



**GSO Senate Resolution 15.01**

**A Resolution Concerning the Closure of the Advocacy Center, the Policies of Student Affairs, and the Chancellor's Workgroup on Sexual Violence Prevention, Education and Advocacy**

**Whereas**, on May 30, 2014, the Chancellor, Kent Syverud, transmitted to the university community a decision of Student Affairs and Rebecca Reed Kantrowitz, Senior Vice President and Dean of Student Affairs, to close the Advocacy Center, a pre-eminent, standalone unit within Student Affairs dedicated to helping victims and survivors of sexual assault and relationship violence, and move its services to the Counseling Center, the Office of Student Assistance, and the Office of Health Promotion in an attempt to centralize services; and

**Whereas**, sexual assault, relationship violence, and rape harm individuals as well as the campus community; these offenses violate personal dignity, autonomy, self-respect, and well-being; they compromise physical and psychological integrity and health; and they contribute to a culture of distrust, fear, and violence in the larger campus social system; and

**Whereas**, the GSO condemns sexual assault and relationship violence against all persons and calls for a community environment supporting victims and preventing such violence; and

**Whereas**, the decision to close the Advocacy Center was made without student input or consultation in any fashion, from either student users of the Advocacy Center or student governance groups, and was communicated and implemented after all student and university governing bodies had adjourned for the summer and in such a rapid manner which did not allow for comment or discussion of the changes; and

**Whereas**, there has been considerable confusion over the change, despite multiple Listening Meetings hosted by Student Affairs after the change was implemented to allow for questions and concerns to be voiced by students; and

**Whereas**, the Chancellor has called for a Chancellor's Workgroup on Sexual Violence Prevention, Education and Advocacy to discuss future action in the areas of sexual assault and relationship violence; and

**Whereas**, the GSO, as the graduate student government at Syracuse University and the unified voice of graduate students on campus, wishes to make a clear statement and take a hard stand on these issues therefore, be it

**Resolved**, That the GSO denounces the manner in which the closure of the Advocacy Center occurred and the manner in which the closure was communicated, and condemns the secretive nature of the decision to close the Advocacy Center; in particular the GSO is appalled by the lack of any student input or consultation in the closure of this critically important center on campus; and

**Resolved**, That the GSO calls for future structural changes to Student Affairs centers to be made only after student input and consultation, and calls for Rebecca Reed Kantrowitz to agree to such; and

**Resolved**, That the GSO calls on Kent Syverud and Rebecca Reed Kantrowitz to create a standalone center on campus dedicated to sexual assault and relationship violence education, outreach, and prevention; and

**Resolved**, That the GSO calls for the Chancellor's Workgroup on Sexual Violence Prevention, Education and Advocacy to include substantial and diverse student and faculty representation, preferably such that the Workgroup is composed primarily of students, and to consider the above request; and

**Resolved**, That the GSO supports the Campaign for an Advocacy Center's rally planned for mid-September and calls for all concerned students to attend; and

**Resolved**, That the President and other Officers shall be authorized to make whatever statements, comments, and take other actions which are necessary to advocate for the statements in this resolution, and in particular, the President shall appoint all graduate student representatives to the Workgroup that are allocated to the GSO; and

**Resolved**, That the President coordinate GSO's responses to this issue with the Student Association and the Campaign for an Advocacy Center; and

**Resolved**, That the GSO has deep concerns and reservations over the lack of a reliable way for the Student Association to directly contact and speak to its constituency, the undergraduate student body, via direct emails to that student body; and

**Resolved**, That an ad hoc committee be created to assist the President in responding to this situation, its membership and chair to be appointed by the Internal Vice President.