



Resolution: Addition of Director of Accessibility Affairs to Graduate Student Government Executive Board

Author(s): GSG Director of Community Service, Kaitlin O'Hara; USG Director of Accessibility Affairs, Zack Wentz

Supporter(s): Maegan Fairchild, GSG Director of Academic Affairs; Emmett Drager, GSG Director of Diversity & Equity - Advocacy; Graduate Student Government Executive Board

Date: November 21, 2017

WHEREAS, Undergraduate Student Government added the position of Director of Accessibility Affairs to its Executive Board for the 2017-2018 academic year in order to support the needs of undergraduate students with disabilities,

WHEREAS, there are countless **physical** accessibility issues on campus and in the USC community including but not limited to:

Lack of access to areas on campus that are accessible by stairs due to discontinued elevator use after certain hours. For example, the elevator from ground floor to second floor of TCC is not accessible after approximately 10 PM without having designated ID card privileges; however, the second floor of TCC accessible via staircase at all times,

Lack of elevators in campus buildings not currently required to follow ADA requirements due to early date of construction. For example, in order to access Bridge Hall in Marshall, one must take the elevator in Hoffman Hall to either the second or third floor, then take the bridge from Hoffman to Bridge. Furthermore, an additional building in Marshall, Accounting, is not accessible whatsoever to any levels other than the first floor,

Lack of access to student section in Coliseum, forcing students to sit in designated accessible area, where each individual using a wheelchair is only allowed one accompanying guest,

Lack of accessibility in dining halls, as evidenced by tables and chairs placed too closely together to comfortably navigate through when using a wheelchair. Additionally, the height of the plate return requires extensive reach for an individual using a wheelchair,

Lack of accessible living options for graduate students. While most University housing options currently meet ADA requirements by having ample space for a student using a wheelchair to navigate in a living area, there is currently only one apartment, located in the Centennial apartment building, that has been renovated to fit the needs of a student using a wheelchair by lowering counter heights, removing cabinets under sinks to allow scooting in closer to sink/counter, and removing the threshold from the bathtub/shower to allow simplified transferring,

Lack of options for engagement in recreational sports by students who use wheelchairs. Currently, the USG Director of Accessibility Affairs is working to acquire wheelchairs for all students to participate in wheelchair basketball as an intramural sport; however, such need is not limited to undergraduate students,

WHEREAS, numerous mental health, physical health, and academic accessibility needs of graduate students are not met, including but not limited to:

Lack of funding for graduate students to receive reasonable and necessary academic accommodations. While many undergraduate students are able to use documentation from neuropsychiatric testing completed in high school to support their university accommodations, most tests have been deemed expired by the time a student reaches the graduate level. Because such testing is very costly, many graduate students are not able obtain appropriate professional recommendations and receive the academic accommodations they need,

Lack of physical and mental health support readily available for many students on Health Sciences Campus due to lack of resources and space. Currently, students in the Physician Assistant program located on the Alhambra campus do not have access to health center resources without traveling to either HSC or UPC,

BE IT RESOLVED that USC Graduate Student Government senate approve the addition of the position of Director of Accessibility Affairs to the Graduate Student Government Executive Board for the 2018-2019 school year in order to increase efforts aimed at increasing accessibility for students with any form of disability or need for accommodation,

BE IT RESOLVED that USC Graduate Student Government calls upon the University to wholly and sufficiently respond to the needs of differently-abled students,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that USC Graduate Student Government calls on the University administration to provide adequate and appropriate support and resources to all students.