



Resolution in Support of Residents of Graduate Center Housing

Adopted by the Doctoral and Graduate Students' Council (DGSC) on March 24th, 2023

WHEREAS, the residents at the Graduate Center (GC) Housing have recently been asked to pay an additional 3.25% rent a month, and over the past 5 years, the rent has been raised 3 times; the last time, 3.25%, and twice 3% before then, showing an alarming trend in the rate of rent hikes which must be stopped; and

WHEREAS, according to the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, "Housing is considered affordable if it costs about one-third or less of household income, and is regulated so the rent can't go up dramatically over time"¹; and

WHEREAS, CUNY GC Housing is advertised online as affordable housing², but it does not meet the above criteria – the rent of GC Housing amounts to, on average, half of a Graduate Center Fellowship; and

WHEREAS, CUNY, as both the owner of the property and the employer of these residents, is raising the rent while leaving their pay the same. Thus, this increase is effectively a pay cut; and

WHEREAS, the GC administration claims that the rent hikes are in response to lost revenue during the pandemic, the rising cost of maintaining the building, and inflation, failing to acknowledge that graduate students at CUNY have stagnant stipends that haven't increased in over ten years. Thus, students are suffering under the weight brunt of inflation, which these rent hikes will only make worse; and

WHEREAS, international students, in particular, rely on the GC housing as they struggle with barriers to housing, such as credit scores and needing guarantors; and

WHEREAS, in addition to these rent hikes, the building has many other issues. Heating in the building was broken at the beginning of winter, leading to several residents becoming sick. Hot water does not work consistently. The WiFi is slow and inaccessible for some residents. Utility bills are not transparent, and residents are routinely charged for utilities even when their apartment is vacant; and

¹ <https://www.nyc.gov/site/hpd/services-and-information/do-you-qualify.page>

² <https://www.gc.cuny.edu/student-life/living-and-learning-nyc/housing>

WHEREAS, Brodsky, the management company for GC Housing, began this process with false communications, demanding the almost immediate return of signed license agreements for the upcoming year within two weeks, with the implicit threat of homelessness, with several residents being unaware of their right to a full calendar month for contemplating the agreement; and

WHEREAS, Graduate Center Housing is owned by CUNY, and is therefore a state-owned asset. The rent goes towards paying the mortgage of the building, and is thus a source of revenue for the University;

THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the DGSC demands that the administration immediately drop the rent hike and commit to making GC Housing affordable going forward.