universities>

²⁸ https://ucop.edu/communications/_files/faqs-on-federal-investigations-and-information-sharing.pdf

been raised as to how the data will be used by the federal administration.²⁹ No outcome has been reported nor determined in this investigation.

- *UC Berkeley* – In March 2025, the USDE announced an investigation into 45 universities. The investigation was prompted due to allegations the institutions violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act by partnering with “The Ph.D. Project.” UC Berkeley was named among the universities who allegedly engaged in race-exclusionary practices in their graduate programs. No outcome has been reported nor determined in this investigation.³⁰
- *UCLA* – In July 2025, the U.S. Department of Justice concluded its investigation and determined that UCLA failed to respond to complaints of severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive harassment and abuse of Jewish and Israeli students. The University was found to have violated the Equal Protections Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI) by acting with deliberate indifference to the hostile educational environment for Jewish and Israeli students.³¹ In response to this finding, multiple federal agencies froze \$500 million (some sources say \$300 million) in research grants already appropriated to UCLA. To date, due to a court order from a federal judge, the federal administration has restored most of the research grants that were previously frozen.³² The federal government has asked for a \$1.2 billion settlement from UCLA for the aforementioned civil rights violations.³³ As of November 12, 2025, a resolution agreement has not been determined between UCLA and the federal administration.

²⁹ <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2025-10-13/trump-uc-csu-employee-data> and <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/09/16/uc-faces-criticism-over-sharing-student-faculty-names-to-trump-administration-00567895>

³⁰ <https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/office-civil-rights-initiates-title-vi-investigations-institutions-of-higher-education>

³¹ <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-finds-university-california-los-angeles-violation-federal-civil-rights> and <https://www.justice.gov/crt/media/1409416/dl?inline>

³² <https://calmatters.org/education/higher-education/2025/09/ucla-recovers-nih-nsf-grants/>

³³ <https://calmatters.org/newsletter/trump-ucla-settlement-proposal/>

- *UC Davis* – In March 2025, the USDE sent letters to 60 colleges and universities warning them of potential enforcement actions if the colleges and universities do not fully comply with their civil rights obligations to protect Jewish students on campus. The 60 colleges and universities were already under investigation for Title VI violations related to antisemitic harassment and discrimination. UC Davis was among the listed colleges and universities.³⁴ No outcome has been reported nor determined in this investigation.
- *UC San Diego* – In March 2025, the USDE sent letters to 60 colleges and universities warning them of potential enforcement actions if the colleges and universities do not fully comply with their civil rights obligations to protect Jewish students on campus. The 60 colleges and universities were already under investigation for Title VI violations related to antisemitic harassment and discrimination. UC San Diego was among the listed colleges and universities.³⁴ No outcome has been reported nor determined in this investigation.
- *UC Santa Barbara* – In March 2025, the USDE sent letters to 60 colleges and universities warning them of potential enforcement actions if the colleges and universities do not fully comply with their civil rights obligations to protect Jewish students on campus. The 60 colleges and universities were already under investigation for Title VI violations related to antisemitic harassment and discrimination. UC Santa Barbara was among the listed colleges and universities.³⁴ No outcome has been reported nor determined in this investigation.
- ***California State University*** –
 - *Systemwide Investigations* – In September 2025, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) announced a systemwide discrimination investigation into all 23 CSU campuses based on allegations of antisemitism and the creation of hostile work environments. The EEOC is a federal agency responsible for enforcing federal employment antidiscrimination laws and can file complaints against employers,

³⁴ <https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/us-department-of-educations-office-civil-rights-sends-letters-60-universities-under-investigation-antisemitic-discrimination-and-harassment>

employment agencies, and labor organizations. To date this is the only systemwide investigation by the EEOC and no subpoena for information has been filed.³⁵ No outcome has been reported nor determined in this investigation.

- *Cal State Los Angeles (Cal State LA)* – According to the CSU, EEOC filed a complaint in January 2025 against Cal State LA due to allegations of antisemitism.²⁶ In September 2025, Cal State LA notified faculty and staff of a federal subpoena and subsequently employee data was released to federal authorities. The California Faculty Association (CFA) has filed a lawsuit against the CSU due to the release of employees' personal information. CFA is alleging the CSU released the information without following proper procedures for notification and disclosure to employees.³⁶ No outcome has been reported on the complaint/investigation nor the lawsuit.
- *San José State University (San José State)* – In February 2025, the U.S. Department of Education announced it would be opening an investigation into whether San José State violated Title IX, specifically with regard to their athletic participation policies. San José State had previously been the subject of a lawsuit which alleged the University awarded a transgendered female athlete a scholarship over other female athletes and that the University retaliated against individuals who defended the discrimination claims of the displaced female athletes. The investigation has yet to yield an outcome.³⁷
- *Cal Poly Humboldt and California State University – San Bernardino* – In March 2025, the USDE announced an investigation into 45 universities. The investigation was prompted due to allegations the institutions violated Title VI by partnering with “The Ph.D. Project.” Cal Poly Humboldt and CSU San Bernardino were named among the

