A Resolution concerning budget cuts to Women’s and Gender Studies.

Whereas: The Women’s and Gender Studies Program at the University of Oklahoma (hereinafter, The Program) is an interdisciplinary program that seeks to enhance students’ knowledge of gender roles and relations across cultures and history;

Whereas: The Program fosters the disciplinary and interdisciplinary study of women and gender and their intersection with various social economic, political and cultural phenomena in local and global contexts;

Whereas: The University of Oklahoma is the only college in the state that offers a minor, major and Graduate Certificate in Women’s and Gender studies, as well as a minor in social justice.

Whereas: The number of students taking classes through the program has increased eleven-fold since 2007;

Whereas: The Center for Social Justice established by the program in 2008, has been recognized in a recent American University study as one of the seven most innovative women’s studies initiatives in the country;

Whereas: The Center for Social Justice events reach thousands of students and community members every year and foster valuable partnerships with non-governmental and governmental organizations throughout the state;

Whereas: Women and minority students have been and continue to be effected differentially by issues ranging from medical needs to experiences of personal and historical violence to educational access to compensation, issues frequently addressed solely within The Program;

Whereas: The President, Administration, Faculty, Staff, and Students of the University of Oklahoma has a long-standing commitment to the ideals of social justice, to ensuring the equitable treatment of women and minorities, and to empowering all students to learn and grow to their fullest potential;

Whereas: The Program plays a vital and irreplaceable role in fulfilling these crucial goals, not only for the University community, but also the State of Oklahoma;

Whereas: The Program’s budget has been cut 52.6% in the last two years and can not continue to survive with this continual shrinking of resources;
Whereas: Two courses in the program are now being funded solely through donations due to recent budget cuts;

Whereas: Two additional courses have been cut for the spring 2013 semester and five additional courses are being considered for elimination as well;

Whereas: Fifty percent of the Program’s courses have now been moved online, further shrinking the in-class dialogue that is vital to the understanding and impact of issues relating to women and gender;

Whereas: The Program at The University of Oklahoma requires more institutional support in order to survive.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE THAT:

Section 1: While recognizing the difficult economic circumstances of the present time both Nationally and within the State of Oklahoma, the Graduate Student Senate asks the University of Oklahoma to guard The Program from further budget cuts and place the Program in highest priority for funding increases in the years to come.

Section 2: Copies of this resolution will be sent to:
The University of Oklahoma President: David Boren, The University of Oklahoma Board of Regents, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences: Paul Bell, The Associate Deans for the College of Arts and Sciences: Edward Sankowski & Kelley Damphousse, Dean of the Honors College: David Ray, The OU Daily, Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students: Clarke Stroud, Director of Women’s and Studies Program: Jill Irvine, President of Student Organizers Collective: Jordan Ward.

Authors: Undergraduate Student Congress Vice-Chairwoman Kelbie Kennedy

Co-Author: Senate Chair Derrell Cox II

Submitted on a motion by:

Action taken by Senate:

Verified by Chair: ___________________________ Date: _________