



**Resolution No. 2021-02**

**A Resolution Calling for the University of Missouri to Reaffirm its Commitment to Graduate Student Workers' First Amendment Rights**

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BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HERE GATHERED THAT:

- WHEREAS,** A *Maneater* article published on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020 referencing a July zoom meeting hosted by the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs references a question regarding graduate student staff's obligations to publicly support the University's positions; and
- WHEREAS,** The Collected Rules and Regulations of the University of Missouri Section 320.050D states "University employee that is enrolled as a student at the University of Missouri and whose primary association with the University is related to the pursuit of an academic program. Because academic pursuit is the primary purpose of the student role, Student Employees should not be scheduled to work more than an average of 28 hours per week across all concurrent University jobs during the measurement period [1] and should be in a student title as described in HR-204 Student Position Titles"; and
- WHEREAS,** The Chancellor and University President has repeatedly demanded loyalty and support from administrators and staff despite large disagreements regarding matters of leadership, social justice, and health and safety, most clearly indicated in his July 13<sup>th</sup> *Expectations for Leaders* presentation which states, "If — deep down — you don't feel that senior management makes good decisions (or *if you don't trust the organization or don't agree with the philosophy and mission*), it's time to start looking for another job," (Appendix I); and
- WHEREAS,** The Collected Rules and Regulations of the University of Missouri Section 330.040A, Professional Responsibilities, Protest, and Political Activities, states "In a community of learning, willful disruption of the educational process, destruction of property, and interference with the rights of other members of the community will not be permitted;" and
- WHEREAS,** The ability of graduate student workers to express their first Amendment rights outside of their employment, so long as such expression does not interfere with the University's educational mission, is integral to a healthy campus climate; and
- WHEREAS,** The Graduate School webpage for Performance & Renewal Evaluation Criteria for Graduate Assistantships states "The responsibilities of the graduate assistantships and the performance evaluation methods should be provided in writing to the student by the immediate supervisor at the beginning of the assistantship," and, in addition to academic criteria, should take into account, "Professional and ethical behavior in all assigned tasks and duties," (Appendix II); and
- WHEREAS,** The inclusion of limitations of First Amendment rights outside of the scope of employment for less than full time graduate student workers in hiring letters, should the University choose to include them, would represent legally dubious requirements; and
- WHEREAS,** The evaluation criteria limits evaluation to "**assigned tasks and duties**," effectively indicating individual liberty outside of employment; therefore be it



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**RESOLVED,** By majority vote of the General Assembly here gathered that the Graduate Professional Council of the University of Missouri calls for the University's administration clarify its position on graduate student worker rights to free speech; and be it further

**RESOLVED,** That the Graduate and Professional Council supports the rights of graduate student workers to express political speech outside of their employment context, even if in contradiction with the University's stated position, to encourage a campus climate which supports healthy discourse and debate.

**AUTHORED,**

**Garren Wegener, Agriculture & Applied Economics**

**SUBMITTED,\***

**Jamie Luke, Agriculture & Applied Economics**

**CO-SIGNED,\***

**Ashley Anderson, English**

**Talyia Fordham, NEP**

**Dakota Ioanis, Geography**

**Sean Duan, Psychology**

\*Submitted and co-signed signatories are for consideration of the Resolution by the General Assembly in accordance with Section 3.1.2.2 of the GPC Bylaws and have been verified by the Vice President.

## Appendix I

Slides 10-12 omitted from original document include photos of alleged University of Missouri students.

# ***Expectations for Leaders***

Mun Y. Choi  
July 13, 2020

# **We're Committed to Improving Inclusion, Diversity & Equity**

- We will always engage in civil discourse with students, faculty and staff to address issues
- We will make decisions based on principles, fairness and the best interest of the institution
- Some decisions may be unpopular with some students, faculty and staff
- Some decisions you may disagree with
- But, we ask for your support for those decisions as well and stand with the institution
- **If your heart is 'not in it' to support inclusion, diversity and equity efforts, do let me know immediately**



