

## **STUDENT SENATE RESOLUTION 2009-1016**

**TITLE:** Resolution urging the University of Florida Police Department to implement a mandatory warning policy for cyclists who are first-time violators of traffic laws.

**AUTHOR:** Senator Tina Steiger

**SPONSOR:** Ad-Hoc Safety Committee, Ad-Hoc Sustainability Committee, Senator Melody Goodell, Senator Ben Cavaturo, Senator Stephen Fitzmaurice, Senator Benjamin Dictor, Senator Dave Schneider, Senator Megan Vu, Senator Jennifer Falcon, Senator Scott Cutshall, Senator Cynthia Kan

**WHEREAS,** fines issued by the University of Florida Police Department can no longer be waived by attending a two-hour bike safety class since February 21, 2007; and

**WHEREAS,** according to the University of Florida Police Department's (UPD) Captain Jeff Holcomb, previously 30-80 students attended the bicycle safety classes each week while the policy was in effect. This effectively educated cyclists about traffic laws and safe riding practices in the university community; and

**WHEREAS,** there are currently 34,744 bicycles registered with the University of Florida Police department; and

**WHEREAS,** UPD, the City of Gainesville's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board and bicyclists at the University of Florida strongly supported the previous practice of waiving fines by attending the bicycle safety class; and

**WHEREAS,** encouraging alternative forms of transportation such as cycling is a pillar of the University's sustainability efforts since increased bicycle usage can help reduce motor vehicle emissions and thereby reduce global warming impacts; and

**WHEREAS,** traffic violators on bicycles are subject to the same fines as violators in automobiles; \$188.50 for running a red light, \$123.50 for a moving violation, \$77.50 for a non-moving violation and \$49.50 for a violation specific to bicycle operation and continue to increase; and

**WHEREAS,** many students are uneducated about the fact that traffic laws apply to cyclists in the same manner as they apply to motorists and are therefore unaware that they may be liable for traffic fines; and

**WHEREAS,** there is currently no mandatory warning policy which would protect cyclists who are first time traffic violators, leaving it up to the discretion of individual officers to issue traffic citations; then

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that the University of Florida Student Senate strongly urges the University of Florida Police Department to adopt a mandatory warning policy in addition to issuing a bicycle safety brochure to cyclists for first time traffic violations not resulting in an accident or near accident.