

Resolution in Support of the University of Arkansas Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Community

Whereas, the University of Arkansas, in its Guiding Priorities statement, has pledged “to foster a culture that is welcoming to all” (uark.edu/strategic-plan/index.php#guiding-priorities);

Whereas, the faculty of the University of Arkansas believes that “a culture that is welcoming to all” must by definition seek to support and include transgender and gender-nonconforming faculty, staff, students, and visitors:

Whereas, any perceived toleration of such discriminatory behavior will make it increasingly difficult to attract diverse and talented students, staff members, and faculty to the University of Arkansas;

Whereas, the American Psychological Association concludes that harassment, including “stigma and discrimination,” directed at the Transgender and Gender Nonconforming community has profound mental health consequences, including increased rates of depression and suicidality and denial of care (apa.org/practice/guidelines/transgender.pdf);

Whereas, according to the most recent large-scale study, “46% of respondents were verbally harassed and 9% physically attacked for being transgender” during the previous year (S. E. James, J. L. Herman, S. Rankin, M. Keisling, L. Mottet, and M Anafi, “Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey,” Washington, DC: National Center for Transgender Equality, 2017 [transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/USTS-Full-Report-FINAL.PDF]).

Whereas, the U.S. Supreme Court has determined that discrimination on the basis of an individual’s status as transgender constitutes sex discrimination within the meaning of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (*Bostock v. Clayton County, GA*, 140 S. Ct. 1731, 1741 [2020]) and the U.S. Department of Education interprets this ruling to prohibit such discrimination at institutions of higher education (www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/lgbt.html);

Whereas, intolerance of transgender and gender non-conforming people injures the reputation of Arkansas as demonstrated by an editorial in *The Washington Post*, (https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/arkansas-becomes-the-countrys-chief-anti-trans-bully/2021/04/06/1926e450-9711-11eb-962b-78c1d8228819_story.html);

Whereas, intolerance of transgender and gender non-conforming people negatively effects the state’s economy, as demonstrated by the growing protests of regional, national, and international sporting events held in the state, including the immediate resignation of Brooks Watts, the organizer of Cyclocross World Championships

Whereas trans and LGBTQ+ students and employees are asking for tangible changes at the University of Arkansas that would provide them support and relief;

Be it resolved, the Faculty Senate calls on the University of Arkansas to take the following measures to prevent discrimination and to welcome Transgender and Gender Nonconforming people to this campus:

- Increase access to and visibility of single-stall restrooms throughout campus;
- Update admissions application and other forms to include transgender and nonconforming gender categories;
- Make it easier for students, staff, and faculty to change their names in UAConnect, Zoom, Senior Walk, and elsewhere to conform to the names they use;
- Call on faculty, staff, and other employees to use the correct pronouns for every individual;
- Expand coverage in the University's health insurance plan to include costs associated with gender affirming healthcare;
- Increase on-campus housing options (and their visibility) for Transgender and Gender Nonconforming students;
- Provide the Multicultural Center with a staff person devoted exclusively to LGBTQ+ issues and funding for LGBTQ+ programming and resources.
- Create a central online location where campus members of the LGBTQ+ community can access a comprehensive list of available resources.

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