



**A Resolution Advocating for Increased Transparency and Communication Regarding  
Current and Future New Construction on the University of Tennessee, Knoxville  
Campus**

**Sponsor:** Stacie Beach

**Co-Sponsors:** Hannah Thompson and Alexis Gillmore, Legislative Steering Committee

**WHEREAS**, the Graduate Student Senate (GSS) is the official legislative body and voice of all graduate and professional students at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville; and

**WHEREAS**, the UT Board of Trustees approved a \$100 million budget for a new building for the Haslam College of Business to accommodate college growth on June 25, 2021<sup>1</sup>; the Tennessee General Assembly approved a \$100 million dollar budget for a new building for the Haslam College of Business to accommodate college growth on April 21, 2022<sup>2</sup>; the Chancellor announced the General Assembly's budget approval via email on April 22, 2022; and

**WHEREAS**, there are approximately thirty-three units housed in Henson, Greve, and Dunford Halls; all of whom will be affected by the demolition of those halls; and

**WHEREAS**, the communication of plans to demolish buildings and the need for relocation was not communicated to affected parties in a timely or coordinated manner<sup>3</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, the location of the new building for Haslam College of Business was not confirmed to the wider campus community until August, 2022<sup>4</sup>; and

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<sup>1</sup> [Board of Trustees Afternoon Session 6-25-21](#); Cf. pp. 96-100.

<sup>2</sup> [TN General Assembly Passes FY 2022-2023 Budget](#)

<sup>3</sup> At least one affected unit received notice of plans to demolish their building(s) in March, 2022 while at least three units housed in Henson, Greve, and Dunford Halls did not receive notice of the demolition and their need to relocate until various dates between May to mid- June, 2022, and at least three more not until July, 2022. These academic units requested that we keep their identities confidential.

<sup>4</sup> [Projects Enhance UT Experience and Reach - UT News](#)

**WHEREAS**, as of February 8, 2023 many of the academic units housed in Henson, Greve, and Dunford Halls did not have a clear understanding of where they will move, if they will have comparable space to what they are losing, and when they will move; and

**WHEREAS**, the UTK master plan describes one of its five goals as “Ensuring a culture where Vol is a Verb: Develop and sustain a nurturing university culture where diversity and community are enduring sources of strength”<sup>5</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, the inconsistent communication timeline regarding this demolition and construction did not foster the intended nurturing university culture; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the UTK Graduate Student Senate urges the Administration at the University of Tennessee to task the University Space Committee with addressing best practices for communication during current, ongoing, and future construction/demolition projects; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the UTK Graduate Student Senate urges the Administration at the University of Tennessee to charge the University Space Committee with proactively and equitably communicating with and seeking feedback from affected units and concerned members of the campus community through simultaneous notifications to affected units following the approval of prospective plans by the TN General Assembly, and through listening sessions and administrative office hours scheduled during times accessible to students, as well as faculty and staff; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the UTK Graduate Student Senate formally requests that the Administration at the University of Tennessee establish student representatives, including *both undergraduate and graduate students*, on the University Space Committee, with full membership rights; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the UTK Graduate Student Senate urges the Administration at the University of Tennessee to create a preventative plan for how to relocate units on campus in case of building failures due to age, environmental factors, emergencies, demolitions etc. and circulate that plan to the wider campus community, thus removing the guesswork and negative optics of uprooting units without due process; and

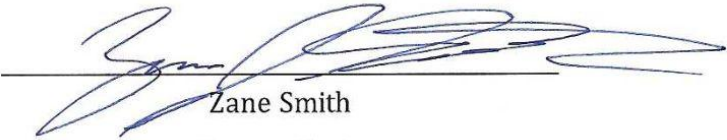
**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the UTK Graduate Student Senate urges the Administration at the University of Tennessee to exercise shared governance in the decision making processes related to new construction and in the development of preventative plans.

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<sup>5</sup> [Campus Master Plan](#); [UTK Strategic Vision](#)

**THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that this Resolution be distributed to the Office of the Chancellor, the Office of the Provost, the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Life, the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School, the President of the Student Government Association, and the President of the Faculty Senate.

Adopted by the Graduate Student Senate of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville on the twentieth of April in the year two thousand and twenty-three.



Zane Smith

Senate Chair

The President of the Graduate Student Senate of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville does hereby  approve / [ ] veto this resolution.



George T. Fields

President

4/20/2023  
Date