

The Graduate Student Assembly
The University of Texas at Austin

Resolution: G.R. 14 (S) 5

Introduced By: Xiaosa Xu
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Action Taken: Passed

Certified: 
David Villarreal
President, GSA

In Support of Graduate Student Housing Initiatives

Summary: A resolution requesting The University of Texas at Austin, Division of Student Affairs to investigate opportunities to expand affordable graduate student housing.

Whereas (1): The Graduate Student Assembly (GSA), a Legislative Student Organization recognized by the Office of the Dean of Students, is the elected governing body of the 13,000 graduate and professional students at the University of Texas at Austin; and,

Whereas (2): The graduate student population at the University is going to increase significantly with the establishment of the Dell Medical School.

Whereas (4): Many graduate students seek the opportunity to live on the university campus in order to increase their interaction with colleagues, to live in close proximity to their research facilities, to participate in student service, leadership, and cultural activities vital to the quality of the graduate student experience; and

Whereas (5): Graduate students historically sacrifice economic well-being to pursue their education and are not previous residents of Austin, and therefore seek quality affordable, safe housing with other graduate students on the university grounds, for social, economic, academic and safety reasons¹; and

Whereas (6): Availability of affordable and safe housing facilities serve as an important incentive to attract qualified and motivated students into the different graduate programs at the University; and

Whereas (7): The University through the Division of Housing and Food Service owns and operates three apartment complexes located in the Lake Austin area: Brackenridge Apartments (1982, 1984), Colorado Apartments (1962), and Gateway Apartments (1972); and

Whereas (8): All University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin) full-time graduate students are eligible to apply for student housing offered by University Apartments.

1. A Resolution to Support the Renovation and Addition of University-Owned Housing Complexes for Graduate and Professional Students, 2009

Whereas (9): University Apartments operates Gateway, Brackenridge and Colorado apartments with a combined total of 689 units³.

Whereas (10): Most residents are graduate and professional students (93.2%), international students (74.9%) and have dependents (spouses, partners, or dependent children).

Whereas (11): Affordable and accessible housing has a positive and critical influence on the life and academic performance of graduate students and family-friendly housing is the cornerstone of social support for graduate students weaving through academic life, average GPA of residents in the apartments is 3.7225 while the average of the university not including the university apartment residents is 3.2903.

Whereas (12): The number of housing units currently available for graduate students offered by University Apartments is limited and cannot meet the demand as evidenced by the long waiting list. Thus, many graduate students are forced to find alternate accommodations which are more expensive, far from campus, and/or not safe².

Whereas (14): The Graduate Students Assembly (GSA) advocates for UT Austin's graduate students on matters that have an impact on their welfare in and out of class, including housing.

Be It

Resolved (1): That UT Austin should increase the number of housing options available for graduate students, including but not limited to, town homes and efficiencies.

Be it

Further

Resolved (2): That the Graduate Student Assembly believes there is a need to consider addition of new graduate student housing and renovation of existing complexes at The University of Texas at Austin.

Be it

Further

Resolved (3): The Graduate Student Assembly requests that the university administration conduct a review of existing graduate student housing options and facilities run by the Division of Housing and Food Service and conduct a needs assessment for the construction of new housing complexes. Such a process should include representatives from the Graduate Student Assembly, the Office of Graduate Studies, the International Office, Division of Housing and Food Service and the University Apartments Tenant Advisory Board.

Be it

Further

Resolved (4): That renovated and newly constructed complexes should provide quality apartments and efficiencies for students with a wide variety of incomes that include security, parking, social activities, and up-to-date modern conveniences and amenities.

2. G.R. 4 In Support of Family-Friendly and Affordable Student Housing for UT Graduate Students, 2004

3. University Residence Halls Demographic Report, Division of Housing and Food Service, Spring 2014

Be it

Further

Resolved (5): That any costs associated with apartment renovation and construction projects should not create a financial hardship on current or future residents of the University Apartments or the rest of the graduate and professional student community at the University.

Be it

Further

Resolved (6): That the graduate and professional students should receive the highest priority for occupancy in all existing and future apartment complexes managed by the University.

Be it

Further

Resolved (7): That the university administration in collaboration with the Graduate Student Assembly should ensure graduate student representation on all university standing or ad hoc committees dealing with housing policies.

Be it

Further

Resolved (8): That official copies of this resolution be delivered to William Powers Jr., President; Dr. Charles Roeckle, Deputy to the President; Dr. Gage E. Paine, the Vice President for Student Affairs; Dr. Judith H. Langlois, the Dean of the Graduate School; ; John Dalton, Asst. Dean of the Graduate School; Dr. Gregory Fenves, Executive Vice President and Provost; Dr. Soncia Reagins-Lilly, the Dean of Students; Tom Dison, Sr. Associate Vice-President for Student Affairs; Floyd Hoelting, Executive Director, Division of Housing and Food Service; Office of the Chancellor, the Board of Regents, Members of the Graduate Assembly; and the Deans of All Colleges.