

## ASA Comments on a Proposed Rule by the National Labor Relations Board on Student Employment

*October 28, 2019*

The National Labor Relations Board proposes a regulation establishing that students who perform any services for compensation, including, but not limited to, teaching or research, at a private college or university in connection with their studies are not “employees” within the meaning of Section 2(3) of the National Labor Relations Act. See the [Federal Register](#) for more on this proposal.

ASA commented on this proposal with the following:

The American Sociological Association, the professional association representing more than 12,000 sociologists across the nation, opposes the proposed ruling. As sociologists, we know the literature on the National Labor Relations Act. The Act's purpose is to guarantee the right to union representation and to collective bargaining for American workers. In 1935, when the Act was passed by Congress, universities were a much smaller part of the U.S. economy. Today they are massive institutions which carry out a wide variety of activities and regularly employ individuals in a variety of capacities who are also students. Those individuals are not different in any relevant way from other employees covered by the NLRA. We strongly discourage changing the current ruling.