

1 **RESOLUTION 2021-012**

2 **A RESOLUTION FOR INCREASING BLACK STUDENT ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION**
3 **THROUGH SUPPORTIVE NETWORKS**

4 Author: Rania Khamees, Parliamentarian; Mary Sagatelova,2, Delegate, Evolution, Ecology, and Organic Biology;
5 Christina Henry; Jasmine Whiteside
6 Sponsor: Executive Committee
7

8 WHEREAS the Council of Graduate Students (CGS) is the representative body of all graduate students enrolled at The
9 Ohio State University as established by Article 2, Section 1 of the CGS Constitution; and
10

11 WHEREAS the Council or its appointed representative(s) have the power to sit as an advisory agent on behalf of graduate
12 students on all matters brought before personnel, committees, or agencies of The Ohio State University involving the interest
13 of graduate students as established in Article 3 Section 3 of the CGS Constitution; and
14

15 WHEREAS Black students enrolled within primarily white institutions (PWIs) lack a strong social support network, both
16 with their peers and faculty mentors, which has been shown to affect both academic success and attrition¹; and
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18 WHEREAS Black graduate students at The Ohio State University represent only 7.6% of all graduate student enrollment in
19 2019²; and
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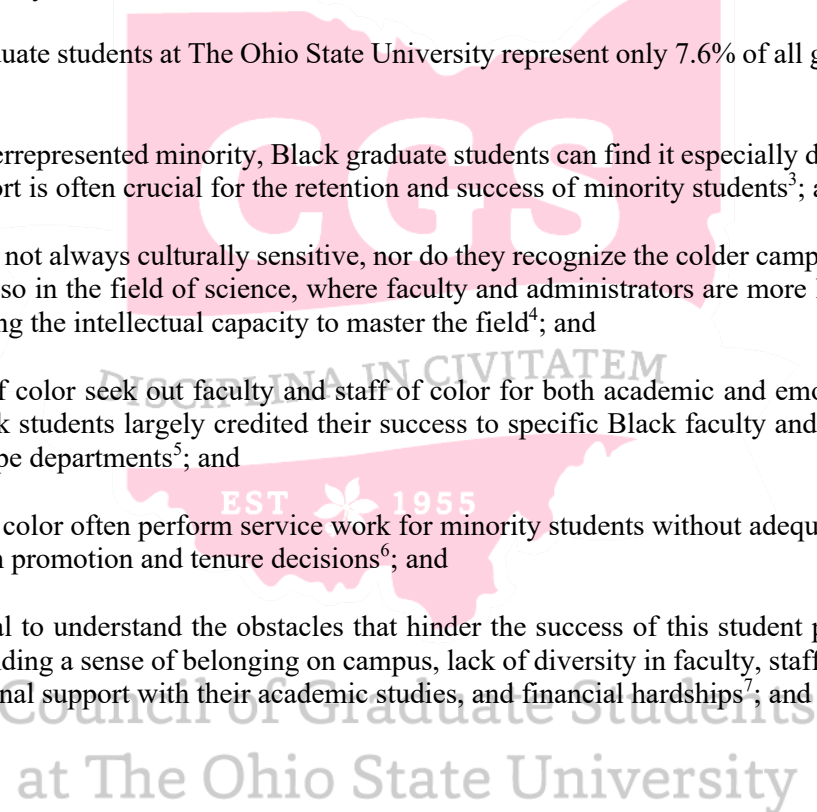
21 WHEREAS, as an underrepresented minority, Black graduate students can find it especially difficult to find mentors within
22 academia, whose support is often crucial for the retention and success of minority students³; and
23

24 WHEREAS faculty are not always culturally sensitive, nor do they recognize the colder campus atmosphere Black students
25 experience, even more so in the field of science, where faculty and administrators are more likely to foster toxic ideology
26 of Black students lacking the intellectual capacity to master the field⁴; and
27

28 WHEREAS students of color seek out faculty and staff of color for both academic and emotional support, with research
29 studies indicating Black students largely credited their success to specific Black faculty and staff members in admissions
30 and student services-type departments⁵; and
31

