


ACTION TAKEN BY THE GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE

Seconded by 

VOTE for 22 against 0 abstentions 1 Pass by Majority Fail by Majority

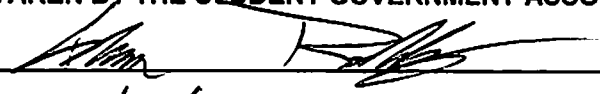
Date 02/25/2013

ACTION TAKEN BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE

Signature 

Date 02/26/2013

ACTION TAKEN BY THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

Signature 

Date 02/26/2013

Resolution to the UTK Graduate Student Senate – *Support of Benefit Equality for Graduate Students at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville*

Presented by Ingram Cope and Amber Woodburn

Whereas, members of both the graduate student community and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community contribute daily to the life of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and

Whereas, the University of Tennessee is an EEO/AA/Title VI/Section 504/ADA/ADEA institution in the provision of its employment and services providing equal consideration for employment, admissions, and graduate assistantships without regard to sexual orientation or gender identity, and

Whereas, previous resolutions have met resistance from the University due to Tennessee state laws governing the provision of state employee benefits, and

Whereas, graduate students are considered employees of the university and do not receive state employee benefits, and

Whereas, the University of Tennessee has a history of supporting the University's LGBT community, including the incorporation of sexual orientation and gender identity as protected categories in the University of Tennessee's personnel policies and the creation of a "safe zone", and

Whereas, the University provides some benefits to both LGBT and unmarried opposite-sex partners of graduate students (access to recreational facilities under a "Plus One" policy), and

Whereas, such benefit equality will promote a climate of diversity, civility, and inclusion on the University of Tennessee campus, and

Whereas, such a policy will strengthen the University of Tennessee's ability to attract and retain top-tier graduate students in accordance with VolVision/Top 25 efforts

Therefore, be it resolved that

The University of Tennessee Graduate Student Senate supports benefit equality for graduate students, where all benefits accessible to married spouses of graduate students are also available to unmarried opposite-sex and unmarried same-sex partners upon remission of fees and premiums, where appropriate and applicable.

Benefit equality for graduate students at the University specifically includes, but is not limited to:

- 1. Eligibility for a domestic partner and/or a domestic partner's child(ren) to be listed as a dependent under the university student health insurance plan (upon payment of requisite premiums specified by the health insurance provider), and**
- 2. Leave of absence benefits for graduate students for the care of their domestic partners and/or their domestic partner's child(ren), upon acceptance and implementation of a graduate student leave of absence policy, and**

3. Access to campus services in addition to those already allowed under university policy, including, but not limited to: library borrowing privileges, memberships to recreational facilities, parking, dining plans, etc.

The Graduate Student Senate requests written responses from Chancellor Jimmy C. Cheek and Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School Carolyn R. Hodges on the administration's plans for progress on benefit equality for graduate students, with specific reference to the items listed in the *Addendum*.

Institution	Abbreviation
University of California - Berkeley	UCB
University of California - Los Angeles	UCLA
University of Virginia	UVA
University of Michigan	Umich
University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill	UNC
College of William and Mary	CWM
Georgia Institute of Technology	GIT
University of California - Davis	UCD
University of California - San Diego	UCSD
University of California - Santa Barbara	UCSB
University of Wisconsin - Madison	UW
University of California - Irvine	UCI
Pennsylvania State University	PENN
University of Illinois - Urbana-Champaign	ILL
University of Texas	UTX
University of Washington	WASH
University of Florida	UF
Ohio State University	OSU
University of Maryland	UMAR
University of Pittsburgh	PITT
University of Connecticut	UCON
University of Georgia	UGA
Purdue University	PUR
Texas A&M	A&M
Clemson University	CLM
Vanderbilt University	VAN
University of Alabama	UAL
Louisiana State University	LSU
Mississippi State University	MSU
University of Arkansas	ARK
University of South Carolina	USC
Auburn University	AUB
University of Kentucky	UK
University of Mississippi	MIS
University of Missouri	UMO
University of Tennessee	UTK

	U		M				U		U		P		W		U		P		U				A		C		V		A		L			
	U	C	U	I	U	C	G	U	C	C	U	E	I	U	A	O	M	I	C	U	P	A	C	V	A	L	S	A	L	S	U			
	B	A	A	H	C	M	T	D	D	B	W	I	N	L	X	H	F	U	R	T	N	A	R	M	M	N	A	U						
T25/SEC/Both	T25	T25	T25	T25	T25	T25	T25	T25	T25	T25	T25	T25	T25	T25	T25	Both	T25	T25	T25	T25	Both	T25	Both	T25	SEC	SEC	SEC							
Healthcare	x	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x										x		
Medical	x	x		x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x										x		
Dental	x			x			x				x	x	x	x			x		x	x	x	x										x		
Vision	x			x	x		x				x	x	x	x			x		x	x	x	x										x		
Child Health	x	x		x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x		x		x			x	x	x										x		
Flex Spend				x																													x	
Student Health Service	x	x		x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x													
Leave		x		x			x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x				x														x	
Family Medical Leave		x		x			x	x	x	x	x	x		x					x	x	x												x	
FML - DP Child		x		x				x	x	x	x	x		x					x	x	x												x	
Sick Leave		x		x			x	x	x	x	x	x		x					x	x	x												x	
Bereavement - DP				x							x	x		x																			x	
Bereavement - Child				x							x	x		x																			x	
Adoption/Birth		x		x				x	x	x	x	x		x					x	x	x												x	
Insurance				x	x		x				x	x			x		x			x													x	
Life Insurance											x				x	x				x														
Life - DP				x			x				x					x																		
Life - DP Child				x							x																							
Long-term Care																																		
Student Health Ins	x	x		x	x			x	x	x	x	x		x					x		x												x	
Counseling	x			x			x				x			x					x	x	x												x	
Couple's Counseling	x			x							x			x						x														x
Athletic Tickets											x									x	x													
Rec Facilities		x		x			x	x	x	x	x		x		x					x	x													x
Library Privileges	x	x		x			x	x	x	x	x									x	x													x
Child Care				x			x								x	x	x			x														x
Univ. Housing	x			x	x		x				x	x	x		x	x	x			x	x													x
Items fulfilled	9	10	0	20	6	0	9	10	10	10	10	20	13	5	14	0	13	6	12	0	6	16	14	15	1	0	12	0	0	0	0			

