



GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL
STUDENT GOVERNMENT

FIFTY FIFTH GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL SENATE 2025 SESSION

55-036

Protect Undocumented Students Resolution

By Avery Baker, Public Policy; Hashem Amireh, Economics; Elaine Reiche, GPSG VP of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs; Alonna Despain, Public Policy

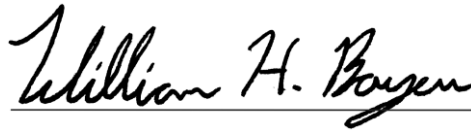
Cosponsored By Ellen Risemberg, Bioinformatics & Computational Biology; Nyssa Tucker, Toxicology [Ph.D.]; Romaniya Voloshchuk, Nutrition; Mandy L. Fowler, English & Comparative Literature; Yasamin Sharifi, Marine Sciences; Robert Ward, Classics; Jair Valenzuela, Biomedical Engineering; James Collins, City & Regional Planning; Melina Flores, Information & Library Science; Bryce Ross, Communication; Helen Klass-Warch, City & Regional Planning; Katherine McCormick, Political Science; Ben King, Public Administration; Omar Merhebi, Bioinformatics & Computational Biology; Jacob Ginn, Sociology; Onyedikachi Adike, Public Health Leadership; Lauren Babinetz, Geography and Environment; Kalin Bennington, Health Behavior; Britney Alcira, Biochemistry and Biophysics; Javier Limon, Public Administration; Michelle Preston, Environmental Science and Engineering; Lorcan Neill, Media & Journalism; Tyler West, Epidemiology; Madisyn Parker, Maternal & Child Health; Shriti Pant, Maternal & Child Health; Paola Sadivias Mendez, Global Studies; Ellen Atterbury, Romance Studies; Matthew Wong, Physician Assistant; Sloan Markowitz, Postdoctoral Representative; Meg Mackenzie, Art; Rebecca Melaku, Medicine; Emma Wrenn, Linguistics; Katie Clough, Toxicology

Signatory: Katie Heath, President of GPSG

01 29 2025	REFERRED TO SoGAPS COMMITTEE	
01 29 2025	RECOMMEND FAVORABLY BY SoGAPS COMMITTEE	AYES: 4 NAYS: 0 ABSTAIN: 0
01 30 2025	REFERRED TO THE SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT	
02 04 2025	APPROVED BY THE FULL SENATE	AYES: 39 NAYS: 1 ABSTAIN: 2
02 05 2025	SIGNED BY THE GPS SENATE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE	

Certified Correct and Proper

Attest:



Senior Vice President

4th day of February, 2025

Protect Undocumented Students Resolution

This resolution constitutes a GPSG Senate vote to call for UNC administration to issue a non-compliance policy with U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) that prioritizes the constitutional rights and well-being of undocumented students when circumstances are not legally binding, and for Chancellor Roberts to issue an apology and correction for the statements made on Jan. 24 indicating full compliance with ICE.

WHEREAS, the memorandum titled “Guidelines for Enforcement Actions in or Near Protected Areas” issued by the Biden Administration on October 27, 2021, containing the Department of Homeland Security directive¹ that mandated immigration enforcement operations should not occur in or near a “protected area” was rescinded on January 21, 2025, allowing U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to raid workplaces, educational institutions, and places of worship; and

WHEREAS, in the days since President Trump’s inauguration, ICE has targeted U.S. residents virtually indiscriminately on the basis of racial profiling against Hispanic and Latin Americans, to the extent where U.S. citizens have been unlawfully detained in New Jersey² and members of the Navajo Nation have had negative, targeted encounters with ICE agents during their pursuits³; and

WHEREAS, the well-being of immigrant students and their right to post-secondary education should be safeguarded in accordance with the principles established by *Plyler v. Doe*⁴, which reaffirms the right of all students access to public education; and

WHEREAS, the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment guarantees equal protection under the law to all individuals under the jurisdiction of the United States of America, which includes immigrants regardless of their immigration status, and explicitly prohibits the deprivation of life, liberty, or property without due process of law for any individual under the jurisdiction of the United States of America, and the Fifth Amendment guarantees the right to remain silent when confronted by law enforcement to all individuals under the jurisdiction of the United States of America⁵; and

WHEREAS, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects the confidentiality of student educational records and prohibits the release of personally identifiable information without consent, including information that could expose students to immigration enforcement actions unless presented with a “subpoena issued for a law enforcement purpose”⁶;

¹ https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/21_1027_opa_guidelines-enforcement-actions-in-near-protected-areas.pdf

