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Sense of the Senate & General Council of RSA: Dissatisfaction Over the Reorganization of On- Campus Tutoring

Student Government Association, Northeastern University

Resident Student Association, Northeastern University

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**A SENSE OF THE STUDENT SENATE AND THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE
RESIDENT STUDENT ASSOCIATION EXPRESSING DISSATISFACTION OVER
THE REORGANIZATION OF ON-CAMPUS TUTORING**

- WHEREAS,** The Peer Tutoring Center, located within and supported by Snell Library, has provided the Northeastern community for decades with academic assistance of consistently high quality and reliability; **AND**
- WHEREAS,** The Peer Tutoring Center logged over 6,500 tutoring hours during the 2006-07 academic year, a 15% increase over the previous academic year; **AND**
- WHEREAS,** Snell Library has offered a safe, convenient, and appropriate venue for tutoring; **AND**
- WHEREAS,** Snell Library and the Peer Tutoring Center reinforce learning and care for students by specialized means, including maintaining resources on hand for students with disabilities and monitoring tutees for warning signs of personal and external factors impeding learning; **AND**
- WHEREAS,** The Faculty Senate in the fall semester of 2005 charged its *Ad Hoc* Committee on Library Policies and Operations “to report on the status of the peer-tutoring system,” including a full evaluation of its recruitment, training, quality control, success rate, and resources; **AND**
- WHEREAS,** During the October 18, 2006, meeting of the Faculty Senate, the library committee moved a resolution advising “the need for additional study and the issuing of recommendations regarding the current state of tutoring at the University;” **AND**
- WHEREAS,** At said meeting, faculty senators regarded the Peer Tutoring Center as “an active group” and “a wonderful program;” **AND**
- WHEREAS,** At said meeting, Provost Ahmed T. Abdelal encouraged the withdrawal of the committee’s resolution with “assurances... that his office [was] investigating the matter of peer tutoring and [would] consult with the Senate Agenda Committee on the outcome of that investigation;” **AND**
- WHEREAS,** At the close of the spring semester of 2007, the provost’s office indicated that the Peer Tutoring Center would cease operations, effective at the close of the first summer semester of 2007, in favor of a decentralized system wherein each academic unit will be responsible for tutoring relevant to its courses; **AND**
- WHEREAS,** Each academic unit will have extensive leeway to design its tutoring services as it sees fit, with no university-wide regulation or consistency; **AND**

WHEREAS, The administrative consensus favors a system in which departments will assign each course one or more tutors, who will hold office hours rather than individual appointments with students; **AND**

WHEREAS, The administrative consensus also favors a system in which departments will arrange for space in residence halls to be used for tutoring sessions; **AND**

WHEREAS, Said decentralized system will take effect via a “pilot program” in select courses during the second summer semester of 2007, with no provision made for students outside these courses to seek tutoring; **AND**

WHEREAS, The provost decided on said course of action without appropriate consultation with the Faculty Senate, as he had promised on October 18, 2006; **AND**

WHEREAS, The provost’s office to date has communicated the details of this reorganization to neither the student body nor the Faculty Senate in any official way; **AND**

WHEREAS, Despite the fact that decentralized tutoring will begin on July 1, significant concerns have not been satisfactorily addressed, including important operational details such as the accommodation of students who prefer one-on-one tutoring and methods by which departments will recruit tutors; **AND**

WHEREAS, The Student Government Association and Northeastern University Tutoring Society have received letters and statements from hundreds of students in support of the Peer Tutoring Center; **THEREFORE**

IT IS THE SENSE OF THE STUDENT SENATE AND THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE RESIDENT STUDENT ASSOCIATION:

That neither the student body nor its representatives have been presented with compelling evidence that the performance record of the Peer Tutoring Center merits its closure; **AND**

That the continued operation of the Peer Tutoring Center is not incompatible with the encouragement of tutoring services in individual academic units, as evidenced by the high usage of both the Center’s tutors in mathematics and the Department of Mathematics’ own tutoring center; **AND**

That, by choosing not to involve the leadership of the Student and Faculty Senates in the planning and execution of the reorganization of tutoring, the provost’s office has acted disrespectfully in relation to both the student body and the professoriate; **AND**

That the roll-out of decentralized tutoring in the second summer semester cannot truthfully be called a “pilot program,” for no plans exist to retract or reevaluate the program in the case of a negative result; **AND**

That the summertime implementation does the student body a disservice by providing no means of tutoring for students outside the “pilot” courses; **AND**

That without central standards, the methods and organization of individual tutoring systems will vary greatly, and indeed may not even exist in certain units that do not have the resources or will to create them; **AND**

That the preference for tutoring sessions in residence halls risks:

- a. Eliminating the convenience of resources in the current, library-based system;
- b. Eroding the safety of the residence halls by allowing non-residents to enter a hall to seek tutoring; and
- c. Impeding recreational use of residential space.

For the Student Government Association:

Michael T. DeRamo
Vice President for Academic Affairs

Stephen J. Lavenberg
Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs

Approve: _____
Michael J. Paradiso
President

Attest: _____
Krystal L. Beaulieu
Vice President for Administration & Public Relations

Date: ____
Yes: ____
No: ____
Abstain: ____

For the Resident Student Association:

Matthew D. Soleyn
Student Government Association Representative

Date: ____
Yes: ____
No: ____
Abstain: ____

Approve: _____
Nicole Johnson
Vice President for Housing Services

Attest: _____
Kristina N. Cecil
Vice President for Administration