

Resolution in Support of Academic Freedom to Teach Race and Gender Justice and Critical Race Theory

- (1) Whereas, in 1894, the Board of Regents released a statement on the importance of academic freedom that remains foundational to the University of Wisconsin-Madison’s academic pursuits, famously writing: *“Whatever may be the limitations which trammel inquiry elsewhere, we believe that the great state University of Wisconsin should ever encourage that continual and fearless sifting and winnowing by which alone the truth can be found;”*
- (2) Whereas, UW-Madison [Faculty Policies and Procedures](#) and [Academic Staff Policies and Procedures](#) affirm the importance of academic freedom to the proper functioning of the university;
- (3) Whereas, the University of Wisconsin Madison’s mission is in part to “Embody, through its policies and programs, respect for, and commitment to, the ideals of a pluralistic, multiracial, open and democratic society;”
- (4) Whereas, University of Wisconsin-Madison’s Institutional Statement on Diversity reads:
Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW–Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin–Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background — people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world;
- (5) Whereas, this statement was endorsed by the Academic Staff Assembly on October 10, 2016;
- (6) Whereas, a resolution in [Support of Instruction and Training On Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice](#) was endorsed by the Academic Staff Assembly on December 14, 2020;
- (7) Whereas, the Academic Staff Professionals Representation Organization (ASPRO) has registered in opposition to the proposed legislation (AB413/SB409) relating to “anti-racism and anti-sexism student instruction and anti-racism and anti-sexism training for employees at the University of Wisconsin System and the Technical College System;” and John Zumbrunnen, Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning at UW-Madison stated UW-Madison opposed this legislation in his testimony before the Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities on Thursday, October 7, 2021;
- (8) Whereas, educating about systemic barriers to realizing a multiracial democracy based on race or gender should be understood as central to the active and engaged pursuit of knowledge in the 21st century to produce engaged and informed citizens;

(9) Therefore, be it resolved that the Academic Staff Assembly at UW-Madison resolutely rejects any attempts by bodies external to the faculty or instructional academic staff to restrict or dictate university curriculum on any matter, including matters related to racial and social justice;

(10) Be it further resolved that the Academic Staff Assembly affirms that the University of Wisconsin-Madison has a responsibility and opportunity to help build equity and social justice in a nation that has for centuries struggled with issues of racial inequity and injustice and should provide students with an adequate knowledge of civil rights history, including BIPOC and LGBTQ+ history, and the policies that contributed to inequities;

(11) Be it further resolved that the Academic Staff Assembly affirms the [Joint Statement on Efforts to Restrict Education about Racism](#), authored by the AAUP, PEN America, the American Historical Association, and the Association of American Colleges & Universities, endorsed by over seventy organizations, and issued on June 16, 2021.