Institution	Background Information	Legislative/Policy Issues
<p>University of California - Berkeley</p>	<p>California Domestic Partner Rights and Responsibilities Act of 2003 - Assembly Bill 205. With its pending effective date of January 1, 2005, AB 205 will extend to registered domestic partners the same rights, protections, and benefits granted to and imposed upon spouses under California law. For same-sex domestic partner, a Declaration of Domestic Partnership issued by the State of California, or of same-sex legal union other than marriage formed in another jurisdiction, or a completed Declaration of Domestic Partnership form issued by the University</p>	
<p>University of California - Los Angeles</p>	<p>See University of California - Berkeley</p>	
<p>University of Virginia</p>	<p>The state of Virginia constitutionally bans same-sex marriages and does not allow civil unions. Much like Tennessee, Virginia statute prohibits the distribution of benefits at its universities to those other than legal spouses or dependents of employees</p>	

University of Michigan

**University of North Carolina -
Chapel Hill**

Faculty largely have complete domestic partnership benefits, but many of these have yet to be implemented for graduate students

College of William and Mary

**Georgia Institute of
Technology**

**University of California -
Davis**

See University of California - Berkeley

**University of California - San
Diego**

See University of California - Berkeley

**University of California -
Santa Barbara**

See University of California - Berkeley

**University of Wisconsin -
Madison**

2008 - est. at UW-M, DPB protection signed into law by Governor in 2009, upheld by Wisconsin Supreme Court in 2011

**University of California -
Irvine**

See University of California - Berkeley

Pennsylvania State University

University of Illinois - Urbana-Champaign

Better GA health benefits have been petitioned for over the years through a student union group called the Graduate Employees' Organization.

The Domestic Partner category (same-sex only) ceased to be available on 6/1/2011. Individuals covered under this plan as of 5/31/2011 were grandfathered and their coverage will continue. Effective 6/1/2011 a new Civil Union Partner category is available, in accordance with Public Act 96-1513, for same-sex and opposite-sex partners. TX law only recognizes benefits to spouses (Man + Woman) and dependent natural/adopted children (unmarried and under age 25) Large "Marriage=Male + Female Only" backlash from funding sources

University of Texas

University of Washington

University of Florida

U of F began offering graduate assistants and their domestic partners free health coverage in 2006, shortly after their decision to extend regular university employee benefits to domestic partners. The plan, entitled GatorGradCare, does not use any state dollars. This resolution was passed by the University after several years of negotiations with University administration.

Ohio State University

Full health equality only applies for same-sex partners

Ohio's legislature passed the Defense of Marriage Act in 2004, but it was later clarified that the bill was not intended to prevent universities from offering these benefits

University of Maryland

A Resolution calling for the University to endorse the University of Maryland (College Park) University Senate Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion (EDI) Committee's recommendation that coverage of system benefits including sick leave, family and medical leave, bereavement leave, and tuition remission, along with policies on nepotism, be expanded to include same-sex domestic partners.

Same sex marriage allowed in the state as of Jan 1 2013.

University of Pittsburgh

A domestic partnership, for purposes of this policy, is defined as a committed relationship between two adults of the same or opposite sex, which meets the criteria described in the University of Pittsburgh Affidavit of Domestic Partnership. Documentation may be required to verify that the criteria are met. See Procedure 07-06-08, Domestic Partner Benefits.

University of Connecticut

University of Georgia

Faculty and GA benefits approved
2012

Purdue University

Texas A&M

University of Texas follows state
guidelines regarding same sex
marriage as illegal, even in the case
of "common law marriage"

Clemson University

Vanderbilt University

University of Alabama

Strong state-wide opposition, though
student and outside organizations
have been active in lobbying for this
after UA-Birmingham granted
benefits in 2009.

Louisiana State University

Mississippi State University

significant coverage of attempts to
instate domestic partner coverage
has been found to date. They
currently do not offer domestic
partner benefits to graduate
students or employees of the
university.

University of Arkansas

Ongoing efforts at the U of A by
faculty and employees to extend
benefits to domestic partners goes
back at least to 1999, and as

	recently as 2009, new resolutions were presented by the Faculty Senate. information found about graduate students' attempts to gain benefits.	
University of South Carolina	State-wide opposition remains strong and although a LGBT Student Organization on-campus has pushed, they've been met with swift resistance	
Auburn University	Strong state-wide opposition, though student and outside organizations have been active in lobbying for this after UA-Birmingham granted benefits in 2009.	
University of Kentucky		DOMA
University of Mississippi		DOMA
University of Missouri	strong support at Mizzou, including from all levels of administration; state response: no public universities or surrounding states offer DPBs	DOMA