

**STUDENT SENATE BILL 2024-1441**

**TITLE: Graduate, Union, and Institutional Development Enhancement(GUIDE):  
Section 2, Volume III: The Graduate Housing Crisis**

**AUTHOR(S): Senator Austin Britton, Senator Cassandra Urbenz**

**SPONSOR(S): Minority Party Leader Anamika Naidu, Senator Hunter Monson,  
Senator Adriana Sela**

**WHEREAS**, the University of Florida is ranked among the top public universities in the nation [1]; and,

**WHEREAS**, the University of Florida offers a minimum stipend for graduate assistants that is lower than those of seven of its top ten peer institutions, even when adjusted for the cost of living [2-7]; and,

**WHEREAS**, since 2017, the minimum graduate assistant pay at the University of Florida has decreased in real terms when adjusted for inflation [8]; and,

**WHEREAS**, rent burden is defined as spending more than 30% of one's income on housing; and,

**WHEREAS**, Florida as a whole has one of the highest rent burden rates in the nation [9], with Gainesville having a rent burden rate of 62.1%; and,

**WHEREAS**, rental costs in Gainesville have surged by 77% over the past decade [10]; and,

**WHEREAS**, the median rent in Gainesville is 18% higher than the national median [11]; and,

**WHEREAS**, the University of Florida has three graduate and family housing complexes: Corry Village, Diamond Village, and Tanglewood Village [12]; and,

**WHEREAS**, despite lower prices for graduate and family housing compared to the rest of Gainesville, a graduate assistant could still be expected to pay as much as 56% of their monthly income on rent due to the low minimum stipend [8,12]; and,

**WHEREAS**, previous Graduate and Family Housing complexes, Maguire Village and University Village South, were closed without any replacement housing designed or planned [13]; and,

**WHEREAS**, following the announcement of these closures, the UF Student Senate passed resolutions 2021-1007 and 2023-1029, denouncing the closures and calling for the protection of these housing options [14-15]; and,

**WHEREAS**, despite statements by the Land Use and Facilities Planning Committee, no plans have been set to replace these complexes or to add additional graduate and family housing options [16]; and,

**WHEREAS**, graduate students can spend years on the waitlist for an apartment after applying; and,

**WHEREAS**, graduate students are required to pay a nonrefundable application fee to be on the waitlist [12]; and,

**WHEREAS**, while living in graduate and family housing, graduate students are expected to follow Housing and Residence Life Community Standards and Housing Agreement Terms and Conditions, which contain specific rules and terms that are infantilizing to graduate employees and their families [17]; and,

**WHEREAS**, graduate students and their families are restricted to living with family members only, where even long-term partners are not allowed unless married [17]; and,

**WHEREAS**, graduates and their families are required to vacate their housing upon graduation, even if the signed lease extends beyond this period [17]; and,

**WHEREAS**, common pets such as cats and dogs are not allowed [17]; and,

**WHEREAS**, Graduate Assistants United (GAU) has attempted to bargain with UF over these issues, which UF has so far refused to do [8]; then,

**THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED**, that the University of Florida Student Senate acknowledges that a graduate housing crisis exists; and,

**THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED**, that the University of Florida Student Senate reaffirms SSB 2021-1007 and SSB 2023-1029; and,

**THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED**, that the University of Florida Student Senate supports the mission of GAU in addressing the housing crisis; and,

**THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED**, that the University of Florida Student Senate believes that no graduate student should pay more than 30% of their income on rent when both values are set by the university; and,

**THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED**, that the University of Florida Student Senate calls upon the Board of Trustees (BOT) and Housing and Residence Life (Housing) to establish measures to reduce wait times for housing to below one semester; and,

**THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED**, that the University of Florida Student Senate calls upon the BOT and Housing to cap rent values for graduate and family housing at 30% of income; and,

**THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED**, that the University of Florida Student Senate calls upon the BOT and Housing to eliminate application fees; and,

**THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED**, that the University of Florida Student Senate calls upon Housing to modify graduate and family housing terms and conditions to allow guests without consent, permit common pets such as dogs and cats, allow lessees to remain for the duration of the lease regardless of graduation status, permit vehicle repair and maintenance on property, and allow shared apartments between unrelated individuals; and,

**THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED**, that the University of Florida Student Senate calls upon Housing to remove terms and conditions that allow for apartment entry without notice, as well as terms that allow for contract changes at any point with a 30-day notice; and,

**THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED**, that the University of Florida Student Senate calls upon the BOT to bargain in good faith with GAU over these housing issues; and,

**THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED**, that the University of Florida Student Senate urges the BOT to amend the UF Campus Master Plan to include additional graduate and family housing options; and,

**THEREFORE, LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED**, that the University of Florida Student Senate calls upon Housing and the BOT to address these issues and report progress at regular intervals until these issues are resolved.

*Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to UF-GAU Co-Presidents Eva Garcia-Ferres and Cassandra "Cassie" Urbenz, UFF-UF President Meera Sitharam, Chief Bargainer Patrick Keegan, Director of off campus life Nora Kilroy, and Director of Housing Operations Brian Kelley.*

[1] <https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/rankings/national-universities/top-public>

[2] <https://uaw2865.org/contract/salary-scales>

[3] <https://www.geo3550.org/>

[4] <https://gradschool.unc.edu/funding/stipends/>

[5] <https://gradstudies.virginia.edu/graduate-stipend-task-force-final-report>

[6] <https://www.underpaidatut.org/home>

[7] [https://onesource.uga.edu/news/grad\\_assistant\\_increases\\_july\\_2024/](https://onesource.uga.edu/news/grad_assistant_increases_july_2024/)

[8] <https://www.ufgau.org/>

[9] <https://www.apartmentlist.com/research/more-than-half-of-all-renters-are-cost-burdened>

- [10]<https://www.renthop.com/average-rent-in/gainesville-fl>  
[11]<https://www.zillow.com/rental-manager/market-trends/fl/>  
[12]<https://housing.ufl.edu/living-options/?housing-type=family-housing>  
[13]<https://trustees.ufl.edu/media/trusteesufledu/minutes/2021/Combined-minutes---March-18-19,-2021.pdf>  
[14]<https://sg.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/SSB-2023-1029-Resolution-Calling-for-the-Immediate-Reversal-of-the-Plans-to-Close-and-Demolish-Maguire-Village-and-University-Vi.pdf>  
[15]<https://sg.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021-1007-Resolution-Condemning-the-Demolition-of-Maguire-Village-and-University-Village-South-UVS-Graduate-and-Family-Housing.pdf>  
[16]<https://facilities.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Minutes-11032020-UFLUFPC.pdf>  
[17]<https://housing.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/GFH-Terms-and-Conditions.pdf>



7/16/24

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Monish Vijayaraghavan  
Senate President

Date