# What Do I Expect of You for Inclusion, Diversity and Equity?

- If you see or are made aware of discriminatory behavior, stop what you're doing and address it immediately
  - Comfort and support the affected individual(s)
  - Speak to the offender immediately and share your repulsion of the behavior
  - Consult with HR, Civil Rights & Title IX and General Counsel about immediate dismissal or suspension, if situation warrants it
  - Include written incident documentation in the offender's personnel file
  - Check in on the affected individual(s) frequently and provide support
- Each one of us will be held accountable if appropriate actions are not taken
- Share the same expectations with your staff



# What Do I Expect of Leaders in the Decision-Making Process?

- You are part of the leadership team because of the perspective and expertise you bring to the team
- Being part of the leadership team and decision-making process includes responsibilities
- When possible, gather information in advance and be prepared for the discussion
- Listen and be open to evaluating input by others
- Provide your opinion and best advice
- Once all input has been evaluated and a decision has been made, support the decision and help implement it, even if the decision is different than one that you would have made



# What if it is a Decision that You are Not Part of?

- Recognize that at times information is confidential and it is not appropriate to share more broadly when decision is made
- When appropriate, seek to understand how and why the decision was made
- As part of leadership team, support and help implement the decision, even if you weren't part of the decision-making process



# Carrying Out a Decision You Disagree With

*[Harvard Business Review article in 2018. Author Art Markman, the Worsham Centennial Professor of Psychology and Marketing at the University of Texas at Austin.](#)*



# Carrying Out a Decision You Disagree With

- One of the great frustrations of being a leader is that other leaders make decisions that go against what you would have done had it been up to you
- A natural reaction is to begrudgingly go along with course of action
- You might even be tempted to communicate to peers and supervisees that you're not convinced this is the right way to go
- But, your job is to help your organization succeed
- You won't be fulfilling that role if you — *intentionally or unintentionally* — undermine the decision
- Instead, start by asking yourself if you trust the organization you work for

# Carrying Out a Decision You Disagree With

- If — deep down — you don't feel that senior management makes good decisions (*or if you don't trust the organization or don't agree with the philosophy and mission*), it's time to start looking for another job
- To convince yourself of the decision, put yourself in the shoes of someone who believes deeply in the decision that was made
- Look for factors you may not have considered before that would make this option a good one
- The reservations you have about the decision can strengthen the plans you develop with your team
- Teach this method of dealing with disappointing decisions with your staff

# ***Thomas Jefferson Statue***

***The last thing that members of the university should do is  
to encourage this type of behavior***

***Appropriate, consistent investigations and sanctions  
must be applied***

***Offenders will feel 'emboldened' if there are no actions  
taken***

***Lost revenue from tuition and state support due to  
the aftermath of 2015 is over \$200M for MU***



# What are MU Stakeholders Saying?

- “I don’t want 2015 to happen again”
- “It’s not my job to speak up when I disagree with what some people are doing”
- “I’ll be labelled a racist if I say anything about topics like ..... (fill in the blank)”
- “I’m an advocate for students and staff and I sympathize with them”
- **What can you do in 2020?**
- **We’re counting on you to take actions and to lead by example**



# If You Believe the University of Missouri is a Worthy Cause

- Actively prevent 2015 from happening again
- It's your job to speak up when you disagree with what some people are doing
- It doesn't make one a racist when **truthful** perspectives are shared about ..... (Fill in the blank)
- Be an advocate for students & staff **BUT REMEMBER** you are their **Guide and or Supervisor**
- **Get them to a good place to make positive changes**
  - You are institutional leaders and not their friends
  - It's not about being popular.....It's about doing what's right



