

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A NON-DENOMINATIONAL PRAYER SPACE

WHEREAS, University of California, Los Angeles is a public institution that prides itself on providing every student with a high-quality education and an inclusive environment to succeed in their endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is the role of UCLA administration and staff to support students and their well-being; and

WHEREAS, the UCLA campus community and administration is committed to ensure that this campus remains inclusive of all students; and

WHEREAS, the free expression of one's religious or spiritual identity is integral to a student feeling comfortable and included in a campus environment; and

WHEREAS, mental health is the focus of a USAC-wide campaign, All of Us, and is a priority for colleges in creating a campus climate beneficial for all students; and

WHEREAS, the implementation of a permanent meditation space would allow students to take a break from the pressures of being a UCLA student; and

WHEREAS, UCLA is the only UC campus without a multicultural center or meditational space for students to utilize; and¹

¹ <http://www.dailycal.org/2011/10/05/meditation-room-in-student-union-to-provide-space-for-thought-prayer/>
<http://mcc.sa.ucsb.edu/index.aspx>
<http://www.universitybusiness.com/article/accommodations-muslim-students-universities>
<http://ccc.ucdavis.edu/powwow.html>
<https://sites.google.com/site/msaucmerced2/prayer-room>
<http://www.ucimsu.com/campus-life/religious-services/>
<http://www.ccc.uci.edu/>
<http://www.cityonahillpress.com/2013/03/14/room-for-faith/>
<https://ccc.ucsd.edu/>
<http://www.msaucr.com/resources/campus-resources/meditation-room>
<https://www.ucsf.edu/news/2011/01/8418/ucsf-opens-space-dedicated-meditation-and-prayer-pannassus-campus>

WHEREAS, the creation of such a space would help students to feel safer and build support systems to alleviate stresses; and

WHEREAS, the creation of such a space would foster interfaith activities and cross-community building; and

WHEREAS, the UCLA Academic Senate Undergraduate Council review of the campus climate reports in 2012 recommended that UCLA “provide a student meditation or reflection space on campus”; and²

WHEREAS, religious organizations, such as the Muslim Students Association, have historically advocated for a designated and respected prayer area that would fulfill the needs of their members; and

WHEREAS, religious organizations, such as the Muslim Students Association, have historically had to resort to the use of parking lot space behind Kerckhoff Hall as a designated prayer space despite the inhospitable conditions and the un-welcoming, multipurpose nature of the location; and³

WHEREAS, a designated non-denominational prayer location would require a degree of sanctity, and respect such that the area is not being used for other purposes in order to adhere to the religious value of the space and respect the students of different faiths that are utilizing the space; and

WHEREAS, UCLA administration has not prioritized the needs of student’s well being in this matter; and

WHEREAS, there is already a void of a structured space within the campus community to address concerns of religious matter; and

WHEREAS, Ackerman Union, the central hub of student activities, already provides students with study and meeting spaces and a meditation space would be a natural extension of its student-centered resources; and

LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the Undergraduate Students Association Council, recognize the student need for a non-denominational prayer and meditation space on campus; and

²http://www.senate.ucla.edu/documents/01-08-13SarnatoLittleton_re.CampusClimateReports.pdf

³ <http://www.msabruins.com/#prayers-on-campus>

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that UCLA administration will actively advocate on behalf of its implementation and prioritize the issue in terms of student needs; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that UCLA administration actively seek existing spaces and locations on campus to convert to non-denominational prayer or meditation spaces in the case that new spaces are not available to create; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that UCLA administration meet with all religious organizations and communities that will benefit from these spaces in an open forum to obtain their input; and

LET IT BE FINALLY RESOLVED, that communities on this campus demand the establishment of a designated non-denominational prayer or meditation space that is reserved for that purpose only.