

Resolution Against CUNY Proposed Tuition Increase and Wellness Fee

Adopted by the DSC on December 13, 2019

WHEREAS, the Doctoral and Graduate Students' Council (DSC) represents and advocates for over 3,500 local and international 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

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, across the nation and (in the case of visiting international students) the world; and

WHEREAS, on Friday, October 21, 2016, the DSC adopted the Resolution on a Tuition Freeze for 2017-18, which requested the CUNY Administration and Board of Trustees freeze tuition at the 2016-2017 rates for the 2017-2018 Academic Year (AY) and called on the New York State Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to sign an enhanced Maintenance Of Effort (MOE bill), which would provide CUNY the necessary state funding each fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, on June 20, 2017, the New York State Legislature adopted an enhanced Maintenance of Effort bill, which Governor Cuomo has yet to sign, subsequently, on June 26, 2017, the CUNY Board of Trustees adopted Calendar Item 4.B., which increased tuition for students attending senior colleges, graduate and professional schools during the 2017-2018 AY; and

WHEREAS, New York State instituted a policy in 2011, and renewed it in 2017, that enables the University to implement "modest and predictable annual tuition increases" by raising the amount paid by students of four-year colleges by \$100 per semester until FY2021; and

WHEREAS, CUNY has proposed in its most recent budget the implementation of a Health and Wellness fee in FY2021 of \$60 per semester to "generate funding that would be used for health and wellness services and education at each of the campuses;" and

WHEREAS, there is a need for more mental health services for CUNY students, however the burden for financing this should not lie with the 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, let it be

RESOLVED, that the Doctoral & Graduate Students' Council hereby expressly rejects the plan to levy a "wellness fee;" and, let it be further

RESOLVED, that the DSC rejects any and all future plans to implement tuition increases, whether under the guise of additional fees or in any other form; and, let it be

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