

THE SENATE OF THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT BODY

S.R. 2020/2021 – 04

A Resolution Formally Requesting Bowling Green State University Reverse Their Decision to Terminate American Sign Language Course Offerings

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT BODY

January 25, 2021

Authored by:

Alexander Chiarelott - Academic Affairs Chair/ Senator At-large, **Hallie Cunningham** - Chief of Staff, **Chase Williams** - Internal Affairs Chair/College of Technology, Architecture and Applied Engineering Senator, **Aarian Lynn** - Director of Diversity Affairs, **Hayley Fournier** - Director of Governmental Relations, **Lauren Reese** - BGSU Student, **Jordyn Jackson** - BGSU Student, **Meredith Dial** - BGSU Student, **Raine Lewis** - BGSU Student, **Mariah Grow** - BGSU Student, **Jenna Blackburn** - BGSU Student, **Bekah Shorter** - BGSU Student, **Megan Jagos** - BGSU Student, **Paige McNutt** - BGSU Student, **Anjolena Davis** - BGSU Student, **Kara Landin** - BGSU Student, **Max Schubert** - BGSU Student, **Kate Spinelli** - BGSU Student, **Anna Winger** - BGSU Student, **Madison Loeffler** - BGSU Student, **Brooke Weirick** - BGSU Student, **Maya Elias** - BGSU Student, **Alena Babyak** - BGSU Student, **Lauren Riggelman** - BGSU Student, **Sam Herman** - BGSU Student, **Sophia Walcher** - BGSU Student, **Autumn Schmittling** - BGSU Student, **Cameron Willis** - BGSU Student, **Andrea Cordova** - BGSU Student, **Emma Brown** - BGSU Student, **Kaylee Staton** - BGSU Student, **Grace Gamble** - BGSU Student, **Anna Windham** - BGSU Student, **Bailey Towns** - BGSU Student, **Maddie Finley** - BGSU Student, **Sydney Newby** - BGSU Student, **Sarah Painter** - BGSU Student, **Ashley Mania** - BGSU Student, **Kailah Stephens** - BGSU Student, **Emily Dennison** - BGSU Student, **Kassidy Crockett** - BGSU Student, **Rachel Mosko** - BGSU Student, **Alex Barnes** - BGSU Student, **Mindy Ellerbrock** - BGSU Student, **Haley Wemple** - BGSU Student, **Julianna Ciccarelli** - BGSU Student, **Kassidy Hoyt** - BGSU Student, **Christine Jakyma** - BGSU Student

Sponsored by:

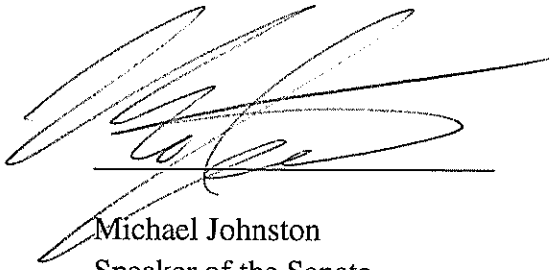
Gil Lutz - Student Affairs Chair, **Sana Ali** - Diversity Affairs Senator, **Eric Cox** - Senator At-large, **Gwendolyn Yockey** - Off Campus Senator

January 25, 2021

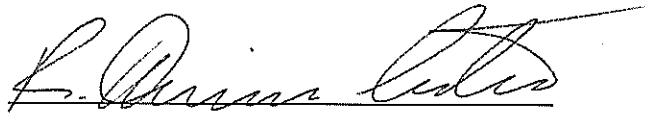
Approved by the Senate of the Undergraduate Student Body, and prepared for the presentation to
the president of the Undergraduate Student Government

January 25, 2021

Approved by the president of the Undergraduate Student Government, and so order into effect.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Johnston", written over a horizontal line.

Michael Johnston
Speaker of the Senate

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Harrison Carter", written over a horizontal line.