² <https://myNBC15.com/news/nation-world/ice-immigration-and-customs-enforcement-raid-in-newark-new-jersey-ocean-seafood-depot-detains-undocumented-residents-citizens-and-veteran-mayor-decries-lack-of-warrant-president-donald-trump-executive-orders-immigrants>

³ <https://www.navajo-nsn.gov/Portals/0/Press%20Releases/2025/Jan/President%20Nygren%E2%80%99s%20statement%20on%20ICE%20concerns,%20for%20Jan.%202025.pdf>

⁴ <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/457/202/>

⁵ https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/amendments-11-27?_ga=2.243131586.1526733431.1738079618-386939005.1738079618#xiv

⁶ <https://www.higheredimmigrationportal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/FAQs-for-Campuses-on-Immigration-Enforcement-and-Site-Visits.pdf>

and

WHEREAS, immigrants are a sizeable and vital part of North Carolina’s population, representing 8.6 percent of the state’s residents as of 2022⁷, and accounting for 11 percent of North Carolina’s economic output (GDP)⁸; and

WHEREAS, as the state’s flagship university, UNC is uniquely positioned to serve as a model of institutional support and advocacy for immigrant students and their families, affirming its commitment to educational access and equity; and

WHEREAS, approximately 150,000 North Carolina residents are “undocumented, college-age, young adults” and an additional 170,000 are children who are U.S. citizens living with an undocumented family member(s)⁹; and

WHEREAS, UNC Chapel Hill has enrolled more than 2,600 international students from more than 110 countries as of Fall 2023 (which undocumented students are considered), hosted 937 international scholars from more than 80 countries during the 2022-2023 academic year, and is ranked 30th among the top host institutions in the United States as of 2022¹⁰; and

WHEREAS, the universally-recognized benefits of higher education, including personal benefits, such as higher lifetime earning potential and increased resiliency in the face of economic shocks and marginalized status and large-scale social and economic benefits reaped by individuals residing in the country at large, such as increased levels of innovation, job creation, wealth generation, and decreased inequality¹¹ dictate that all students who choose to pursue a college education should have the freedom to do so without interference; and

WHEREAS, UNC Chapel Hill has welcomed DACA and Undocumented students to apply and attend university, and members of the UNC community that are impacted by undocumented status include students, staff, faculty, alumni, and other university supporters¹²; and

WHEREAS, the swift recession of federal protections for immigrants, people of color, and other

⁷<https://map.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/locations/north-carolina/#:~:text=North%20Carolina,-Download%20PDF&text=North%20Carolina%20has%20a%20large,at%20least%20one%20immigrant%20parent>

⁸ https://ncbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/50-State_Earning-NORTH-CAROLINA.pdf

⁹ <https://undocucarolina.unc.edu/about/what-drives-us/>

¹⁰ <https://global.unc.edu/about/facts-and-figures/#:~:text=UNC%2DChapel%20Hill%20enrolled%20more,the%202022%2D2023%20academic%20year>

¹¹ <https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/education/50-years-after-landmark-study-returns-education-remain-strong>

¹² <https://undocucarolina.unc.edu/about/what-drives-us/>

historically marginalized people has created a climate of uncertainty and fear among immigrant communities, students, and families, potentially impacting their access to education and essential services; and

WHEREAS, dozens of UNC units advocate for and support undocumented students on campus, including but not limited to UndocuCarolina, UNC Global, the UNC LatinX Center, Humanities for Public Good, the Dean of Students, Carolina Housing, the Asian American Center, Gillings School of Public Health, Kenan-Flagler Business School, Adams School of Dentistry, Department of Anthropology, School of Information and Library Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences, University Libraries, Office of Scholarships and Student Aid, Academic Advising Program, School of Education, University Career Services, Counseling and Psychological Services, Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Center for European Studies, and International Student and Scholar Services¹³; and

WHEREAS, university administration has a responsibility and a duty to provide an environment conducive to learning by ensuring the overall safety and wellbeing of all students, regardless of immigration status and by heeding the recommendations of its own students and faculty; and

WHEREAS, by allowing ICE to raid the school and in so doing disrupt the learning of some or all UNC students by depriving them of their liberty and property, by taking away the students' time and effort from their studies, by breaking up the UNC community, and by fostering an environment of fear and distrust, UNC will fail to follow their end of the agreement between a university and its students; and

WHEREAS, on January 24th, 2025, Chancellor Roberts said UNC Chapel Hill will “comply” with ICE agents who pursue information about the whereabouts of undocumented students at UNC’s campus¹⁴ to enforce the Trump administration’s mass deportation policies; and

WHEREAS, the ACLU delivered a letter to UNC condemning Lee Roberts’ statements indicating the university would cooperate with ICE, and urging UNC to abide by their legal obligations to protect the privacy rights of their students. The letter¹⁵ cites FERPA requirements to protect personally identifiable student information, the Fourteenth Amendment’s Equal Protection Clause, and Title IV’s prohibition of discrimination based on “race, color, or national origin.” therefore be it

¹³ <https://undocucarolina.unc.edu/resources-for-allies/list-of-allies/>

¹⁴ <https://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/education/article299119765.html>

¹⁵ https://www.acluofnorthcarolina.org/sites/default/files/2025.01.30_-_letter_to_unc_chancellor.pdf

RESOLVED BY THE GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL SENATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL THAT:

Section 1.

