



ASUO SENATE RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON FORENSICS DEPARTMENT

Authors: DFC Chair Kyle Richardson, Vice Chair Jada Woods-Flores, Representative Madisen Kunkler, Senator Victoria Piñeiro, Senate Treasurer Prissila Moreno, Senate President Taliek Lopez-DuBoff

Co-Authors: Senator Jessica Fisher, Senator Jamie Dillon

ACKNOWLEDGES that one of the university's core functions is to engage students and advance their out-of-classroom experience at the University of Oregon;

AFFIRMS that we provide a platform for students to gain experience as leaders and "strive to provide for the social, cultural, educational, and physical development of (our) members";

SEEKS to catalyze personal growth and offer opportunities for students to thrive through structured programs that promote skill-building in research, oral advocacy, argumentation, and public speaking;

ADDRESSES institutional issues that resonate with student concerns, including the need for sustainable funding, administrative oversight, and programmatic continuity in academic and extracurricular activities;

HAVING CONSIDERED the impact of the UO Forensics Department in providing students with transformative opportunities in Debate, Mock Trial, and other Forensics-related activities, which develop critical thinking, leadership, and public engagement skills;

DESIRES to ensure that Forensics activities remain accessible and well-supported through institutional funding, transparent governance, and student-led leadership in collaboration with the Director of Forensics;

ASSERTS that university leaders shall seek to promote an environment where students with expertise and interest in Forensics can meaningfully contribute to the university's core mission of fostering "values of free inquiry, intellectual expertise, and productive argument among divergent points of view";

UNDERSTANDS that, in comparison to peer institutions, the University of Oregon must maintain competitive structures and financial support to ensure that students engaged in Debate and Mock Trial receive adequate institutional backing. This is validated by similar programs at institutions such as the University of Utah, Purdue University, University of Maryland, Indiana University, University of Wisconsin, University of California, Los Angeles, University of Southern California, University of Washington, Rutgers University, University of Minnesota, and the University of Iowa, all of which have structured and institutionalized support for Forensics programs;

HAVING NOTED that the UO Forensics Department, under the leadership of Director Trond Jacobsen, has cultivated a legacy of excellence in competitive speech and debate, producing nationally recognized student competitors and fostering a community dedicated to intellectual rigor and public discourse;

EXPRESSES the need to consolidate resources, opportunities, and expertise currently spread across various administrative units to enhance the efficiency and stability of Forensics programming at UO;

EMPHASIZES expressed student desires to educate themselves and the relative successes they have achieved in Forensics, as evidenced by competitive tournament achievements, national recognition, and the development of skills that contribute to academic and professional success.

EXPRESSES a formal apology on behalf of the Departments Finance Committee to the Director of Forensics and the greater student body, for previous misrepresentation of the Department's intentions.

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY BY THE ASSOCIATED STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON SENATE THAT:

1. ENCOURAGES the continued support for the UO Forensics Department from both the Clark Honors College and the ASUO Departments Finance Committee
2. CALLS ON the Dean of the Clark Honors College to entrust the Director of the UO Forensics Department with the budget and oversight of the UO Forensics Department; moreover the Director should also be thoroughly involved in the Department and be familiarized with the workings of both Debate and Mock Trial throughout the future of the Department.
3. CALLS ON the Clark Honors College and the Dean thereof to retain both the Debate and Mock Trial teams under the UO Forensics Department
4. CALLS ON the ASUO Senate to approve the necessary appropriations to hire and fund the remainder of the Mock Trial position
5. CALLS ON the ASUO Senate to rescind the memo submitted by the Departments Finance Committee on January 22nd and include this resolution in the public record
6. CALLS FOR the creation of a hiring committee, composed **only** of the Director of the UO Forensics Department and its members, to hire a coach for the Mock Trial team.
7. UNDERSTANDING that the financial resources for this coaching position will be fully funded by the ASUO, we assert that the hiring committee shall operate independently, without broader administrative oversight, ensuring that the decision-making authority remains solely with the UO Forensics Department.

Respectfully,



President Taliek I. Lopez-DuBoff
Associated Students of the University of Oregon Senate

