RESOLUTION # XX     2014 FALL SESSION

Legislative Action:
Introduced by: GPSA Equity and Inclusion Chair Amber Dukes, UNM Queer-Straight Alliance, UNM Residence Hall Association, Senator Walker, Senator Liu, UNM Secular Student Alliance, UNM Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance

Executive Action:

WHEREAS, the UNM Women’s Resource Center (WRC) was founded in 1972 by a collective of faculty, graduate students, and community members and continues to educate, support, and provide a safe space for women on campus through cultural and educational programming;¹ and
WHEREAS, the UNM WRC’s Mission states in part that: “The WRC also seeks to promote understanding and mutual respect among women and men to achieve individual and social change as well as to create a positive campus environment;”² and
WHEREAS, the UNM WRC has historically provided a variety of services to student, including information about healthy sexuality and healthy relationships; and
WHEREAS, UNM’s Mission Statement includes, “UNM’s ongoing commitment serves to educate and encourage students to develop the values, habits of mind, knowledge, and skills that they need to be enlightened citizens, contribute to the state and national economies, and lead satisfying lives;”³ and
WHEREAS, the World Health Organization defines Sexual Health as, “a state of physical, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality. It requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence.;”⁴ and
WHEREAS, courses on topics of human sexuality are offered in several departments on UNM campus, these classes frequently have over 100 students enrolled and are often capped because of high enrollment; some of these classes utilize community members and groups such as the Self-Serve Sexuality Resource Center as a source of information and as guest speakers;⁵ and
WHEREAS, chartered student organizations such as the Queer-Straight Alliance, Residence Hall Association and others have established a long-standing educational relationship and have utilized Self-Serve Sexuality Resource Center as a valuable source of programming and sexual health information for student-lead events for many years such as Sex with Werewolves, QSA’s

¹ http://women.unm.edu/
² http://women.unm.edu/about-us/index.html
⁴ http://www.who.int/topics/sexual_health/en/
⁵ catalog.unm.edu
WHEREAS, other events on this campus aimed at promoting sex education have used “controversial” titles, such as I <3 Female Orgasm, which brought in 750 attendees;\(^6\) and

WHEREAS, Yale University held the first Sex Week in 2002, and was followed by Harvard, Brown, and other universities, now including numerous other institutions of higher learning;\(^7\) and

WHEREAS, a study found that the addition of “emancipatory sexuality education, which encourages the exploration of women’s own sexual values and desires” to a sexual assault resistance program showed improvements in risk detection; and\(^7\)

WHEREAS, writer, educator, and activist Jaclyn Friedman is quoted as saying: “These misguided attacks show just how afraid people are of frank, pleasure-centered sex education. But that fear fuels violence. When young people don’t know what safe, pleasurable sex can be like, we leave them vulnerable to predators who will tell them that abuse is normal;”\(^8\) and

WHEREAS, a study published in 2013 found that there are gender differences in the expression and interpretation of indicators of consent, which may contribute to acquaintance rape; and\(^9\)

WHEREAS, group-based comprehensive sexual education has been found to reduce [adolescent] pregnancy, HIV and other STI’s;\(^10\) and

WHEREAS, a primary prevention program that has been shown to be effective in reducing sexual violence through multiple sessions, and includes information about attitudes, social norms, and healthy relationship skills;\(^11\) and

WHEREAS, an initially positive response from UNM about Sex Week quoted UNM WRC director Summer Little as stating: “Our rationale is that by teaching medically accurate sex education with prevention infused throughout, we will be heard by the folks who need this info the most. Young people are arguably interested in sex and many of them have had limited or no sex education. In teaching them about sex, we can also teach them about healthy relationships and consent;”\(^12\) and

\(^6\) [http://www.dailylobo.com/article/2014/02/i-3-female-orgasm](http://www.dailylobo.com/article/2014/02/i-3-female-orgasm)


\(^8\) cited from [http://petitions.moveon.org/sign/unm-support-sex-week](http://petitions.moveon.org/sign/unm-support-sex-week)


WHEREAS, UNM Policy 2220: Freedom of Expression and Dissent states: “As an institution that exists for the express purposes of education, research, and public service, the University is dependent upon the unfettered flow of ideas, not only in the classroom and the laboratory, but also in all University activities. As such, protecting freedom of expression is of central importance to the University. The exchange of diverse viewpoints may expose people to ideas some find offensive, even abhorrent. The way that ideas are expressed may cause discomfort to those who disagree with them. The appropriate response to such speech is expressing opposing ideas and continued dialogue, not curtailment of speech;”\(^{13}\)

WHEREAS, 40 people complained about the optional workshops being presented, while an overwhelming number of people have signed a petition (over 1,000 as of October 15, 2014) in support of sex week;\(^{14,15}\) and

WHEREAS, in a statement issued October 1, 2014, Student Affairs Vice President Torres stated: “....the initiative did not have clear oversight or close enough supervision to prevent the inclusion of topics that are sensational and controversial. For the UNM apologizes;”\(^{16}\) and

WHEREAS, this apology has been interpreted in national media as reactionary and as a withdrawal of support for sex education and the WRC, rather than allowing for the expression of opposing viewpoints;\(^{17,18}\) and

WHEREAS, in an editorial discussing the Sex Week apology written by the editorial board of the Daily Lobo, President Frank was quoted as saying “We’re a university; we’re a place where you should talk about hard ideas.”\(^{19}\)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that GPSA stands with and supports the UNM WRC and their efforts to inform, educate, and empower students at UNM; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that GPSA supports the UNM WRC and other campus resource centers and campus groups in hosting comprehensive, sex positive, events about a variety of sexual behaviors and lifestyle choices, and we ask that the UNM administration to do the same, financially and in spirit; and

FINALLY BE IT RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be sent to Office of the Board of Regents, the Office of the University President, the Office of the Provost, the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, the Office of the Dean of Students, the Women’s Resource Center, and the Associated Students of the University of New Mexico.

\(^{13}\) https://pathfinder.unm.edu/common/policies/freedom-of-expression-and-dissent.html
\(^{14}\) http://www.dailylobo.com/article/2014/10/editorial-sex-week
\(^{15}\) http://petitions.moveon.org/sign/unm-support-sex-week
\(^{16}\) http://news.unm.edu/news/unm-statement-regarding-sex-week
\(^{17}\) http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/10/03/unm-sex-week-apology_n_5924772.html
\(^{18}\) http://www.dailylobo.com/article/2014/10/editorial-sex-week
\(^{19}\) http://www.dailylobo.com/article/2014/10/editorial-sex-week