R. Harrison Carter
President of the Undergraduate Student Government

S.R. 2020/20201 – 04

A Resolution Formally Requesting Bowling Green State University Reverse Their Decision to Terminate American Sign Language Course Offerings

In the Senate of the Undergraduate Student Body here assembled,

1. **Whereas**, the Undergraduate Student Government represents the undergraduate student voice
2. at Bowling Green State University; and
3. **Whereas**, Bowling Green State University and the Undergraduate Student Government
4. aim to ensure all student voices are represented within the Senate; and
5. **Whereas**, American Sign Language (ASL) is an irreplaceable communication tool that
6. enables hundreds of thousands of Americans to express themselves freely and efficiently; and
7. **Whereas**, Bowling Green State University lists on their official Diversity and Inclusion
8. Comprehensive Strategy Plan¹ 2020-2023 that, “Bowling Green State University values
9. diversity as essential to improving the human condition. Diversity and inclusion immeasurably
10. enriches all that we do to engage, understand, and respect individuals. Within our
11. community, the diversity of identities and life experiences determines how we perceive and
12. contribute to society. We acknowledge that diversity has not always been understood or
13. embraced in our society, yet, at BGSU, we will strive to understand and embrace diversity by
14. breaking down barriers to meaningful participation to ensure that individuals are treated with
15. dignity;” and
16. **Whereas**, the decision to end the American Sign Language minor is directly opposed to
17. these ideals and serves to sever off the educational development and assistance to one of the
18. most important communities on campus; and
19. **Whereas**, this minor houses over 250 students and thus is a cornerstone of their BGSU
20. educational development; and
21. **Whereas**, the ASL adjunct faculty are highly qualified to be hired on as full time faculty to
22. continue this minor; and
23. **Whereas**, Bowling Green State University is hiring a multitude of new faculty and staff for
24. their nursing program, and over 20 life design coaches, therefore there is no precedent set in

¹ <https://www.bgsu.edu/content/dam/BGSU/division-of-diversity-and-belonging/documents/20DB0405DiversityandBelongingComprehensiveStrategyandPlan.pdf>

25. place that would stand in the way of hiring a full-time faculty member to teach upper level
26. ASL courses; and

27. **Whereas**, in the era of Covid-19 and the necessity for facial coverings it has become
28. impossible for deaf Americans to lip read which further elevates the importance of proper
29. ASL interpreters; and

30. **Whereas**, the Toledo Blade reports that, “According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics,
31. demand for deaf interpreters is growing; through 2028, the need for interpreters is
32. expected to increase by 19 percent;”² and

33. **Whereas**, there has been a strong and prevalent student outcry against the decision to end the
34. ASL minor; and

35. **Whereas**, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (SEC) voted down a proposal to
36. suspend admissions to the ASL minor on October 27th, 2020 by a vote of 8 opposed to
37. suspending the minor and 2 abstentions, however the administration went against SEC’s
38. recommendation and now has decided to end offering courses in the minor starting Fall 2021;
39. and

40. **Whereas**, BGSU students have started a Change.org petition that has gained over 7,800
41. Signatures; and

42. **Whereas**, this displays an overwhelming amount of support to keep and continue to offer
43. ASL courses at Bowling Green State University; and

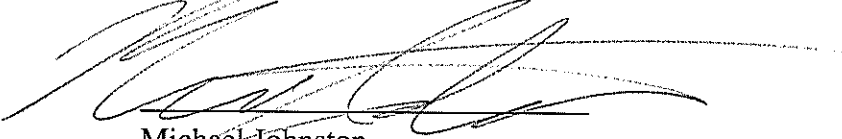
44. **Therefore, let it be resolved that**, The Undergraduate Student Government of Bowling
45. Green State University stands in solidarity with the student body to disapprove and condemn
46. the University for their decision to end admissions to the American Sign Language minor and
47. the offering of American Sign Language courses all together.

48. **Therefore, let it be further resolved that**, The Undergraduate Student Government and the
49. Bowling Green student body demands that BGSU reverse their decision regarding the ASL
50. minor and bring on a full time faculty member to teach the upper level ASL courses.

² <https://www.toledoblade.com/opinion/editorials/2021/01/20/sign-language-skills-are-needed/stories/20210119003>

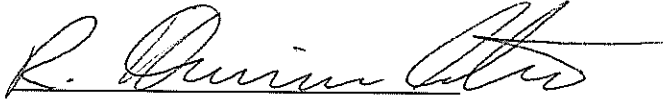
THE SENATE OF THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT BODY

Passed by the Senate and ordered presented to the president of the Undergraduate Student Body for Approval or Veto.



Michael Johnston
Speaker of the Senate

I do hereby approve and order this legislation into effect.



R. Harrison Carter
President of the Undergraduate Student Government

I do hereby disapprove and order this legislation to be returned to the Senate.

R. Harrison Carter
President of the Undergraduate Student Government
