



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
CONGRESS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

Resolution

28th Congress of Graduate Students

Resolution #: 7

Sponsored by: Representative Hirsch

Date: June 15th, 2020

Social Justice and systematic injustice acknowledgement.

Read: 6/15/2020

COGS Vote: 5-0-1

PASSED: June 15, 2020

CERTIFIED TO THE STUDENT BODY

A handwritten signature in black ink.

6/17/20

Speaker of the Congress of Graduate Students

A handwritten signature in black ink.

6/22/20

Deputy Speaker for Finance



Resolution

28th Congress of Graduate Students

Resolution #: 7

Sponsored by: Representative Hirsch

Date: Monday, June 15th, 2020

Whereas: Every Representative in the Congress of Graduate Students, the Law School Council, and the Medical School Council takes an oath of office to uphold the United States Constitution, the Constitution of the State of Florida, and laws of Florida State University;

Whereas: This oath recognizes a duty to uphold and defend the position that all people are fundamentally equal and have a right to enjoy and defend life and liberty regardless of race, religion, national origin, or physical disability, which is officially recognized in the Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Florida;

Whereas: The oath also dictates that Representatives have a duty to uphold and defend the right of peaceful assembly and to petition for redress of grievances as outlined in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, Section 5 of the Constitution of the State of Florida, and FSU Policies Chapter 3 (FSU-3.003);

Whereas: Florida State University upholds “a policy of non-discrimination for any member of the University’s community on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veterans’ status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other legally protected group status” (FSU Equal Opportunity & Non-Discrimination Statement);

Whereas: The history of Florida State University is permeated with agitation for social justice as evidenced by the arrest of FSU student Joe Spagna for trading seats on a segregated bus with two FAMU students, Leonard Speed and Johnny Herndon, in 1957;

Whereas: The history of Florida State University also evidences the power of student assembly in the form of student picketing of non-FSU business for segregation policies during the 1960’s, the sit-in protest by Black FSU students in the Office of FSU President J. Stanley Marshall in 1971, and large protests of the Supreme Court nomination of the segregation supporting judge Harrold Caswell in the 1970’s;



Whereas: The history of Florida State University also includes administrative impedance to social justice activities and infringement of civil rights, which included censorship of social justice related literature (i.e., "The Pig Knife"), refusal to extend official recognition to a social justice oriented student organization (i.e., Students for a Democratic Society), and utilization of the legal system to prevent a rally (i.e., peaceful assembly) of the Students for a Democratic Society which resulted in mobilization of local law enforcement in an evening now remembered as "The Night of Bayonets";

Whereas: Current peaceful protests and demonstrations are taking place nationwide, including in Tallahassee, against systemic racism and injustice sparked by the abuse of power by police officers and the injustice served for the deaths of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Tony McDade, Ahmaud Arbery, and many other Black Americans.

Whereas: These facts demonstrate the difficulties associated with the struggle for social justice and inclusivity at the system level, and how the Florida State Student Body has been an example for the United States in the legal application of the right to assemble as a means to seek redress for grievances;

Whereas: The fruits of inclusivity and social justice advocacy at Florida State University have results in national recognition of one of the most diverse student populations in the United States and official recognition as a "Diversity Champion" by INSIGHT in Diversity magazine;

Whereas: Continued emphasis on diversity and inclusivity by administrators at Florida State University has resulted in Goal III of the strategic plan that includes a prerogative to, "foster a campus culture that celebrates diversity and inclusion";

Whereas: Administrators have recently demonstrated sensitivity to the concerns raised by the FSU Student Body in relation to the needless deaths experienced by Black people related to racism and have issued strong statements and condemnations, including taking action to meet with Student Body and Community leaders;

Be it resolved by the Twenty-Eighth Congress of Graduate Students of Florida State University that: this resolution represents an official acknowledgement of the acute emotional pain at the societal level and the civil unrest associated with systemic injustice experienced by marginalized peoples in the United States. Furthermore, this resolution also affirms that:



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1. COGS supports FSU students' rights for peaceful protest and assembly by ~~soliciting funding proposals for events in general, but specifically in this time, ones~~ that focus on social justice opposed to racism and injustice against marginalized groups;
2. COGS is committed to the inclusion, diversity, and equity of FSU students, staff, faculty, visitors, and other University community members from marginalized groups;
3. COGS stands against discrimination and racism and supports justice for the many Black lives lost due to the injustice and abuse of power from police officers across the country. Black Lives Matter;

Be it further resolved that: copies of this resolution be sent to:

1. Eduarda Machado, President of the MSC Funding Board
2. Madison Johnson, Chair of the LSC Funding Board
3. President John E. Thrasher
4. Dr. Amy Hecht, Vice President of Student Affairs
5. Dr. Mark Reily, Dean of the Graduate School
6. Dr. Judith Devine, Senior Associate Dean of the Graduate School