

**The Graduate Student Assembly
The University of Texas at Austin**

Resolution: G.R. 13 (F) 9

Introduced By: Academic Affairs Committee
GSA

Action Taken: _____

Certified: _____
Columbia Mishra
President, GSA

In Support of Flexible Dissertation Embargo for Graduating Students

Summary: A resolution requesting The Graduate School of The University of Texas at Austin to revisit dissertation embargo policy for graduating graduate and professional students and provide greater flexibility

Whereas (1): The Graduate Student Association (GSA), a Legislative Student Organization recognized by the Office of the Dean of Students, is the elected governing body of the 13,000 graduate and professional students at the University of Texas at Austin; and,

Whereas (2): The GSA appreciates that public dissemination of information and scholarly work is one of the key goals of a public university like the University of Texas at Austin; and,

Whereas (3): The University of Texas at Austin, currently, requires graduating PhD and Masters students to submit electronic copies of their dissertations, thesis and/or reports to Texas Digital Libraries (TDL) in pdf form; and,

Whereas (4): If a thesis or dissertation has a patent pending or otherwise, the author has the option to request, through his/her faculty supervisor, for an one year embargo on display and distribution rights through the UT Digital Repository and TDL's online repository; and,

Whereas (5): The GSA recognizes that under present rules, at the end of the one-year embargo, the author of the dissertation or thesis can file a petition to the Dean of the Graduate School, with the supervisor's support, to extend the embargo for one additional year at a time; and,

Whereas (6): The GSA recognizes that an embargo on public viewing of the graduate student's scholarship as contained in the dissertation or thesis can be critical to securing advancement in a variety of academic and professional endeavors. Eg., a dissertation which is released to public viewing may complicate the manuscript publication through a University Press, which is required for obtaining tenure in a faculty job in several departments in research universities; and,

Whereas (7): The GSA is aware of the diversity of needs of graduate students and the difference in expectations regarding manuscript publication among academic employers as well as the variety in the lengths of the tenure process in different academic disciplines; and,

Whereas (7): The GSA is aware of similar reviewing of embargo policies, including a two year initial embargo option, in other top-tier institutions like Princeton University, University of Chicago, University of California and University of Wisconsin; and,

Whereas (8): The GSA is aware of greater flexibility in embargo options, including an option of extended multi-year dissertation embargo, in distribution through Proquest's UMi publishing program; and,

Whereas (10): The GSA appreciates the commitment of the Graduate School and the University in promoting the interests of graduating students in their chosen profession beyond their initial placement; and,

Therefore

Let it be

Resolved (1): The GSA advocates for greater flexibility in the dissertation embargo policy at the University of Texas at Austin that accounts for the different needs and time-scales necessary for professional advancement and protection of intellectual property in different fields; and,

Therefore

Let it be

Resolved (2): The GSA encourages that the discussion on increasing flexibility in embargo on dissertation and thesis in the Graduate School to explore directions including but not limited to ideas such as providing an option for a multi- year initial period of embargo, increased ease of extension of the embargo through online application, etc. ; and,

Be it

Further

Resolved (3): The GSA encourages a periodic revision of the embargo policy in the Graduate School given the changing nature of information access and increasing demand for online viewing and dissemination of scholarly work; and,

Be it

Further

Resolved (4): That official copies of this resolution be delivered to Dr. Judith H. Langlois, the Dean of the Graduate School; Dr. Terry Kahn, Associate Dean of Graduate Student Services; Marvin Hackert, Associate Dean of Graduate Student Services; Michael White, Chair of the Graduate Assembly; Jay Hartzell, Chair of the Graduate Assembly Academic Committee; Mr. Charles Roeckle, Deputy to the President; Mr. Gregory Fenves, Executive Vice President and Provost; Dr. Hillary Hart, Chair of the Faculty Council; and the Deans of All Colleges.