32 WHEREAS, faculty of color often perform service work for minority students without adequate financial compensation or
33 service consideration in promotion and tenure decisions⁶; and
34

35 WHEREAS it is critical to understand the obstacles that hinder the success of this student population, including, but not
36 limited to, difficulty finding a sense of belonging on campus, lack of diversity in faculty, staff, and student population, lack
37 of family and professional support with their academic studies, and financial hardships⁷; and
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¹ Xu, Y. J., & Webber, K.L. (2018). College Student Retention on a Racially Diverse Campus: A Theoretically Guided Reality Check. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*, 20(1), 2-28

² Graduation Admissions. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://dataviz.rae.osu.edu/t/public/views/CoalitionDashboards_0/GraduateAdmissions?:isGuestRedirectFromVizportal=v&embed=y

³ Brown II, C. M., Davis, G. L., & McClendon, S. A. (1999). Mentoring Graduate Students of Color: Myths, Models, and Modes. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 74(2), 105-118.

⁴ Easterwood, A. (2016). Racial Stressors and the Black College Experience at Predominantly White Institutions. Retrieved from https://kuscholarworks.ku.edu/bitstream/handle/1808/22359/Easterwood_ku_0099M_14812_DATA_1.pdf?sequence=1

⁵ Wright, B.W. (2008). Expectations and Experiences of African American Students at Two Predominantly White Universities in Southern Appalachia. Retrieved from <https://dc.etsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4140&context=etsu-works>

⁶ Social Sciences Feminist Network Research Interest Group. (2017). The Burden of Invisible Work in Academia: Social Inequalities and Time Use in Five University Departments. *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations - Diversity & Social Justice in Higher Education*, 39(39), 228-245

⁷ Eakins, A. & Eakins, S. (2017). African American Students at Predominantly White Institutions: A Collaborative Style Cohort Recruitment & Retention Model. *Journal of Learning in Higher Education*: 13(2). Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1161827.pdf>

39 WHEREAS diversity initiatives often work to increase support for Black graduate students through a white lens without
40 considering the unique perspective of underrepresented groups who do not share the same experiences; and
41
42 WHEREAS, to counteract this and fully and effectively support Black graduate students, Black-to-Black mentorship is
43 essential; and
44
45 WHEREAS, to be successful, mentorship must be maintained throughout the first year via academic advising, career
46 counseling, student workshops, and targeted mentorship opportunities.
47
48 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Council of Graduate Students advocates for a university-wide program for incoming
49 Black graduate students led by trained faculty and staff of color; and
50
51 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this program will enroll students across all disciplines and recruit faculty and staff to
52 be involved from various areas around the university to create a university-wide support system for Black graduate students;
53 and
54
55 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that continuous engagement in the first year and through the duration of a student's graduate
56 education be established, modeled after similar programs such as the Knights-Hennessey Scholars program at Stanford
57 University⁸, in which Black graduate students can enroll in the program during their first year on campus and have access
58 to faculty and staff of color across the university through regular meetings, workshops, and sponsored events; and
59
60 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the established program should provide academic mentoring and socialization, cross-
61 disciplinary networks, and career coaching; and
62
63 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such a program is to provide a community of Black scholars with formal structure and
64 access to concrete advice, skills, and resources that take into account the history, culture, and challenges of Black individuals
65 within academia; and
66
67 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this program should seek to enroll Black graduate students who are recipients of the
68 University's diversity fellowships or other university fellowships such as the William E. Nelson Research and Travel Grant⁹;
69 and
70
71 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the program can additionally provide grants for academic travel or professional
72 development on a competitive basis to enrolled scholars; and
73
74 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED for consecutive years in which the student is enrolled in a graduate program, Black graduate
75 students will be provided with academic development, career coaching, and opportunities for mentoring incoming graduate
76 students; and
77
78 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this program will have an additional focus of guiding Black graduate students into
79 careers in research and academia; and
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81 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this program should build off of existing programming, as modeled by Preparing Future
82 Faculty Fellows¹⁰ operating with Black Graduate & Professional Student Caucus; and
83
84 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that students outside of the first year or dissertation years can act as mentees to incoming
85 students and provide invaluable insights about navigating academia as a Black graduate student and allow for professional
86 development experience; and

⁸ <https://knight-hennessy.stanford.edu/>

⁹ <https://aaas.osu.edu/about/giving>

¹⁰ Allen, W. R., Epps, E. G., Guillory, E. A., Suh, S. A., & Bonous-Hammarth, M. (2000). The Black Academic: Faculty status among African Americans in U.S. higher education. *Journal of Negro Education*, 69, 112–127.

