

## **Resolution against the Proposed Plan to Implement an 'Excellency Fee' for Masters' Students**

Passed on November 17, 2017

Plenary

WHEREAS, the Doctoral and Graduate Students' Council (DSC) represents and advocates for over 3,500 doctoral and masters' students of the Graduate Center of the City University of New York in their roles as students, teachers, workers, family members, New Yorkers, activists, and academics; and

Executive Committee

Steering Committee

WHEREAS, the DSC shares CUNY's historic mission of providing access to higher education to low-income communities and communities of color in New York City and across the nation; and

Constitution and Bylaws

Grants

WHEREAS, President Chase Robinson and Provost Joy Connolly have proposed a plan to effectively increase the tuition for masters' students at the Graduate Center by proposing a \$100/credit 'excellency fee'; and

Health & Wellness

Outreach

Student Services

WHEREAS, masters' students are required to take 9-12 credits for full-time status, and most masters' students take at least 6 credits per semester, which would amount to \$600-\$1,200 per semester effective increase in tuition; and

USS Advisory Committee

Advocate Advisory Board

WHEREAS, because the GC's budgeting process is not transparent or democratic, there is no evidence that the money from the proposed fee would go directly to benefit masters' students; and

OpenCUNY Board

Governance Task Force

WHEREAS, on October 23rd, the CUNY Board of Trustees voted to increase tuition, by up to \$200 /yr for full-time master's resident students; and

WHEREAS, the total cost of attending an institution of higher learning is more than just tuition and fees; and

WHEREAS, the cost of living in New York City has risen about 23% from 2009 to 2014; and

WHEREAS, in the 2015-2016 academic year, CUNY estimated that students living at home would spend approximately \$9,592 in books, transportation, and living expenses, while students not living at home would spend approximately \$20,295 on such expenses<sup>[1]</sup>; and  
WHEREAS, instead of demanding funding from the state for increasing services, President Robinson and Provost Connolly are shifting the cost for needed services down to already cash-strapped students; and

WHEREAS, the rising tuition and expenses, stagnant financial aid assistance, insufficient state funding, and the prevalence of low-wage jobs undermine the affordability and stymie the accessibility to higher education and the advancement of a highly-educated and skilled workforce; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Doctoral & Graduate Students' Council hereby expressly rejects the plan to levy an 'excellency fee' on masters' students; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the DSC rejects any and all future plans to implement tuition increases under the guise of additional fees; and, be it

RESOLVED, that the DSC urges the GC administration to deploy its ample resources to lead a public campaign and lobbying effort for the full funding of the Graduate Center, and, be it

FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Doctoral Students' Council demands that President Chase Robinson and Provost Joy Connolly release a plan to fund services for masters' students without increasing tuition or fees.

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<sup>[1]</sup> CUNY, <http://www.cuny.edu/admissions/tuition-fees.html>