RESOLUTION 2021-011
A RESOLUTION FOR THE INTEGRATION OF BLACK STUDENT SUPPORT STAFF INTO ALL
OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGES

Author: Caroline Fitzpatrick.271, Co-Chair, Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion
Sponsor: Executive Committee

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

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

WHEREAS the Ohio State University’s Columbus Campus’ enrollment of Black students has increased for the last three years to 3,953 students in Autumn 2019; and

WHEREAS the mission of the Ohio State University is to “prepare a diverse student body to be leaders and engaged citizens”;

WHEREAS research consistently finds that Black students face unique academic and personal experiences in college as compared to their non-Black peers, including microaggressions and racial jokes by other students, low expectations and bias against their intellectual capabilities by faculty, and a generally hostile environment of discrimination and hyper-surveillance that leads to marginalization and feelings of isolation; and

WHEREAS these violent experiences create barriers to adjustment, engagement, and completion of college, and increase risk for long-term harm to Black students in the form of chronic stress and poor mental and physical health outcomes; and

WHEREAS the Ohio State University’s current support system for Black students includes the Hale Black Cultural Center, which offers a few select community-building programs for Black students, a single African-American Student Liaison within the Multicultural Center, a handful of Black Student organizations, and a small number of Chief Diversity Officers within individual colleges that offer inconsistent diversity programming; and

WHEREAS research documents the connection between quality support services for Black students and student adjustment, performance, motivation, and retention11,12,13; and
WHEREAS the 2019 four-year graduation rate for Black students was only 45.8%, as compared to 62.3% for white students14, indicating that many Black students are still facing barriers to success on campus that are not impeding white students and are not resolved by existing services.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Council of Graduate Students advises The Ohio State University to permanently fund at least two positions for Black Academic Liaisons (BAL) in each college and regional campus, who will be charged with providing personal, academic, and professional support for Black students according to the strengths, vulnerabilities, and perspectives of the Black student body of their particular department; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that preference for each BAL be given to Black applicants, as existing research confirms that a racial match between service provider and client result in increased utilization of services, more favorable outcomes, and greater client satisfaction15,16; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each BAL should have experience within the field of their college of employment so that they are able to provide field-specific mentorship and programming to their students, as studies document that Black students face varying barriers depending on their field of study17; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that programming instituted by each BAL should be grounded in evidence-based practices, including peer mentoring programs4, networking events with representation of Black professionals11, and cooperative study opportunities17; and

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

Approved: Yes/No

Date: __11/6/20____

Stephen J. Post, President