



Resolution in Support of the Statement of No Confidence in the Graduate Center Senior Administration (President, Provost, Senior Vice President of Finance and Administration)

Adopted by the Doctoral and Graduate Students' Council (DGSC) on December 9th, 2022

To the attention of:

CUNY Chancellor, Félix V. Matos Rodríguez

CUNY University Provost, Wendy F. Hensel

CUNY University Chief Operating Officer, Hector Batista

Graduate Center President, Robin L. Garrell

Graduate Center Provost, Steve Everett

Senior Vice President of Finance and Administration, Brian A. Peterson

WHEREAS, on November 28, 2022, a Statement of No Confidence in the Graduate Center Senior Administration was published by distinguished members of the Graduate Center Faculty; and

WHEREAS, the Doctoral and Graduate Students' Council (DGSC) is the representative government of the Graduate Center student body, and an allocating body of the Graduate Center Student Activity Fee; and

WHEREAS, the statement addresses issues on diversity, equity, and inclusion, and the DGSC agrees with the lack of diversity in Graduate Center faculty and the suggestion that there has been a lack of prioritizing by senior administration in diversifying its faculty; and

WHEREAS, fundraising is a topic addressed by the statement, it is clear that the Senior Administration has not met the needs in fundraising to improve student conditions nor articulated a clear and compelling vision of how to do so. During the October 2022 Graduate Council meeting, Provost Everett referred to state funding as "handouts" while giving an incoherent presentation on philanthropy. During the November 2022 DGSC plenary, President Garrell asked student representatives to donate to the GC Foundation and to ask their families to donate on Giving Tuesday, while avoiding any commitments to pursuing funding equity between programs at The Graduate Center; and

WHEREAS, the Statement mentions problems of Governance, it has been clear for the student leadership that GC Senior Administration do not know how their own governance operates, as evidenced by the fact that the Graduate Council, which is the combined governance body of students and faculty of the Graduate Center, is operating in violation of its own Bylaws. The Graduate Council Committee on Committees, which is responsible for filling vacancies on Graduate Council Committees, was elected in violation of these Bylaws, a fact that was only acknowledged when brought to attention by a student representative to the Committee on Committees; and

WHEREAS, the Graduate Council is also responsible for electing faculty members to the College Association Board of Directors, which is responsible for approving the usage of the Student Activity Fee, at its annual May meeting, but did not conduct this election in 2022; and

WHEREAS, The DGSC has a surplus that needs to be authorized by a two-thirds vote of the College Association, and without faculty representation, 9 out of 10 current members need to approve of any actions; and

WHEREAS, at the October 19th meeting of the Graduate Council, the President expressed that they were not in possession of any of the previous documents of the Graduate Council; and

WHEREAS, at that same meeting, the Graduate Council Budget Committee was announced to have been scheduled for November 7th. However, multiple members of the Budget Committee indicated that they were not aware that this meeting had been scheduled, as it had been scheduled without the consultation of its members' availability. The formal notification was not sent until October 27th. Additionally, the DGSC Co-Chairs did not receive a communication asking about ex-officio membership until October 31st; and

WHEREAS, we do not have first hand information on the mismanagement of staff mentioned by the Statement, it is worrisome that the VP for Institutional Advancement has been fired, as the administration has communicated to the members of the Budget Committee of the Graduate Council that since 2019, CUNY Central has stopped increasing the value they provide to the Graduate Center for a Graduate Assistant position, causing the Graduate Center to cover the annual 2% increase beyond the value of a 2019 Graduate Assistantship, causing the GC to pay for their students to teach at the consortial colleges; and

WHEREAS, from our student perspective, it is clear that the concerns expressed by the previous DGSC Executive Committee to the President and the Provost on the need to prioritize fundraising to improve our fellowships has not been properly addressed as a priority by them; and

WHEREAS, the Statement mentions uncompensated Labor at the Graduate Center, and the DGSC has received dozens of complaints about late or missing fellowship stipend refund payments as well as improper compensation (or lack thereof) for PhD students in the Sciences working in labs and paid through the Research Foundation. Additionally, Senior Administration has not provided a plan on how international students who entered the GC in the 2020-21 academic year and could not come in person to the US will be compensated for the fellowship payments they did not receive in their first year; and

WHEREAS, the Statement mentions problems of Business Office Dysfunction, over the past six months, the DGSC has had tremendous delays in the processing of our finances, with students finally receiving payments from June and July at the end of October, to the extent that the Office of Student Affairs had to intervene to find solutions for the DGSC to be able to operate financially, despite a lack of consistent direction and continuously changing instructions from the Graduate Center Business Office; and

WHEREAS, the Statement asserts a GC-wide climate of discontent, disrespect and demoralization, the student representatives have expressed these concerns monthly in our DGSC plenaries; and

WHEREAS, the Statement mentions that "The lack of adequate food services aside from vending machines has furthered a sense of detachment, alienation, and anomie", this is a fact that is clear to the student body as food services has been one of the main concerns of the student representatives. The issue has been asked by the DGSC officers to the administration in every possible meeting, yet the narrative about when this need will be addressed is repeatedly shifting. As a response, the DGSC established a task force at its September 23rd Plenary, and on December 1st, the DGSC published a petition for food services at the GC; and

WHEREAS, the Statement includes the lack of leadership and clear stated vision as one of the problems of the senior administration, this fact is evident due to the fact that the GC is currently without a strategic plan - the previous strategic plan was for 2018-2022. The 2023-2027 strategic plan was supposed to have been underway in the 2021-2022 academic year, and yet in December 2022, there is no information regarding even the development of such. THEREFORE, LET IT BE

RESOLVED, the DGSC supports the Statement of No Confidence in GC Senior Administration and demands the CUNY Chancellery to take action to remove President Garrell, Provost Everett, and SVP Peterson from their positions.