

SSR 2022-11

A Resolution for: Condemn the Official University and BOR response to Dr. O’Kane’s Policy Violations in how it affects his Students

Written by: President Samantha Bennett

Introduced by: Speaker Sam Caughron

Sponsored by:

Vote: 0-0-0

Speaker Action: _____
Speaker Sam Caughron Date

WHEREAS: Dr. Steve O’Kane has been relieved of in-person teaching duties by the University as a result of violating university and Board of Regent policies; and

WHEREAS: This left Dr. O’Kane’s Plant Systematics course without an instructor, which had put the class on hold until further notice; and

WHEREAS: The University was not able to provide the students of Plant Systematics with any concrete solutions regarding the future of their class, their credits, or their course fees; and

RECOGNIZING: A violation of University and/or Board of Regent policies can not be without consequence; and

RECOGNIZING: The consequences currently decided upon by the University for Dr. O’Kane result in a punishment not only for him, but for his students, who have neither violated policies nor made any actions that necessitate punishment; and

FURTHER RECOGNIZING: The University of Northern Iowa exists to provide an education to its students who are promised a top quality education and who pay for such with both large amounts of time and money; and

FURTHER RECOGNIZING: Plant Systematics is a highly specialized course over topics Dr. O’Kane is regarded to be the only qualified individual to teach; and

FURTHER RECOGNIZING: The students in Dr. O’Kane’s Plant Systematics course have dedicated countless hours and energy to this course, resulting in a large body of work already completed or initiated; and

FURTHER RECOGNIZING: There are students enrolled in this Plant Systematics course who need this class to graduate this semester, and the initially decided upon university punishment of relieving Dr. O’Kane with no determined plans for replacement jeopardized students’ graduations; and

FURTHER RECOGNIZING: These students have expressed that the course of action taken by the University and the Board of Regents has put them under great distress, had a negative impact on their experiences both academically and personally, and left them with an uncertain future at UNI; thus

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED: The Northern Iowa Student Government voices full support of the students in BIOL 4166, and condemns the University of Northern Iowa Administrators and Board of Regents’ handling of the situation involving Dr. Steve O’Kane and his students; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that physical copies of these documents will be sent to the Senior Leadership Team of the University of Northern Iowa; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that physical copies of these documents will be sent to the members of the Board of Regents; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that this resolution be administered to the general student body from NISG via email and social media accounts.