

1. Abilene Christian University

S.R. 100.14

2. 100th Congress

3. Spring Session 2024

4. By Ryland Mallett

5.

6. **A RESOLUTION TO PETITION ADMINISTRATION TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE NEED**

7. **OF THE STUDENT BODY FOR CONTINUED AND NUANCED CONVERSATIONS**

8. **ABOUT SEX AND SEXUALITY BY RECOGNIZING VOICE AS AN OFFICIAL**

9. **STUDENT ORGANIZATION WITH ALL OF THE RIGHTS, FREEDOMS, AND**

10. **RESPONSIBILITIES THEREOF**

11.

12. *WHEREAS*, this resolution seeks to achieve two different goals: validate the need of the student

13. body for public conversations about sex and sexuality and petition administration to instate

14. VOICE as an official student organization with all of the rights, freedoms, and responsibilities

15. thereof,

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17. **Furtherance of public conversation about sex and sexuality**

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19. *WHEREAS*, “the mission of Abilene Christian University is to educate students for Christian

20. service and leadership throughout the world. We achieve our mission through exemplary

21. teaching... that informs and impacts issues of global importance to the academy, church, and

22. society;”

23.

24. *WHEREAS*, ACU’s vision is “...Built upon rigorous academics and leadership

25. development...preparing talented students to become Christ's 'salt and light' in the world by
26. producing leaders who think critically, globally and missionally... Delivering a unique,
27. Christ-centered experience that draws students into community.”,
28.
29. *WHEREAS*, the issue of sex and sexuality is pertinent to every Christian and individual in the
30. world, and conversations about its implications are commonplace in business practices, the
31. national conversation, churches, and other community circles,
32.
33. *WHEREAS*, beliefs and attitudes about sexuality have a major impact on the faith of Christians
34. and non-Christians alike and impact the development of students' faith during their time at ACU,
35.
36. *WHEREAS*, the way in which ACU has conversations about sexuality impacts the decision of
37. prospective students to attend ACU or other institutions,
38.
39. *WHEREAS*, before Holy Sexuality Week, the university had made a limited amount of public
40. spaces on campus for all students to engage with conversations about sex and sexuality
41. outside of a general reference to the topic in a few select classes,
42.
43. *WHEREAS*, President Schubert and the Chapel office have already agreed that students are
44. “hungry” for the conversation as evidenced by the large number of students who attended and
45. engaged with Holy Sexuality Week,
46.
47. *WHEREAS*, the speakers for Holy Sexuality Week were selected with little consultation from
48. faculty or student groups,

49.

50. *WHEREAS*, while the life experience of the speakers was diverse, they neglected to present a

51. thorough scholarly understanding of sexuality that could have been provided by faculty,

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53. *WHEREAS*, Holy Sexuality Week was presented as a “conversation” but the only outlet for

54. students to participate was through moderated question submissions, many of which were about

55. homosexuality,

56.

57. *WHEREAS*, meaningful learning and faith development requires free and open engagement and

58. participation in important conversations,

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60. *WHEREAS*, likewise, denying a regular and safe place to engage in questioning and

61. Christ-centered debate about important matters does a disservice to the educational and spiritual

62. development of ALL students,

63.

64. *WHEREAS*, if diverse perspectives and beliefs about sexuality are not represented in on-campus

65. conversations, students will be ill-prepared to enter their post-grad communities, in which

66. sexuality is an ever-present topic, and be able to engage with people from all backgrounds on the

67. topic of sexuality,

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69. *WHEREAS*, allowing on-campus ideas different from those shared by the administration does not

70. mean ACU officially endorses those ideas but instead strengthens the overall student

71. understanding and respect for the importance of the subject matter,

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73. Recognition of VOICE as an official student organization

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75. *WHEREAS*, in the 2022-2023 school year, VOICE had a recorded 174 official active members

76. and many more on-campus supporters making it one of ACU's largest student organizations,

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78. *WHEREAS*, VOICE members are heavily involved in student organizations and leadership

79. positions across all facets of campus life,

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81. *WHEREAS*, VOICE represents an important part of the student population, and its members'

82. perspectives and life experiences are an important part of the campus conversation about sex and

83. sexuality,

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85. *WHEREAS*, members of VOICE are among the students most affected by the conversation

86. surrounding homosexuality and are eager to participate in it,

87.

88. *WHEREAS*, members of VOICE should have the same right and freedom to participate, question,

89. and engage with the said conversation as all other students on campus,

90.

91. *WHEREAS*, right now VOICE members do not feel welcome to safely contribute to the

92. conversation because of several instances of cyberstalking from the ACU Open Forum Facebook

93. group which routinely calls for VOICE to be kicked off of campus,

94.

95. *WHEREAS*, additionally, the restrictions imposed by the Peer Support and Education Group

96. Parameters like, "VOICE will not advocate for or promote specific theological or political

97. opinions.”, create a lack of clarity on what practices are deemed peer support as opposed to

98. advocacy which further discourages members from contributing to the conversation,

99.

100. *WHEREAS*, preventing an important perspective in the conversation of sex and sexuality on

101. campus from being heard publically makes both students and faculty fear saying, questioning,

102. or supporting “the wrong thing,” which diminishes the quality of conversation that the whole

103. campus can have,

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105. *WHEREAS*, instating VOICE as an official organization would be a categorical change that

106. grants its members the freedom to share their lived experiences, emotions, and perspectives in

107. an honest and respectful manner without fear of repercussion,

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109. *WHEREAS*, administration approval of the proposed action would not be an endorsement

110. from the university of any one political or spiritual belief about sexuality any more than

111. allowing a Catholic student group is an endorsement of the infallibility of the Pope or

112. allowing political student groups is an endorsement of entire political ideologies,

113.

114. *WHEREAS*, administration granting members of VOICE the same rights, freedoms, and

115. responsibilities of all other student organizations, endorses the spiritual growth of students

116. through engagement in the on-campus marketplace of ideas, creates an environment that

117. encourages students to engage with their own spirituality, and shows that ACU administration

118. equally welcomes all students into the ACU community,

119.

120. *WHEREAS*, for the above reasons, instating VOICE as an official student organization does

121. not conflict with the sexual stewardship policy as written but instead exemplifies the
122. university's commitment to "the vigorous pursuit of truth" and its encouragement to "all of
123. our community members to engage this issue with Christian care and compassion.",
124.
125. *RESOLVED*, that the 100th Student's Association Senate authorize the Executive Cabinet to
126. petition administration to acknowledge the need of the student body for continued and
127. nuanced conversations about sex and sexuality by recognizing VOICE as an official student
128. organization with all of the rights, freedoms, and responsibilities thereof.