³⁵ <https://www.calstate.edu/impact-of-the-csu/government/federal-relations/Pages/EEOC-FAQs.aspx>

³⁶ <https://www.calfac.org/cfa-sues-csu-over-disclosure-of-faculty-personal-information-to-trump-administration/> and <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2025-10-13/trump-uc-csu-employee-data>

³⁷ <https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/us-department-of-education-investigate-title-ix-violations-athletics>

universities who allegedly engaged in race-exclusionary practices in their graduate programs. No outcome has been reported nor determined in this investigation.³⁸

- *California State University, Sacramento (Sac State)* – In March 2025, the USDE sent letters to 60 colleges and universities warning them of potential enforcement actions if the colleges and universities do not fully comply with their civil rights obligations to protect Jewish students on campus. The 60 colleges and universities were already under investigation for Title VI violations related to antisemitic harassment and discrimination. Sac State was among the listed colleges and universities.³⁴ No outcome has been reported nor determined in this investigation.

- ***California Community Colleges –***

- *Santa Monica College* – In March 2025, the USDE sent letters to 60 colleges and universities warning them of potential enforcement actions if the colleges and universities do not fully comply with their civil rights obligations to protect Jewish students on campus. The 60 colleges and universities were already under investigation for Title VI violations related to antisemitic harassment and discrimination. Santa Monica College was among the listed colleges and universities.³⁴ No outcome has been reported nor determined in this investigation.

Question – What is the current status of each of the aforementioned investigations?

How have the investigation affected campus culture?

V. Additional Federal Actions:

Closure of the USDE – In March 2025, the federal administration issued an executive order which calls for the closure of the USDE.³⁹ Since the executive order, the USDE has downsized and laid off a myriad of employees. While the USDE remains open and continues to conduct

³⁸ <https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/office-civil-rights-initiates-title-vi-investigations-institutions-of-higher-education>

³⁹ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/improving-education-outcomes-by-empowering-parents-states-and-communities/>

business on behalf of the government, advocacy groups remain concerned the closure of the department will only result in harm to students and their families.⁴⁰

Federal Compacts – In the first week of October 2025, the USDE issued a letter to nine colleges and universities expressing an interest in entering into a compact for a mutually beneficial relationship between the administration and the selected higher education institutions. According to the letter, “compact signatory schools will signal to students, parents, and contributors that learning and equality are university priorities. In addition, the Federal Government would have assurance that signatory schools are complying with civil rights law and pursuing Federal priorities with vigor. This assurance will yield multiple positive benefits for the school, including allowance for increased overhead payments where feasible, substantial and meaningful federal grants, and other federal partnerships.”⁴¹

The colleges and universities who initially received the letter and copy of the compact were Vanderbilt University, the University of Pennsylvania, Dartmouth College, the University of Southern California, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the University of Texas at Austin, University of Arizona, Brown University, and the University of Virginia.⁴² The compact would require institutions to agree to the following:

- A ban all considerations of race or sex in the hiring or admission procedures at the institutions;
- A freeze increases on tuition for a five-year period and provide free hard science programs to qualifying students;
- A limit foreign student enrollment to 15% of the student body;
- A commitment to institutional neutrality and civil discourse;

⁴⁰ <https://tcf.org/content/commentary/how-gutting-the-u-s-department-of-education-would-hurt-students-and-their-families/>

⁴¹ https://www.insidehighered.com/sites/default/files/2025-10/University%20President%20Email_Mahoney%5B37%5D%5B93%5D.pdf

⁴² <https://www.cnn.com/2025/10/02/politics/white-house-higher-education-compact-federal-funding>

- A requirement for student applicants to complete the ACT or SAT exam;
- A commitment to academic integrity through the reduction of grade inflation;
- A restriction for all employee conduct policies to the expressing political view on behalf of the institution;
- A commitment to shut down academic departments that “punish, belittle, or spark violence against conservative ideas.”⁴³

Of the colleges and universities who have received the letter/compact from the federal administration, only two have indicated an interest in signing the compact. The University of Southern California declined to sign onto the compact.⁴⁴

The federal administration announced it is expected to have a signing agreements with colleges and universities by November 21, 2025.

Governor Gavin Newsom announced on October 2, 2025, that any California college or university that signs the compact would no longer receive state funding.⁴⁵

VI. Additional Information –

- [Federal Updates – CSU](#)
- [Federal Updates – UC](#)
- [Tracking Trump’s Higher-Ed Agenda](#) – The Chronicle of Higher Education

⁴³ <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/government/science-research-policy/2025/10/02/white-house-floats-compact-preferential>

⁴⁴ <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/government/2025/10/24/how-universities-are-responding-trumps-compact>

⁴⁵ <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2025/10/02/governor-newsom-no-state-funding-for-sell-out-universities/>