

Resolution 02-21-22: Condemnation of Recent and Future Racist and Discriminatory Graffiti On UW’s Campus and Recommendations for Communicating Campus Resources to Graduate Students

Written by: A.J. Balatico, GPSS Vice President of Finance

WHEREAS, The mission statement of the Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS) is “With integrity, GPSS amplifies the voices and experiences of graduate and professional students at the University of Washington, builds community, and advocates for the eradication of inequities”; and

WHEREAS, Racist and discriminatory graffiti has negative consequences for the UW community, creating a hostile, unsafe learning and work environment, especially for students, faculty, and staff who are the intended targets of expressions of hate; and

WHEREAS, Graffiti and vandalism take time and resources to remove or restore; and

WHEREAS, Racist and discriminatory graffiti was found in multiple buildings on UW’s Seattle Campus on Friday, October 22, 2021; and

WHEREAS, The Daily reported on the November 1, 2021 issue “Racist graffiti reported in engineering buildings” [\[1\]](#) ; and

WHEREAS, The Daily reported on a separate but similar incident in the March 10, 2021 issue “Repeated racist and homophobic vandalism reported in residence halls” [\[2\]](#) ; and

WHEREAS, The College of Engineering Dean Nancy Albritton, the College of Education Office of Student Diversity and Inclusion, and other departments have sent emails to graduate student audiences condemning the actions and offering links to campus resources; and

WHEREAS, The Aerospace & Engineering Research Building, Gates Center, the Electrical and Computer Engineering building (ECE), Gould Hall, Smith Hall, Guthrie Hall, Physics / Astronomy Tower (PAC), Hutchinson Hall, and PACCAR Hall were named in the aforementioned communications to the UW community; and

WHEREAS, Bias incidents on campus are defined as “any discrimination or harassment against a member of the university community based on perception of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, citizenship, sex, pregnancy, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, disability or veteran status,”; and

WHEREAS, Bias incidents do not necessarily constitute hate crimes as defined by RCW. 8A.36.080 [\[3\]](#) ; and

WHEREAS, Reports of bias incidents on campus can be made anonymously; and

WHEREAS, The follow up to reports of bias include: “asking facilities services to remove graffiti, reaching out to an affected community to provide support or providing feedback to a department or individual”; and

WHEREAS, In the 2018-19 Annual Report of the UW Bias Incident Advisory Committee [4], 34 of 49 (87%) submissions were filed with the “Discrimination Topic” as Race and 24 of 49 (49%) as Ethnicity; and

WHEREAS, In the same report, “White supremacy” and/or “racism” reports were filed “in nearly every month of the fiscal year,”; and

WHEREAS, The same report states 4 unique incidents of “Graffiti” were reported between July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019; and

WHEREAS, Updates to the Bias Incident website, reporting tool, and annual reports may be delayed due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, The University of Washington Police Department (UWPD) defines “graffiti” as “Intentional damage by painting over or otherwise defacing property of another,”; and

WHEREAS, The UWPD defines “vandalism” as “damaging, defacing, or destroying property” and that it is a separate category from “graffiti,”; and

WHEREAS, The term “graffiti” is not searchable on the UWPD website; and

WHEREAS, The UWPD 60 Day Log does not clearly indicate reports of graffiti or vandalism, and only lists two separate reports on September 23 and September 24 at the same location; and

WHEREAS, No other offenses related to graffiti or vandalism on campus are clearly discernible from this log; and

WHEREAS, The UWPD’s Community Engagement makes no mention of how to address these issues; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, The GPSS condemn all discriminatory actions against members of the UW community,

THAT, The graduate student body be made aware of the UW Bias Incident Reporting Tool in an all graduate student email sent from GPSS; and

THAT, The GPSS assesses that UWPD does not at present adequately address prevention of or responses to instances of graffiti on campus; and

THAT, The GPSS recommends the UWPD clearly state on their website on the Community Engagement/Crime Prevention Tips page what appropriate actions students should take if they witness or find graffiti or vandalism on-campus; and

THAT, In Winter quarter, the GPSS hold a “town hall / listening session” event to address issues of student safety and security on and around campus, requesting the attendance of those mentioned in the forwarding clause; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT The GPSS reaffirms the call to reimagine a safe campus and asks the UW to “Commit to creating novel approaches, not using law enforcement approaches, to respond to public safety needs...” [5]; and

AND THAT, This resolution be forwarded to:

UW President Ana Mari Cauce,
UW Provost Mark Richards,
UW Director, Regional & Community Relations Sally Clark,
UW Vice President of Student Life Denzil Suite,
UW Ombud Chuck Sloane,
UW Bias Incident Advisory Committee Co-Chairs Magdalena Fonseca and L. Lincoln Johnson
the UW Board of Regents,
UWPD Interim Chief Randall West,
the ASUW Board of Directors, and
the Editorial Team of the UW Daily.

[1] https://www.dailyuw.com/news/safety/article_10feaea8-3ac1-11ec-80fd-fbfd08c96ed8.html

[2] https://www.dailyuw.com/news/article_d19a8d52-81f4-11eb-9ca8-8fe2c5509283.html

[3] <https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=9A.36.080>

[4] <https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/uw-s3-cdn/wp-content/uploads/sites/147/2020/03/16190723/Bias-Incidence-Advisory-Committee-Annual-Report-2018-19.pdf>

[5] <https://depts.washington.edu/gpss/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/GPSS-Resolution-regarding-UW-divestment-from-local-law-enforcement-agencies-1.pdf>

First Reading: November 17, 2021

Second Reading: December 8, 2021

Approved: December 8, 2021