SR-84.01

“Student Protest and Encampment Solidarity Resolution”
(Resolution supporting lifting penalties for peaceful protests by students and staff at or
relating to the encampment at the Valley Library and MU grounds)

SUMMARY
This resolution calls upon the administration of Oregon State University (OSU) to cease all charges against
students, faculty, and staff resulting from nonviolent participation in the encampment protest, and expresses
support for protesters from among the student, staff, and the broader university community.

WHEREAS
The Palestinian people, who have been displaced from their lands and the subject of ethnic
cleansing since 19481, are currently subject to widespread destruction and loss of civilian
life in Gaza, following a military invasion by the State of Israel after the attacks of October
7. With at least 36,550 deaths (including more than 15,000 children) and 86% of schools
destroyed or damaged, the widely understood death toll presents conditions 2 easily
recognizable as a genocide. 1.7 million of 2.3 million of the Palestinians in Gaza are
displaced, with approximately one million sheltering at UN facilities3;

WHEREAS
Since May 15, 2024, a student-led encampment4 (The People’s University for Palestine at
Oregon State, hereafter “encampment”) primarily consisting of students, and joined also
by employees of the university, has stood as a peaceful, nonviolent protest (despite reported
instances of violence from counter-protesters) against the actions of the State of Israel in
Gaza. Further, this encampment protests the complicity of university and public funds
broadly in contributing toward these actions, directly or through the support of corporations
or other entities implicated in these actions;

WHEREAS
Since May 20, 2024, participants in the encampment have been subject to proceedings
alleging violations of the Code of Student Conduct and other university policies, carrying
the persistent threat of disciplinary action that may jeopardize protesters’ academic success,
employment, or other rights and privileges accorded to members of the OSU community.
A portion of protesters have also received bans from central areas of campus for a year,
restricting their movement between work and classes, without due process;

WHEREAS

2 AJLabs. “Israel-Gaza War in Maps and Charts: Live Tracker.” Al Jazeera,
3 “Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #103 [EN/HE] - Occupied Palestinian Territory | ReliefWeb.” 2024.
4 Note – Columbia University started their Palestine Solidarity Encampment on April 17th, 2024, followed by various other university
campuses thereafter. Encampments have protested and demonstrated peacefully.
Recipients of these conduct proceedings have in some cases testified to spurious or unfounded charges inconsistent with their involvement in the encampment. If suspicion of these charges stems to any extent from mere support for, or association with, encampment organizers, protected rights of free expression and assembly raise concern;

WHEREAS More recently, threats of disciplinary action against encampment protesters have escalated to warnings of felony criminal charges for alleged damage to lawn areas associated with the protest. These warnings come after the immediate prior year, in which the OSU Foundation assembled a university-sanctioned, 50-foot-tall tent in the same approximate location for its Believe It fundraising campaign. Visible damage to the MU lawn after its disassembly has been widely acknowledged, if largely accepted as a necessary, temporary inconvenience;

WHEREAS The rights of students to participate in peaceful protests, build leadership skills, and civically engage with the world, are of greater benefit to the university than strict adherence to its ground use policies;

WHEREAS The Associated Students of Oregon State University (ASOSU) has an obligation to advocate for the interests of the student body as an electoral constituency, and in solidarity with the broader university community;

WHEREAS Student protest and civil disobedience alike have held an integral role in past advances in social justice at OSU and in American political life broadly. Examples include the now almost universally celebrated values and leadership of the Civil Rights Movement, the Free Speech Movement, and divestment from Apartheid South Africa, among many other examples;

WHEREAS In retrospect, these movements have obtained broad support from the public and institutional leaders alike (for instance, through the annual MLK, Jr. Commemoration organized directly by OSU, or the increasing awareness of the Kalapuya land upon which OSU resides). However, the struggles for justice they represent were invariably divisive during the times they occurred;

WHEREAS Progress in these circumstances has relied upon the courage of people and institutions to be among the first to depart from a stance of neutrality and complicity, and instead begin to address these challenges directly;

WHEREAS  The encampment has not meaningfully affected the use of the campus by peers. It is in the interest of OSU to recognize the advocacy of encampment protesters as consistent with the mission and values of the university, to delegate sufficiently empowered representatives to meet with protesters in good faith, and to work toward a mutually beneficial outcome for all parties;

WHEREAS  Holding harmless and protecting student and staff protesters from punishments for nonviolent, protest-related violations of university policy or applicable law (either preemptively or as part of the outcome of these discussions), represents a compassionate and measured approach to address widespread student concerns;

WHEREAS  This approach presents few risks of establishing precedent that could not be reasonably applied to future protests. Nor would friendly engagement with protesters, or even support for the message or demands of this protest, preclude the university from preserving the academic freedom of authors, researchers, lecturers, and students at the university to freely dissent from these statements and decisions.

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE ASOSU THAT:

The ASOSU stands in solidarity with the encampment protesting the present condition of the Palestinian people and the genocide in Gaza, which calls to end complicity in these actions through any implicated contracts, funding, or relationships of the university and its associated partners, including the OSU Foundation. The ASOSU also expresses support for student organizers’ and coalition partners’ right to protest.

The ASOSU calls upon OSU and university leadership to recognize the deeply personal nature of this protest to many of its students, faculty, and staff, and to accordingly safeguard their success as valued contributors to our shared mission of service and leadership.

To this end, the ASOSU calls upon the university to identify and pursue the most immediate means possible to cease all charges against students, faculty, and staff under the Student Code of Conduct, or other respective university policies, or applicable criminal or civil statutes, resulting from nonviolent participation in the encampment protest. In this, we recognize that all students and staff are entitled to equally free exercise of their rights as members of our community.

This bill shall be sent to:
Audrey Schlotter, ASOSU President
Jayathiy Murthy, President, Oregon State University
Members of the Oregon State University Board of Trustees
Mike Green, Vice President for Finance and Administration & Chief Financial Officer
Brent Gustafson, Associate Vice President for Budget and Resource Planning
Edward Feser, Provost & Executive Vice President, Oregon State University
Dan Larson, Vice Provost of Student Affairs
Scott Vignos, Vice President, Chief Diversity Officer
Kevin Dougherty, Associate Vice Provost & Dean of Students
Rob Odom, Vice President, University Relations and Marketing
**Authored by:**
ASOSU Students for Palestine

**Sponsored by:**
Mercedez Allen, ASOSU Senator
Donovan Morales-Coonrad, ASOSU Senator
Adison Rowe, ASOSU Senator
Emerson Pearson, ASOSU Senator

**Endorsed by:**
People of Color in Politics and Law Club
MECHA
YDSA Corvallis
OSU Student Workers Organizing Committee
Sunrise Corvallis

**Confirmation of passage:**
Zachary Kowash, ASOSU Vice President and Student Senate President

Signature: ___________________________ Date: 6/10/2024

**Approval or veto by the ASOSU President:**
Audrey Schlotter, ASOSU President

Signature: ___________________________ Date: ___________  approved □

Signature: ___________________________ Date: ___________  vetoed □