STUDENT SENATE RESOLUTION 2017-115

TITLE: Resolution Supporting the Institute of Black Culture and the Institute of Hispanic-Latino Cultures as Two Separate Entities

AUTHORS: Former Senator Daniel Clayton, Senator Zachariah Chou, Chairman Ian Green

SPONSORS: Senate President Jackie Phillips, Senator Kevin Arneus, Senator Marcela Astudillo, Senator Cj Lockwood, Senator Whitney Nguyen, Senator Dylan Santalo and Senator Brian Robusto

WHEREAS, the University of Florida Student Government Senate values the various cultures and communities within the University framework; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida Multicultural Diversity Affairs Office is committed to a full-scale renovation of the cultural spaces of the Institute of Black Culture and the Institute of Hispanic-Latino Cultures (also known as La Casita); and,

WHEREAS, two design options were presented by the University, one with a U-shaped design and the other as a separate institutes design; and,

WHEREAS, members of the student body, namely the student coalition #NoLaIBCita, made it clear that they are in favor of the two separate institutes design through peaceful protest⁴, educational seminars⁵, and infographic information⁶ that was available to the public; and,

WHEREAS, organizations that proudly utilize the Institute of Black Culture and La Casita, the Black Student Union⁶ and the Hispanic Student Association⁷ respectively, appreciate the history and significance of having the two buildings as two separate entities; and,
WHEREAS, we, the Student Government Senate, feel it is our duty to acknowledge the ability of students to exercise their First Amendment rights, to ensure that their voices are listened to by Student Government and the UF Administration; and,

WHEREAS, Student Government President Smith Meyers also affirms the decision of MCDA to support the Black and Latinx community’s desire for two separate cultural centers⁶; and,

WHEREAS, students surveyed by MCDA showed clear support for the two separate structure design⁷; and,

WHEREAS, on July 18th, 2017, MCDA & the Institute Project Core Committee made an official decision to accept student feedback and proceed with the two building design⁸.

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Government Senate recognizes the distinct cultures represented by the Institute of Black Culture and the Institute of Hispanic-Latino Cultures, as well as the unique identities of the students who call these places home.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Government Senate is in full support of MCDA’s decision to rebuild the Institute of Black Culture and the Institute of Hispanic-Latino Cultures as two unique separate spaces that will act as beacons of diversity and multicultural support on the campus of the University of Florida.

Jacqueline Phillips 7/26/17
Senate President
Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to President W. Kent Fuchs, Vice President of Student Affairs Dr. Parrott, Assistant VP of Student Affairs Mary Kay Carodine, Director of Major Projects and Special Programs Miles Albertson, Project Manager Robert Hatker, MCDA Executive Director William Atkins, and the UF Board of Trustees

1 http://www.alligator.org/news/article_804f3c5c-6756-11e7-96b8-0b7e7e9bb4fd.html
2 https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1W1JUqktisJiNcVK9Ldhc5AqxSGUphUL9EadhOKLSJBM
3 https://www.instagram.com/p/BWMEjxigfHz
4 https://www.instagram.com/p/BWrl9U4ByEI/?taken-by=uf_bsu&hl=en
5 https://www.facebook.com/HSAtUF/photos/rpp.131926660336271/698201977042067/
6 http://www.alligator.org/opinion/letters_to_the_editor/article_0b0c82b0-0793-11e7-a5f1-4f0c838ed168.html
7 https://www.facebook.com/chad.chavira.1/videos/493987157606874
8 https://multicultural.ufl.edu/statement-institutes-mcda-staff/