

STUDENT SENATE BILL 2024-1575

TITLE: Affordable Housing for Graduate Students Act — Resolution

AUTHOR(S): Senator Nathaniel Pelton

SPONSOR(S):

WHEREAS, the University of Florida Core Value of Community enshrines the belief of the university that “we work together toward the betterment of our local community and the world around us.” [1]; and,

WHEREAS, the annual median household income in the City of Gainesville in 2022 was \$42,453, while the annual median household income in the State of Florida in 2022 was \$69,303, equating to \$26,850 or 38% less annual median household income within the city than the state [2] indicating lesser socioeconomic standing and opportunity in the local community; and,

WHEREAS, in the year of 2022, 28.2% of the City of Gainesville population were experiencing poverty, while 12.7% of the State of Florida population experienced poverty, representing a 15.5% higher poverty rate in the city than the state [2] indicating a heightened probability of poverty among the local community; and,

WHEREAS, in 2023, 2,251 post-secondary students in the State of Florida self-identified as an unaccompanied homeless youth on their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form [3] emphasizing the need of affordable housing for all students; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships estimate the cost projections for a UF graduate student range from \$31,360.00 for in-state on-campus graduate, to \$53,374.00 for an out-of-state off-campus graduate [4], while the estimated cost projections for a UF undergraduate student range from \$23,530.00 for an in-state on-campus undergraduate, to \$45,808.00 for out-of-state off-campus undergraduates [5] showing a clear discrepancy in cost of attendance between graduate and undergraduate students; and,

WHEREAS, according to the Fall 2022 headcount of the University of Florida’s Main Campus and UF Online, there were 20,659 (34.11%) graduate and 39,908 (65.89%) undergraduate students making up the total enrollment of 60,567.

WHEREAS, in its Master Plan 2012-2018, UF Housing & Residence Life, formerly the UF Department of Housing & Residence Education, estimated a projected capacity of on-campus housing for 8,596 students, with room for 7,616 (88.60%) undergraduates and 980 (11.40%)

graduate students. With the partnership with private developers, the Continuum would be built, offering capacity for an additional 612 graduate students by 2015 [7]; and,

WHEREAS, despite making up 34.11% of the student population in Fall 2022, graduate students were offered roughly 11.40% of on-campus housing capacity; and,

WHEREAS, the Continuum Gainesville, initially advertised as the University of Florida's affordable graduate housing alternative to building additional on-campus residence halls, offers housing for graduates at the cost range of \$1,165.00 to \$3,440.00 per month for an apartment lease, equating to a range of \$13,980.00 to \$41,280.00 in housing costs per year at the University of Florida's off-campus housing partnered alternative, representing 105.51% to 311.5% of its 2024-2025 expected living expenses for on-campus graduate students [4][8]; and,

WHEREAS, the price of the Continuum Gainesville does not equate to an affordable housing option for graduate students seeking on-campus prices, as the University of Florida intended; and,

WHEREAS, on-campus affordable graduate housing options range in price from \$589.00 to \$906.00 per lease month, equating to an annualized cost of living at \$7,068.00 to \$10,872 a year, representing 53.34% to 82.05% of its 2024-2025 expected living expenses for on-campus graduate students [9]; and,

WHEREAS, on-campus affordable housing for graduate students is more than two times cheaper than off-campus housing options, allowing graduate students the opportunity to focus on their academic work and study; and,

WHEREAS, the offerings of affordable housing for graduate students at the University of Florida have declined with the closure and planned destruction of Maguire Village and University Village South in Summer 2023 [10]; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida has a responsibility to ensure that all students have access to safe and affordable housing, in line with the sentiments shared within the Core Value of Community [1]; and,


WHEREAS, the building of low-cost housing for graduate students would help to attract and retain top talent, and maintain the world class opportunities and access to education at the university offered to graduate students; now,

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate strongly encourages, advocates for, and calls upon the university for the construction of low-cost housing for graduate students to help prevent further backsliding in residence hall capacity.

THEREFORE, LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate urges the university administration and all relevant stakeholders to act on the affordability crisis and student homelessness affecting all Gators, and in particular, graduate students.

Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to University of Florida Interim President Kent Fuchs, Student Body President John Brinkman, UF Housing & Residence Life Senior Director Tina Kuhlengel Horvath, and Inter-Residence Hall Association President Kaylee Kedroski.

- [1]<https://www.ufl.edu/about/core-values/>
[2]https://data.census.gov/profile/Gainesville_city,_Florida?g=160XX00US1225175
[3]<https://nche.ed.gov/unaccompanied-youth-data/>
[4]<https://www.sfa.ufl.edu/cost/graduate-costs/>
[5]<https://www.sfa.ufl.edu/cost/undergraduate/>
[6]<https://ir.aa.ufl.edu/facts/uf-profile/>
[7]https://web.archive.org/web/20170625144615/https://housing.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/MasterPlan_2012-2018WEB.pdf
[8]<https://www.swamprentals.com/the-continuum-apartments-gainesville>
[9]<https://housing.ufl.edu/rates-payments-agreements/graduate-and-family-housing-rental-rates/>
[10]<https://www.alligator.org/article/2022/11/uf-coalition-bands-together-to-save-graduate-housing-complexes>



Monish Vijayaraghavan
Senate President

10/2/24

Date