UNC Chapel Hill must adopt a policy of non-compliance with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and any other law enforcement agency acting in an immigration enforcement capacity. Furthermore, UNC-Chapel Hill must institute a policy denying all voluntary detainer requests, which are non-binding and have been struck down by multiple federal district courts as a violation of the Fourteenth Amendment¹⁶; and,

Section 2.

Lawful court-ordered actions, such as search warrants and subpoenas signed by a judge, are exempt from Section 1. Furthermore, I-9 Notices of Inspection should also be exempt from Section 1; and,

Section 3.

Appropriate UNC-Chapel Hill administration shall assess its current open-campus status and create suitable protocol with designated private areas and restricted access points where ICE officers would be required by law to request access¹⁷, and this protocol must be clearly communicated and made accessible to the student body; and,

Section 4.

Vice Provost for Global Affairs and Chief Global Officer's office should create clear guidelines for instructors, staff, and students on interacting with ICE. These guidelines should protect undocumented and non-citizen students to the greatest degree possible.

Furthermore, the Executive Branch of the Graduate and Professional Student Government, whose role is to "implement and advocate the interests of graduate and professional students to the university...and [lead] efforts to improve the graduate and professional student experience"¹⁸ must consult with Carolina Student Legal Services and create and disseminate "know your rights" information to students, and ensure students are aware of resources (such as pro bono legal and other services) that can help ensure the physical and mental wellbeing of undocumented and non-citizen graduate and professional students to the greatest degree possible.

Section 5.

¹⁶ https://www.ilrc.org/sites/default/files/resources/immig_detainer_legal_update-20180724.pdf

¹⁷ <https://www.higheredimmigrationportal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/FAQs-for-Campuses-on-Immigration-Enforcement-and-Site-Visits.pdf> (Section VI)

¹⁸ <https://gpsg.unc.edu/the-people/the-executive-branch/the-executive-board/>

UNC Chapel Hill administration must hold town halls during times convenient to the largest proportion of the UNC Chapel Hill community where the policy and guidelines referred to in the previous section will be disseminated and community feedback to them will be noted and considered by all relevant parties. These town halls should have a virtual option to ensure accessibility and safety for all participants.

Section 6.

We urge UNC Chancellor Lee Roberts to issue an apology for his statement that was not informed by the community that, per his title, he is meant to represent and may have negatively affected the learning of many UNC students. He must also assert that UNC would *not* comply with any requests from immigration enforcement that are not legally binding, consistent with Sections 1 and 2.

Section 7.

The Senior Vice President shall transmit a copy of this Resolution to the following parties:

The Office of the UNC System President
The Office of the Chancellor
The Office of the Provost
The Student Advisory Committee to the Chancellor
The UNC System Board of Governors
The UNC-Chapel Hill Board of Trustees
The Office of the Provost
Brian James, UNC Chief of Police
Beth Mayer-Davis, Dean of the Graduate School
Jim White, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences\
Angela Kashuba, Dean of the Eshelman School of Pharmacy
Nancy Messonnier, Dean of the Gillings School of Public Health
Aimee N. Wall, Dean of the School of Government
Raul Reis, Dean of the Hussman School of Journalism and Media
Mary Margaret Frank, Dean of the Kenan-Flagler Business School
Jed Atkins, Dean of the School of Civic Life and Leadership
Janet Guthmiller, Dean of the Adams School of Dentistry
Stanley C. Ahalt, Dean of the School of Data Science and Society
Jill V. Hamm, Interim Dean of the School of Education
Jeffery Bardzell, Dean of the School of Information and Library Science
Martin H. Brinkley, Dean of the School of Law
Wesley Burks, Dean of the School of Medicine
Valerie Howard, Dean of the School of Nursing
Ramona Denby-Brinson, Dean of the School of Social Work
Student Body President Jaleah Taylor

55-036

GPSG President Katie Heath

Adopted by the Graduate and Professional Student Senate this the 4th day of February, 2025.

Attest:



*Senior Vice President
5th day of February, 2025*



President Pro Tempore of the Senate

Approved this 5th day of February, 2025