A RESOLUTION FOR THE INCLUSION OF ALL FACULTY IN UNIVERSITY SEXUAL HARASSMENT TRAINING

WHEREAS, Sexual harassment and sexual assault are a major concern in an academic environment, and are prohibited for academic institutions receiving federal funding under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq.; 34 C.F.R. Part 106); AND

WHEREAS, Sexual harassment is similarly prohibited in an employment context under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and in both educational and employment contexts under Michigan’s Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act of 1976; AND

WHEREAS, University of Michigan’s Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities, states that “Students have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity,”¹ and the University has adopted a Student Sexual Misconduct Policy to that end². The University has also adopted a separate Sexual Harassment Policy³ for university staff, which covers student employees; AND

WHEREAS, When sexual harassment occurs, it can have a serious and detrimental effect on the victim’s mental health, personal life, and career; AND

WHEREAS, According to the University of Michigan Sexual Harassment Policy, “Sexual harassment most often occurs when one person has actual or apparent power over another”³; AND

WHEREAS, As junior colleagues, graduate students are in an intermediate power position, often playing the a subservient role under faculty and a dominant role to undergraduates; AND

¹ http://oscr.umich.edu/statement/
² http://studentsexualmisconductpolicy.umich.edu/policy-coverage
³ http://spg.umich.edu/policy/201.89-0
WHEREAS, Thus graduate students have the potential to be both the perpetrators, and the
victims of sexual harassment; AND

WHEREAS, The reauthorized federal Violence Against Women Act of 2013 (S.47) now
requires training programs for all *incoming* staff, faculty, and professional,
graduate and undergraduate students by March of 2014; AND

WHEREAS, This is intended to minimize the risk of graduate students as the cause of
sexual harassment; AND

WHEREAS, Due to the close relationship and power dynamic between faculty and
graduate students, faculty members are the most likely perpetrators of sexual
harassment for graduate students; AND

WHEREAS, While Rackham Student Government strongly supports the training of
*incoming* staff and faculty, the student body is concerned that the slow
turnover of *current* faculty positions presents a significant population that
will not undergo training, thus diminishing the impact of this legislation,
increasing the timeline to achieve the goals, and increasing the risk to
potential victims and presenting a substantial liability to the University; AND

WHEREAS, NOW ON BEHALF OF THE STUDENT BODY OF THE HORACE H.
RACKHAM GRADUATE SCHOOL, BE IT

RESOLVED, That Rackham Student Government will work closely with University
administrators and the Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center to
assist in educating graduate students on their rights and responsibilities, per
the reauthorized Violence Against Women Act of 2013 requirements; AND
BE IT

RESOLVED, that current faculty be included in the training mandated for incoming faculty
under the Violence Against Women Act of 2013; AND BE IT FINALLY

RESOLVED, the Rackham Student Government will work closely with the University
administration, as well as any relevant campus governments such as Senate
Advisory Committee on University Affairs, to ensure that all existing faculty
do participate, through any regulatory means at its disposal.

AUTHORS

David Weinreich
Representative, Division 3

Erin Sullivan
Representative, Division 3
By Signing below, I certify the this resolution was dispatched by the RSG Board under the rules as prescribed in section IX of the bylaws and that the vote count appearing at the top of this resolution is accurate.

Michael Benson, Parliamentarian, Rackham Student Government

PRESIDENTIAL ACTION

I, Phillip Saccone, President of the Rackham Student Body, do hereby approve / veto this resolution on this the _____ day of ____, 2014.

Phillip Saccone
President, Rackham Graduate Student Body