

A Resolution Urging UCLA to Address the Impact of Gun Violence on Students

WHEREAS, on May 31, 2022, dozens of UCLA students engaged in protest against the onslaught of mass shootings, lying down at the base of Tongva Steps for five minutes and 37 seconds; each second representing a student killed by campus gun violence since the 1999 Columbine High School Massacre.¹

WHEREAS, on February 1, 2022, UCLA canceled in-person instruction due to a shooting threat from a former lecturer and postdoctoral fellow, which included sending a personal video titled “UCLA Philosophy (Mass Shooting)” to members of the Philosophy Department. Students first learned of the threat from this video and the former lecturer’s manifesto amid delayed outreach from the UCLA Administration,² creating a stressful and terrifying environment for students.

WHEREAS, on June 14, 2022, the UCLA Threat Response Task Force, chaired by Emeritus Professor Steve Yeazell of UCLA Law, submitted a report in response to the campus shooting threat in early 2022. The report specifically recommends the creation of emergency communications protocols that consider the “mental health impacts” connected with physical threats, including those that “may not be considered credible or actionable.” In addition, the report recommends the creation of protocols for non-physical threats that allow the affected to “process and cope with the mental health consequences, such as healing gatherings.”³

WHEREAS, students must confront the fear and anxiety imposed by gun violence while facing the immense stress of academics and college life.

WHEREAS, on the eve of presenting this resolution, October 24, 2022, a gunman killed a 16-year-old girl and a 61-year-old woman at Central Visual and Performing Arts High School in St. Louis, Missouri, wounding several others. The 19-year-old gunman possessed a long gun and a dozen 30-round magazines,⁴ exemplifying how the political status quo is untenable.

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the Undergraduate Student Association Council remembers the victims, family members, and community members impacted by the Robb Elementary School shooting in Uvalde, Texas, and the abhorrently high number of communities suffering from gun violence.

¹ <https://abc7.com/ucla-protest-students-call-for-gun-reform-mass-shootings/11914125/>

² <https://www.newsweek.com/matthew-harris-former-ucla-lecturer-shooting-threat-investigated-1674835>

³ <https://trtf.ucla.edu/>

⁴ <https://www.cnn.com/2022/10/24/us/st-louis-school-shooting/index.html>

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Undergraduate Student Association Council stands in solidarity with the UCLA community and activists nationwide who protest against political inaction on gun violence.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Undergraduate Student Association Council recognizes American mass shootings and threats are not geographically isolated in their impact, but tragedies that degrade the mental health and academic focus of students.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Undergraduate Student Association Council urges the UCLA Administration to expedite the development of protocols to address the mental health impact of violent threats, and to solicit student perspectives throughout the process.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Undergraduate Student Association Council calls on the UCLA Police Department to update active shooter trainings so that they are: (1) sensitive to student concerns, and (2) are relevant to the UCLA campus environment; as well as promulgating these materials in engaging formats to students.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Undergraduate Student Association Council urges the UCLA Administration to ensure every instructional space can be locked swiftly in the event of a violent threat, which may include the installation of Lock Bloks⁵ in rooms without such functionality.

LET IT BE FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Undergraduate Student Association Council calls on the UCLA Administration to prioritize student safety and well-being with the option of remote instruction, as well as no-cost, ongoing access to therapy and self-guided mental health supports that specifically address mass violence.

⁵ <https://doorblok.com/>