# Address These Matters in a Timely Manner

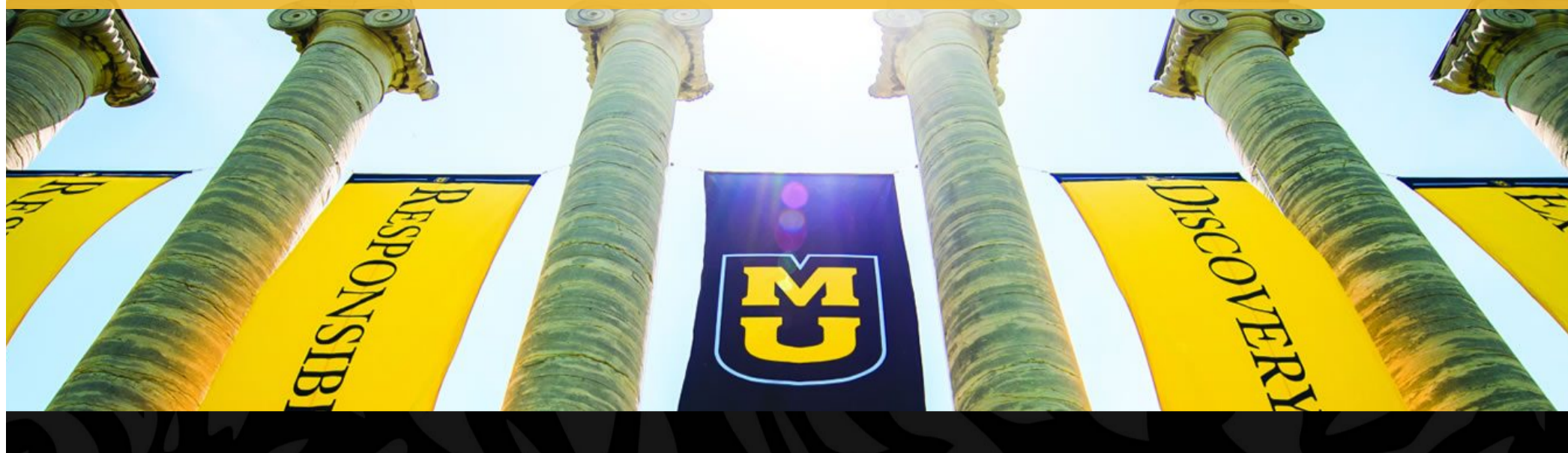
- Most people are doing the right things for the right reasons at MU
- But to those who are are damaging (*intentionally or unintentionally*) the institution through their actions, communicate **unambiguously** your concerns and expectations
- Hold individuals accountable for their actions
- I ask each of you to have conversations with your staff about how best to support the institution



***Thank you for your support for the  
University of Missouri***



## Appendix II



# Assistantships and Fellowships

## Graduate assistantship evaluation methods

The responsibilities of graduate assistantships and the performance evaluation method should be provided in writing to the student by the immediate supervisor at the beginning of the assistantship. An [appeal process](#) is available for students in graduate assistantships who assert they have not been fairly evaluated.

## Conducting evaluations

The faculty or staff member who supervises the work of the student holding the graduate assistantship must conduct a written evaluation of the student's performance at least once a year and provide a copy to the student and to the chair/director of the program or department for placement in the student's file. This evaluation is separate from the annual review of student academic progress and should take the following criteria into account:

- Prompt, efficient, and accurate completion of assigned tasks.
- Independent work.
- Analysis and problem solving.
- Adequate evaluations by students for instructional and tutoring assignments in courses, laboratory, and clinical settings.
- Cooperation with mentor, director, and other assistants.
- Professional and ethical behavior in all assigned tasks and duties, including course studies and research.

Opportunities for improving performance should be outlined.

## Equal treatment

The University of Missouri is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution. Evaluation of student performance in a graduate assistantship must not be influenced by race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, genetic information, disability or protected veteran status. Discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions is also prohibited. In addition, evaluations must not be influenced by a student's exercise of First Amendment freedoms of expression and association.

The academic freedom of graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) is not necessarily coextensive with that of faculty. GTAs are engaged in supervised teaching or instruction activities. Supervisors are responsible for defining the nature, scope, and manner of instruction for each course. Supervisors should communicate the extent to which GTAs have discretion to introduce additional material, and GTAs should follow supervisors' instructions. GTAs may not be penalized for expressing their own views on matters within the scope of the course, provided they adequately represent these views as their own.

## Renewing assistantships

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- Academic program guidelines for the funding duration or limited semesters of support of a student are met.
- The student is making satisfactory academic progress, with a GPA not less than 3.0.
- The student’s assistantship performance is judged by their supervisor to be satisfactory.
- The student’s professional and ethical behavior in all assigned tasks and duties — including course studies and research — is judged to be satisfactory.

If the renewal falls within number of years of funding specified in the initial letter of offer *and* the five criteria listed above have been met, the assistantship must be renewed.



Graduate School  
University of Missouri