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88 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED this program would require reasonable monetary compensation for participating faculty
89 and formal recognition of their service; and

90

91 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this mentorship program should be integrated into the service component for tenure
92 track faculty as a means to firmly root the university initiative as well as to ensure recognition is given to such service work;
93 and

94

95 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Council of Graduate Students formally recognizes that of the factors proven to improve
96 the retention of students of color at Ohio State, direct efforts to be more inclusive of students, faculty, and staff of color and
97 initiatives targeted to retain individuals of color are necessary¹¹; and

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99 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Council of Graduate Students will direct Black graduate students to participate in this
100 initiative; and

101

102 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Council of Graduate Students desires the Ohio State University to identify resources
103 and faculty to propagate the implementation of this program; and

104

105 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Council of Graduate Students directs its President and Vice President to distribute
106 this resolution to The Ohio State University President Kristina M. Johnson, Executive Vice President and Provost Bruce
107 McPheron, Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Dean of the Graduate School Alicia Bertone, Vice President for
108 Student Life Melissa Shivers, Vice President for Government Affairs Stacy Rastaukas, and the Chair of the Council on
109 Student Affairs Jordan Vadja, and all other relevant leadership and authorities of The Ohio State University and its
110 partners.

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113 Approved: Yes/No

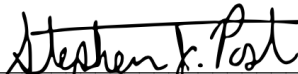
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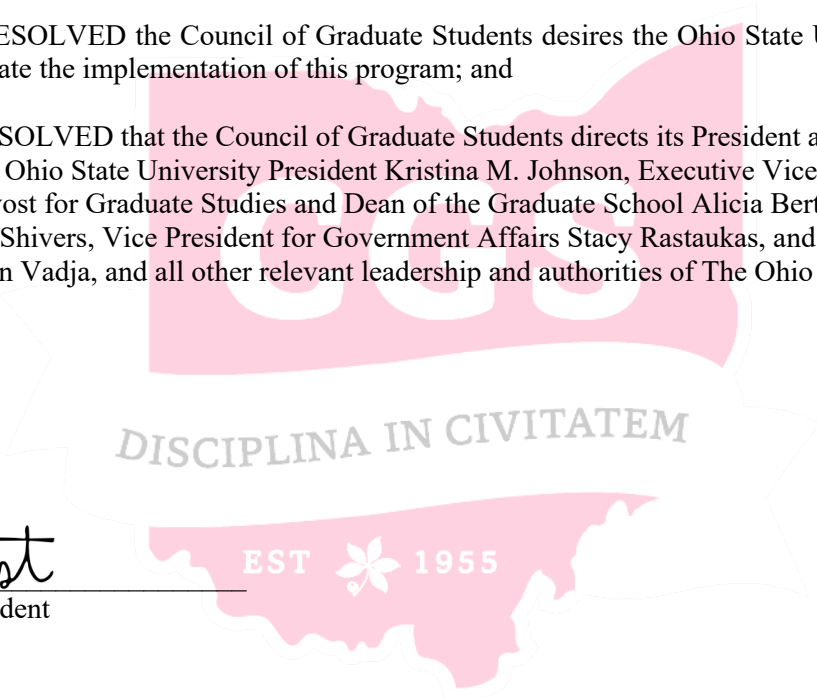
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Stephen J. Post, President

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Council of Graduate Students at The Ohio State University

¹¹ Hurtado, S., Milem, J., Clayton-Pederson, A., & Allen, W. (1999). Enacting diverse learning environments: Improving the climate for racial/ethnic diversity in higher education. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report Volume 26(8). Washington, DC: The George Washington University, Graduate School of Education and Human Development.