



Resolution for Transparency and Representative Student Involvement in Reopening

Adopted by the Doctoral and Graduate Students' Council on May 21, 2021

Co-sponsored by the PSC-Graduate Center Executive Committee

Attention:

Graduate Center Administration
President Robin L. Garrell
Senior Vice President Brian Peterson
GC Reactivation Committee

WHEREAS, the campus of the Graduate Center (hereinafter, "GC") at 365 5th Ave. has been closed to almost all students and faculty for more than two full semesters due to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the events of the past 15 months have threatened students' mental, social, communal, and academic wellbeing, leading to widespread feelings of isolation and overall poor conditions for mental and social health, disrupting research, impeding progress to degree completion, and contributing to further financial strain; and

WHEREAS, the Doctoral and Graduate Students' Council (hereinafter, "DGSC") recognizes the importance of reopening the building to the greatest extent possible while respecting safety, equity, and inclusion concerns; and

WHEREAS, GC leadership has not been transparent about its reopening plans, leading to widespread confusion and rumour, even at the level of Executive Officers, and this uncertainty has further compounded the harms of the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, GC leadership continues to posit the reopening of CUNY in terms of vague "percent capacity," without giving the GC population concrete expectations for the fall; and

WHEREAS, GC leadership has not worked *with* the PSC reopening team to implement health and safety walkthroughs, has not released the results of the survey it took of students' reopening needs, and has generally been reluctant to work in collaboration with students and staff in reopening; and

WHEREAS, having merely two students on a Reactivation Committee with more than fifty members is not sufficient for student representation in reopening planning, especially since the students in question are already in student leadership positions, are not given a vote, and are not included in any *meaningful* way in deliberations; and

WHEREAS, this lack of meaningful student representation on the Reactivation Committee is not an outlier but rather part of a general trend wherein GC administration consistently undermine attempts at democratic participation of students in deliberating community-wide issues; and

WHEREAS, the many student populations of the GC (e.g. students with disabilities, non-course taking students, students without access to study spaces, students fearful of anti-Asian violence, international students, students from BIPOC communities) have different health, social, communal, and academic needs; and

WHEREAS, any reopening plan ought to be transparent, attentive to all of the GC-community members' needs (in their diversity and particularity), and meaningfully engage with students; let it be

RESOLVED, that the DGSC demands to know the details of the GC's reopening plan, in particular how it will:

- a. provide access to study and community spaces within the building for students who want them, while
- b. accommodating the health and safety concerns of students, faculty, and staff in their diversity and particularity;

and let it be

RESOLVED, that the DGSC demands to know the details of how the GC will support students in financial and material ways as the institution reopens (for instance by providing an extra year of funding to all GC students as was already demanded by over 1400 students in a [prior petition](#), and expanding mental health support at no extra cost to students); and let it be

RESOLVED, that the DGSC demands the following student representation be added to the Reactivation Committee, with the understanding that at least one representative be an international student and one a Level III student:

1. One PhD student from a humanities discipline
2. One PhD student from an arts discipline (e.g. Theatre & Performance, Music)
3. One PhD student from a social sciences discipline
4. One PhD student from a natural sciences (e.g. Science, Mathematics, Computer Science) discipline
5. One PhD student from an interdisciplinary field (e.g. LAILAC, Urban Education)
6. One MA student from a humanities or arts discipline OR from an interdisciplinary field (e.g. Digital Humanities)
7. One MA student from a social sciences or natural sciences discipline;

and that each student on the reopening committee be given full voice and vote; and let it be

RESOLVED, that the DGSC demands that the GC administration immediately begin working with the PSC to ensure safe and just reopening by:

- a) bargaining and regular and open communications with the PSC, especially the GC PSC chapter,
- b) adopting the [PSC standards for safe opening at CUNY](#) in full,
- c) permitting health and safety walkthroughs, and
- d) accommodating staff who need flexible or remote work arrangements;

and let it be

RESOLVED, that the DGSC demands that GC administration release the results of the survey they compiled on students' needs around the pandemic; and let it be,

RESOLVED, that the DGSC demands that the GC administration properly consider the results of any surveys carried out by the PSC or DGSC; and let it be,

FINALLY RESOLVED, that the DGSC demands a written response to each RESOLVED item of this resolution **at least by June 12th 2021.**