

FACULTY SENATE RESOLUTION 15–01

Opposition to “The Response” Prayer Rally at LSU

Pramod Achar, Lilly Allen, Sharon Andrews, Paula Arai, Jeremiah Ariaz, Chris Barrett, Emily Batinski, Sarah Becker, Dana Berkowitz, Michael P. Bibler, Jacob Blanton, Lillian Bridwell-Bowles, Mary Brody, Ellen Bush, Les Butler, James Catano, Prosanta Chakrabarty, Bin Chen, Wesley Church, Geoff Clayton, George Cochran, Jon Cogburn, Daniel C. Cohen, Brannon Costello, Pallavi Dani, Maribel Dietz, Brant Faircloth, Stephen C. Finley, Carl Freedman, Andreas Giger, Deborah Goldgaber, Emily Graves, Jacob Grey, Cecile Guin, Rachel Hall, Petra Hendry, Katherine Henninger, Dominique G. Homberger, Josef Horáček, Stuart Irvine, Charles David Isbell, Joyce Jackson, Catherine Jacquet, Kate Jensen, Benjamin Kahan, Michael D. Kaller, Rendy Kartika, Morgan Kelly, Gerald Kennedy, Touria Khannous, Emily King, Joseph Kronick, John Larkin, Catherine Lemieux, Vince LiCata, Younghee Lim, Marybeth Lima, Richard Litherland, Julie Lively, Michelle Livermore, Elaine M. Maccio, Phillip Maciak, Michelle Massé, Kent Mathewson, Bryan J. McCann, Robin McCarley, Patrick McGee, Elsie Michie, Sulagna Mishra, Jorge Morales, Carl Motsenbocker, Laura Mullen, Ali Mullin, Judith Myhand, Marcia Newcomer, Elisabeth Oliver, Carol O’Neil, Solimar Otero, Timothy Page, Loretta L. Pecchioni, Charles H. Pence, Robert Perlis, John Pojman, John Protevi, Justin Ragains, Micha Rahder, Ravi P. Rau, Helen Regis, Judith Rhodes, James Rocha, Mona Rocha, Jeffrey Roland, Steven Ross, Susan Elizabeth Ryan, William Saas, Daniel Sage, Husain Sarkar, Matthew Savage, Tracy Shaffer, ReRe Shaw, Charles Shindo, Irina Shport, Melinda Solmon, Phillip Sprunger, George Stanley, Bradley Storin, Patricia Suchy, Gail Sutherland, David Terry, Randolph Thomas, Kristine Thompson, Cameron Thrash, R. Eugene Turner, Shawn Walker, Carolyn Ware, Sue Weinstein, Sharon Weltman, Terrie White, Jim Wilcox, Bill Wischusen, Jean Witherow, Miyoun Yang, Jack Yeager, Margherita Zanasi, and Donghui Zhang

WHEREAS, Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal is inviting the public to a prayer rally entitled “The Response” in the Pete Maravich Assembly Center (PMAC) on the Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College (LSU) campus in January 2015¹, and

WHEREAS, “The Response” is being funded by the American Family Association², a group classified by the Southern Poverty Law Center as a hate group³, promulgating demonizing and patently false claims about lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) people, Jews⁴, Muslims⁵, Hispanics⁶, Native Americans⁷, and atheists⁸, and

WHEREAS, the AFA denounces scientific theories such as evolution⁹, links the theory of evolution with Adolf Hitler¹⁰, and promotes creationist and intelligent design curriculum in public schools¹¹, and

WHEREAS, hosting “The Response” potentially creates a hostile, unsafe environment for LSU students, staff, and faculty and their families, and

WHEREAS, hosting “The Response” event contradicts LSU’s mission¹² to “use its extensive resources to solve economic, environmental, and social challenges,” and

WHEREAS, LSU, in its Flagship Agenda¹³ and Policy Statement 1¹⁴, has pledged a commitment to nondiscrimination against traditionally oppressed minorities within its community, including its racial-, ethnic-, religious-, and sexual-minority students, staff, and faculty, and

WHEREAS, LSU is “committed to creating and maintaining a living and learning environment that embraces individual difference” and “proactively cultivates and sustains a campus environment that values...cultural competence,”¹⁵ and

WHEREAS, “LSU depends on the faithful commitment by each community member to these, our basic principles”: to “advance justice, equality, compassion,” to “demonstrate dignity and respect,”¹⁶ and to affirm freedom of expression; and

WHEREAS, “The Response” may have deleterious effects on LSU’s regional and national reputation, despite the University’s effort to distance itself from the event’s content and message and the repugnant views of the AFA as outlined, in part, in their prayer guide.¹⁷

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the LSU Faculty Senate opposes the anti-scientific, anti-intellectual, and prejudiced ideology of the AFA, the host of the event known as “The Response” scheduled for January 24, 2015, at the PMAC.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the LSU Faculty Senate endorses the efforts of those members of the LSU community who are contributing to a range of peaceful responses to the event on January 24, 2015 at the PMAC;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Faculty Senate proposes a major event to be held on the LSU campus and advertised to the public that directly engages the University’s commitment to diversity, upholds the University’s mission to operate as a place of broad learning and inquiry, and supports all of our students, staff, and faculty, including the most vulnerable among us.

References

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