
Resolution on University Resources for Students with Children

WHEREAS, the University of Pennsylvania (hereafter the “University”) places high value on the recruitment and retention of a talented and diverse graduate and professional student body; and

WHEREAS the University acknowledges that balancing academic and family life is essential to having a productive and committed graduate and professional student body that achieves a graduation rate and a time to degree that is competitive with peer institutions; and

WHEREAS, part of the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly’s (hereafter “GAPSA”) purpose is to represent the concerns of graduate and professional students, including students with dependents to the University administration; and

WHEREAS, no accurate and official University data exists on the number of graduate and professional students with dependents, further that a GAPSA survey, which was not statistically sound, revealed that at a minimum 400 graduate students at the University have child dependents and an additional 120 students plan to give birth to or adopt a child prior to graduating; and

WHEREAS, the University’s decisions with regard to facilities and services do not seem to take into consideration the needs of graduate and professional students with dependents; and

WHEREAS, the only existing University childcare facility available to Penn student families are unaffordable and inaccessible for graduate and professional students; and

WHEREAS, University identification cards (hereafter “PennCards”) and associated services, including access to Penn Transit, and the Hutchinson Gymnasium, are no longer extended to child dependents of students; and

WHEREAS, the University has already accepted a proposal and identified funding for a Family Resource Center; and

WHEREAS, there is no longer dedicated family student housing since Mayer Hall was annexed by the Stouffer undergraduate College House; Therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that GAPSA urges the University to maintain and furnish to GAPSA data as accurate as possible concerning the number of students with children; and further;

RESOLVED, that GAPSA urges the University to prioritize additional space in close proximity to campus for affordable childcare services for the children of students; and further

RESOLVED, that GAPSA urges the University to extend PennCard privileges to child dependents of students, so that they may receive nominal access to University services, such as libraries, recreational facilities and transportation; and further

RESOLVED, that GAPSAs urges the University to ensure that all recreational facilities associated with the University have appropriate hours when the facility is accessible to child dependents of students; and further

RESOLVED, that GAPSAs urges the University to identify adequate space on campus for a Family Resource Center; and further

RESOLVED, that GAPSAs urges the University to allocate space and facilities in the PennConnects postal land development plan to accommodate the needs of students with families.

Submitted by Susan Haas, (Annenberg), Jacqui Simonet (Medicine) and Nikki Thorpe (Design).

Adopted by the Assembly on January 21, 2009.