



# Collegial Connections

## Membership FAQs

### What Is NAICU?

NAICU is the only national membership organization solely focused on representing the private, nonprofit higher education sector in Washington, D.C. on federal public policy issues affecting student aid, tax policy, and government regulation. Since 1976, the Association has served as the unified voice for the public policy interests of private, nonprofit colleges with Congress, the White House, federal government agencies, the media, and the public. NAICU's membership is comprised of presidents drawn from the universe of 1,700 accredited private, nonprofit colleges and universities, and related state, regional and special-purpose independent college and university associations.

### What Does NAICU Do?

NAICU is instrumental in shaping higher education policy and driving federal student aid funding, while assisting its members with federal issues and guiding its members in advocacy efforts in support of private, nonprofit higher education. Year after year, NAICU members have demonstrated that their collective voices produce positive outcomes in Washington.

To help meet these goals, NAICU's government relations, research, and communications teams meet with policymakers; track campus trends; conduct research; analyze higher education issues; publish information; help coordinate state-level activities; and advise members on legislative and regulatory developments with potential impact on their students and institutions.

Specifically, NAICU:

- Serves as the leading national voice for private, nonprofit higher education with policy makers, national, regional, and trade news media, and with the public.
- Represents private nonprofit institutions during the deliberations of the five other national higher education presidential associations, making sure the private, nonprofit sector's interests and concerns are served when the higher education community crafts national public policy responses.
- Advocates for private, nonprofit colleges and universities with Congress, the Administration, and federal regulatory agencies on a wide range of issues, including federal student aid programs, government regulation and tax policy.
- Participates in the shaping and implementation of new legislation with the executive and legislative branches as a part of special commissions, and such mechanisms as negotiated rulemaking.

- Advocates for the preservation of, and increased funding for, the federal student aid programs.
- Leads the private, nonprofit higher education sector in influencing tax policy, while also advocating for private, nonprofit colleges' perspective on such tax issues.
- Supports enlightened non-profit governance reform, and helps educate Congress on the complexities of private colleges' operations and finances.
- Defends institutional integrity and autonomy, fighting governmental intrusion and inappropriate regulation.
- Identifies and alerts members to pending legislation and regulatory requirements that could jeopardize the fundamental independence of private, nonprofit colleges.
- Mobilizes its members to advocate in support of or opposition to legislative or regulatory initiatives with a major impact on private, nonprofit higher education.
- Participates in litigation before the federal courts to present the positions of private, nonprofit higher education.

## Who Are NAICU's Members?

Private, nonprofit colleges and universities of every size and category are represented among NAICU's 1,000 member institutions and associations.

NAICU's member institutions include major research universities, faith-based colleges, historically black colleges, minority-serving institutions, art and design colleges, traditional liberal arts and science institutions, women's colleges, two-year colleges, and schools of law, medicine, engineering, business, and other professions.

With more than 5 million students attending independent colleges and universities, the private nonprofit sector of American higher education has a dramatic impact on our nation's larger public interests.

## How Does NAICU Differ From the American Council on Education (ACE) and the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC)?

ACE serves a coordinating function on federal policy for higher education associations across all sectors. Appropriately, ACE does not represent the particular interests of any one sector of higher education. NAICU is the *only* national organization specifically representing private, nonprofit colleges and universities on public policy issues at the federal level.

NAICU and CIC have a cooperative working relationship, including a formalized agreement, the services that the two associations offer are complementary, rather than redundant. NAICU advocates for private, nonprofit colleges with Congress, the White House, and agencies of the federal government, basically dealing with issues that are external to the institution. CIC offers programming and services that are primarily directed toward on-campus operations and issues.

## What Are the Benefits of Membership?

According to a recent survey of NAICU members ...

- 84% say providing them with useful tools to make the case for private, nonprofit higher education is an important service NAICU provides.
- 92% say being aware of public policy changes and updates at the federal level is VERY important.
- 90% say the Association's ability to help them understand and comply with new rules is important.

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates how important it is for private, nonprofit higher education leaders to have policy and lobbying experts in place immediately assessing the situation, communicating in real time, and organizing a response from our community. For members, NAICU is a ...

### **Source for Tools, Resources, Research and Analysis**

As trusted community leaders, college presidents have significant influence on Capitol Hill. Creating long term relationships with Congressional Delegations is important. NAICU helps members advocate on behalf of their institutions and the students and families they serve, providing members-only talking points, research, analysis, tools and other resources to help make the case to elected officials and other state and community leaders. Legislative alerts, sent at key points during Congressional decision making, help presidents to shape the messaging.

### **Resource for Staff Beyond the College or University President**

NAICU reaches across the c-suite to provide services and resources for other members of the college administration, including: CFO's, Provosts, Student Affairs and External Affairs. In addition, government relations, public relations, and institutional research staff members benefit from NAICU's targeted information, updates and educational sessions.

All private colleges, no matter their size, benefit from NAICU's expertise, analysis, insight, tools and resources.

All NAICU staff – including the president – are readily available to provide information and advice, as needed, on a one-to-one and confidential basis.

### **Convener and Networking Facilitator**

NAICU supports a community that can foster connections to others in the same leadership role, and can help build your network of peers. Beyond our Washington-focused activities, NAICU also provides services of a more direct and immediate benefit to its members. The Association:

- Serves as a resource for in-depth information on higher education issues, and aids members in making the case for private, nonprofit higher education through talking points, data and other communications tools.

- Maintains the University & College Accountability Network (U-CAN), a resource for prospective students and their families offering comparable data on private, nonprofit colleges and universities.
- Undertakes special projects to inform the public about private colleges' strengths and contributions to society, such as Your Vote, Your Voice (to encourage voter participation on campuses); and Campus Affordability and Cost-cutting Initiatives (featuring colleges' efforts to contain or reduce costs).
- Provides specialized timely information for member presidents, as well as dedicated information and resources for key campus offices, including institutional research, government relations, and public relations and communications.
- Offers current higher education news and information on higher education policy developments through *Washington Update*, available to all NAICU member presidents and their staff.
- Co-chairs The Student Aid Alliance, a coalition of over 80 higher education organizations united in support of federal student aid funding. Created in 1994, by NAICU and ACE, the Alliance supports a package of proven student aid programs to help students achieve their higher education goals without excessive debt, and activates association and campus communities to tell the grassroots student aid story.

## How Is NAICU Governed?

NAICU's Board of Directors plays an integral role in setting the association's policy mission focused around issues affecting student aid, tax policy and government regulation.

The Board is composed of 43 voting members, including 24 member presidents who are directly-elected by the membership from NAICU's eight regions, 12 at-large members who are selected to redress any imbalances in the Board composition, and the current and past NAICU Board chairs. In addition, the chairs of the National Association of Independent College and University State Executives (NAICUSE) and the NAICU Secretariat serve as *ex officio* members with a vote. Two additional state executives and one additional member of the Secretariat are recommended by their respective organizations, and are ratified as voting members by the board.

Three non-presidents from member institutions also participate in board deliberations as non-voting representatives. The NAICU President also serves as a non-voting *ex officio* member.

## How Are Membership Dues Calculated?

Annual dues are calculated based on each institution's enrollment and budget. NAICU's bylaws call for dues sufficient to finance the work of the Association.