

Resolution in Support of Depolicing the GC

*Adopted by the 2019-20 and 2020-21 Steering Committees of the
Doctoral and Graduate Students' Council on June 26, 2020*

WHEREAS, the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis has brought to the center of public attention the brutality of the police institution in the United States, and has broadcast what communities of color have known for centuries: the police are a tool of repression and violence in the struggle of the state and ruling class to manage social inequalities. And;

WHEREAS, the Graduate Center is a place of learning, and should act as a sanctuary for its students. Part of its mission is to “provide access to graduate education for diverse groups of highly-talented students, including those who have been underrepresented in higher education;” and,

WHEREAS, the GC is beholden to a current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between CUNY and the NYPD allowing the police on campus both in times of emergency and under certain conditions in periods of non-emergency.; and,

WHEREAS, the GC currently employs two sergeants and five peace officers as part of its security detail. These officers have powers of arrest and are empowered to use lethal force in pursuit of a suspect. Officers with a license under section 400.00 of the New York State Penal Law are also empowered to carry sidearms; and,

WHEREAS, by our estimates, CUNY spent \$59M on its security budget in FY2019 while its workforce and buildings were subject to harsh austerity measures; and,

WHEREAS, the GC and CUNY more generally currently participate in the Prison Industrial Complex (PIC) through their commercial partnerships with corporations that make use of prison labor or exploit prisoners. At the Graduate Center, these include Corcraft and Starbucks; and,

WHEREAS, the safety and security of our students is impossible while students are brought face to face with the same people that profile them in the streets and brutalize them at protests; and,

WHEREAS, the wave of protests around police brutality has prompted the re-evaluation of the relationship between our institutions of education and the police. This has led schools like the University of Minnesota to limit its relations with local police departments; and,

WHEREAS, employing police as campus security is the exception rather than the rule at a global level. Before 1992, CUNY did not employ peace officers at any of its campuses. The U.S. model of policing

campuses with registered law enforcement agents has proven to have no effect on-campus crime, and in fact, is one of the primary sources of insecurity among students and staff¹; therefore, let it be

RESOLVED that the Steering Committee of the Doctoral and Graduate Students' Council (DGSC) of the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, through its commitment to student safety and security, condemns any participation of the Graduate Center in the Prison Industrial Complex, including contracts with corporations using prison labor; and, let it be

RESOLVED that the DGSC Steering Committee calls on the GC and CUNY at large to sever all official ties with the New York Police Department. The GC must revise its MOU to ensure police are not allowed on campus, or used as security for any events, and cease allowing NYPD or other law enforcement agencies to rent or otherwise use GC facilities for meetings or events; and, let it be

FINALLY RESOLVED that the DGSC Steering Committee calls on the Graduate Center to transition its public safety team to one that is entirely unarmed and has no powers to arrest or use lethal force, and calls on the GC maintain control over the training and management of the team.

1A. Vitale, a Professor of Sociology and coordinator of the policing and Social Justice Project at Brooklyn College, has pointed out in his recent book *The End of Policing* (New York: Verso, 2020) that studies in New York have shown that “schools with less punitive disciplinary systems were able to achieve a greater sense of safety for students, lower arrest and suspension rates, and fewer crimes, even in poor and high-crime neighborhoods.” (p. 112).