GPSA Resolution #8

**Resolution to Critique the Hiring of Associate Dean of Students for Inclusion, Engagement and Community Support and to Increase Funding to Advocacy Services, Support Resources, and Inclusion Programming**

Sponsored by: Christine Yao, Katherine Herleman, Jevan Hutson, Diane Wong, Members of the Latino Graduate Studies Coalition

**WHEREAS**, the University is currently actively hiring a “Senior Associate Dean of Students for Inclusion, Engagement and Community Support (SAD) [who] will be a member of the senior staff of the Office of the Dean of Students (DOS) and will participate in strategic planning and decision making in this area,”

**WHEREAS**, this new position will provide oversight and direction to the following student services units: Asian and Asian American Center (A3C), Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center (LGBT RC), Women’s Resource Center (WRC), Student Development Diversity Initiatives (SDDI), Student and Community Support (OS&CS), and Student Leadership, Engagement and Campus Activities (SLECA),

**WHEREAS**, much of the inclusion and community engagement advocacy and programming offered at Cornell is initiated, implemented, and funded by Cornell undergraduates via the Student Assembly and byline-funded university organizations,

* The undergraduate student activity fee provides $108,000 to the African, Latino, Asian, Native American Intercultural Board (ALANA), $46,000 to Haven: LGBTQ Student Union, $46,000 to the Women’s Resource Center (WRC), and $33,000 for to the International Students Union (ISU)
* The graduate student activity fee provides about $10,000 for the ISU

**WHEREAS**, the University does not provide commensurate support to its own community advocacy centers, which are also tasked with supporting graduate and professional students on campus as well as faculty and staff:

* The University provides approximately $50,000 for Student Development and Diversity Initiatives, $27,000 for the LGBT Resource Center, $0.00 to the Women’s Resource Center (outside of the salary for Assistant Dean of Students, Director of Cornell Women's Resource Center), and has not formed an advocacy center for international students due to lack of funding despite sustained student interest and demonstrated need;

**WHEREAS**, the aforementioned advocacy centers are limited in their ability to offer additional services and support to graduate and professional students due to insufficient funding and lack of full-time staff support;

**WHEREAS**, the University’s peer institutions (Harvard University, University of Pennsylvania, Princeton University, New York University, Georgetown University, Dartmouth College) offer more substantial support and financial resources to their University-administered minority community and advocacy programs:

* The University of Pennsylvania provides approximately $300,000 for its LGBT Center and approximately $500,000 for its Pan-Asian American Community House

**WHEREAS**, this SAD will have a tentative $116,000 annual salary, as per the Full-time Annual Equivalent Typical Recruiting Range of Category H within Student Services,

**WHEREAS**, Article II Section 2.01 “Scope of Authority” of the GPSA Charter states:

“*1. The Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (hereinafter referred to as the GPSA) shall have a voice in those activities, program areas, and non-academic policies that affect graduate and professional students,*”

**WHEREAS**, Article II Section 2.03 “Legislative Authority Over Policies” of the GPSA Charter states:

“*1. The GPSA shall have the authority to examine the University politics that impact graduate and professional students.*

*2. The GPSA shall have the authority to make recommendations to the*

*appropriate bodies and University administrators concerning these matters”*

*3. The GPSA shall be consulted with respect to the modification and*

*development of non-academic policies, which directly affect graduate and professional students,*”

**WHEREAS**, the Preamble of the GPSA Charter states:

“*this body may interact with and discuss issues of common interest with the Student, Employee, and University Assemblies, and Faculty Senate,*”

**WHEREAS**, the Student Assembly as of March 26, 2015 passed Resolution 53: Suspend the Hiring of the S.A.D., which affirmed that the addition of the S.A.D. position is not the immediate, most pressing priority for the communities this administrator is intended to serve and that funds allocated for this position would be better spent hiring additional staff members for the understaffed and underfunded community advocacy and resource centers that already exist on Cornell’s campus.

**WHEREAS**, the University’s Strategic Initiative Plan for 2010-2015 cites “yearly growth in the proportion of underrepresented minorities among the undergraduate student population” and “ensuring a hospitable and supportive environment for minorities on campus” as a priority, yet continuously refuses to allocate adequate funding or resources to advocacy centers that support these students,

**WHEREAS**, advocacy centers are central to the creation of a safe, supportive environment for minority students,

WHEREAS, the creation of this position took place without any direct stakeholder engagement with the student service unit staff, associated student organization leaders and students who initiate, implement, fund and utilize much of the inclusion and community engagement advocacy and programming offered at Cornell and whereas these students are direct stakeholders in the operation of this new position;

WHEREAS, the GPSA acknowledges the importance of hiring administrators to address the loss of staff in the Dean of Students’ Office but remains concerned that this new position encompasses far too many responsibilities under the umbrella of community support to adequately address the aforementioned needs of minority students and their respective advocacy centers,

WHEREAS, shared governance at Cornell is an important value and the GPSA has already passed Resolution 7 about the need for greater transparency and consultation with Cornell’s assemblies,

WHEREAS, minority students in particular require their needs to be heard because their communities are historically under-resourced, overlooked, and whose voices often go unheard,

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED**, that the GPSA is concerned about the creation and hiring process of the Associate Dean of Students for Inclusion, Engagement and Community Support,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the University allocate funds to the operational budgets of WRC, A3C and LGBTRC that are commensurate with Cornell’s aforementioned peer institutions to ensure the adequate, continued, and improved access to services for minority populations.

**BE IT ALSO RESOLVED** that the University, in light of these major concerns which have been raised continuously since 2008, regarding its funding of advocacy services, support resources, and inclusion programming, re-examine structuring of funding and full-time staffing for advocacy centers on campus and other direct support services that impact campus climate (as recommended by the “for students” action items in the Cornell Strategic Initiative Plan for 2010-2015),

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the University should involve communities more broadly in decisions that affect them before making unilateral decisions by consulting with the relevant student service unit staff about the needs of their advocacy centers and their constituents, the associated student leaders of relevant organizations and other students from affected communities in order to hear their voices earlier in the process and make more effective choices that reflect the demands that face these communities

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Yao

Humanities Voting Member, GPSA

Katherine Herleman,

Chairman, Diversity and International Students Committee, GPSA

Jevan Hutson,

President, Haven: The LGBTQ Student Union

Diane Wong

President of the Society of Asian American Graduate Affairs

Members of the Latino/a Graduate Studies Coalition

[assembly.cornell.edu/GPSA/Home](http://assebmly.cornell.edu/UA/Home)