



111th STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSEMBLY
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

approved
21 13/18

1 University Station, A6210 · Austin, TX 78712-0810
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Executive Summary

A.R. 23: In Support of the University of Texas Taking Action Against Professor Richard Morrisett

The purpose of A.R. 23 is to express The University of Texas at Austin Student Government will support the University of Texas in any decision they make that results in ramifications for Professor Morrisett as a result of his actions. We believe the University should hold faculty to at least the same high standard we hold our students in regard to Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault. Professor Richard A. Morrisett was charged with three counts of third-degree felonies and plead guilty to the first instance of violence. He was accused of strangling the victim until she started "seeing stars." This resolution supports the University of Texas taking action as a result of these incidents.

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. Why are we doing this?

It is vital that Student Government expresses to the administration that we support them in any decision to take action against Professor Morrisett. It is also important the University knows the students want to see him held to at least the same standard of accountability that students are held to in incidents regarding abuse.

2. How is this different from J.R. 5, In Support of Revising University Policies Regarding Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault?

J.R. 5 focuses on the broader issue of changing the institutional policies so that this does not happen in the future. A.R. 23 focuses this particular instance and what action should be taken. These are two different topics that deserve to separate discussions.



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A.R. 23

In Support of the University of Texas Taking Action Against Professor Richard Morrisett

Authors: CHAIR NATALIE ENGEL (*Legislative Policy*), AND REPRESENTATIVE CONNER VANDEN HOEK (*Transfer Student*)

Sponsors: SPEAKER MADISON HUERTA (*Student Government Assembly*), CHAIR NATALIE ENGEL (*Legislative Policy*), AND REPRESENTATIVE CONNER VANDEN HOEK (*Transfer Student*)

WHEREAS, Student Government serves as the official voice of students at the University of Texas at Austin; and,

WHEREAS, The University has stated that it will not tolerate sex and/or gender discrimination (including discrimination on the basis of gender orientation, gender identity or gender expression), sexual harassment, sexual misconduct or physical abuse, threats of violence, physical assault, or any form of sexual violence, including but not limited to sexual assault, acquaintance rape, domestic violence, dating violence or stalking. These unacceptable behaviors are hereafter collectively referred to as "prohibited conduct." Individuals who alone, or in concert with others, participate or attempt to participate in prohibited conduct described in this policy are subject to disciplinary action by the University, notwithstanding any action that may or may not be taken by civil or criminal authorities¹; and,

WHEREAS, In Spring 2016, Professor Richard A. Morrisett was accused of two incidents of violence. On one of the occasions the victim was quoted as, "seeing stars," following being strangled by Professor Morrisett and was subsequently hospitalized.

WHEREAS, In February 2017, upon being charged with three counts of third-degree felonies, Professor Morrisett pleaded guilty to the first instance of violence and the rest of the

¹<https://policies.utexas.edu/policies/prohibition-sexual-discrimination-sexual-harassment-sexual-assault-sexual-misconduct>



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charges were dismissed. Morrisett could have spent up to thirty years in prison if convicted of the alleged crimes. He was instead sentenced to four years of community supervision, a kind of probation, and ordered to take a class on avoiding family violence, to undergo counseling, to complete 100 hours of community service and to have no contact with the victim²; and,

WHEREAS, The University of Texas Student Government has used its voice in the past to act in support of or in opposition to faculty members who are under investigation, such as past University President Bill Powers³; and,

WHEREAS, Students of the University of Texas chose to come to the 40 Acres because of the opportunities they have to leave here as better people. Students chose this university to be lead by the example set by their professors and mentors; and,

WHEREAS, Students at the University of Texas have a right to assert their concerns over the allocation of their tuition dollars; and therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, As students, we oppose our tuition funding a faculty and staff of convicted domestic violence offenders; and therefore,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The University of Texas Student Government hereby condemns all instances of domestic and interpersonal violence; and therefore,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The University of Texas Student Government deems Professor Morrisett's actions as a failure to abide by the university's codes and ethics and requests a public statement, from Morrisett, expressing this sentiment to the student body; and therefore,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The University of Texas Student Government, supports the University of Texas in firing Professor Morrisett, if that is what they deem appropriate following a retroactive review under the new policies enacted by President Fennes; and therefore,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be sent to Professor Richard Morrisett, the Office of the Dean of the College of Pharmacy, the Daily Texan, the Austin American Statesman, the Office of the Dean of Students, the Office of the

²<http://www.mystatesman.com/news/local/declined-sanction-professor-who-pleaded-guilty-violent-felony/turzhL5nv6dPkQ6bVjJo1J/>

³ <https://alcalde.texasexes.org/2012/05/student-leaders-we-refuse-to-be-complacent-about-ut/>



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President, The Office of the Director of Student Activities, the Board of Regents of
The University of Texas System, and the Office of Chancellor McRaven.