



## Council Resolution (CR03) The Koala and Media on the UC San Diego Campus



**WHEREAS** On November 18, 2015, the Chancellor & Vice-Chancellors of UC San Diego denounced the Koala for its “repugnant, repulsive, attacking and cruel” language and encouraged UCSD student groups to denounce the publication as well<sup>1</sup>;

**WHEREAS** the Associated Students (AS), within 48 hours of the administration’s public denouncement, voted to defund all media organizations to which they offered financial support in order to effectively distance itself from the Koala’s content<sup>2</sup>;

**WHEREAS** the defunding of the Koala is primarily a symbolic move as the Koala purportedly receives less than half of its funding from AS and, therefore, will be able to continue publishing its particular brand of uninformed, ineffective literature with no further action taken to improve upon its content, assess its worth to the environment of UCSD, or to make it a viable outlet for sociopolitical commentary as its claims to satire require;

**WHEREAS** the Koala defines itself as a satirical publication and identifies with the practice of journalism by calling itself “the worst in collegiate journalism,” however, the Koala Constitution does not mention any form of journalistic integrity, intention or method, and, further, the current iteration of the Koala does not produce articles that are in line with actual satirical practice;

**WHEREAS** satire is a tool for social change, specifically defined as “the use of humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to *expose and criticize people’s stupidity or vices*, particularly *in the context of contemporary politics* and other topical issues”<sup>3</sup>, not a mouthpiece for sexualizing particular races, mocking rape survivors or similar symbolic acts of violence perpetuated in many Koala publications, especially present in the most recent issue;<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>[http://ucsdnews.ucsd.edu/pressrelease/statement\\_denouncing\\_koala\\_publication\\_from\\_uc\\_san\\_diego\\_administration](http://ucsdnews.ucsd.edu/pressrelease/statement_denouncing_koala_publication_from_uc_san_diego_administration)

<sup>2</sup> <http://ucsdguardian.org/2015/11/19/1118-a-s-council/>

<sup>3</sup>Quoting the offered definition of “satire” from a Google search. Further explication of the term can be found here [<http://literarydevices.net/satire/>] and here [<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/satire>]

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.thekoala.org/archives/2015-FA-1.pdf>



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**WHEREAS** the Graduate Student Association of UC San Diego (GSAUCSD) sees the most recent publication of the Koala as obscene, defamatory, and possibly hate speech;

**WHEREAS** a national debate has erupted in recent weeks over the free speech rights and security of American college students on the campuses of Yale, Amherst, University of Missouri, and others, as specifically these campuses are experiencing protests from students who have experienced racist action and speech from their fellow co-eds;

**WHEREAS** the GSAUCSD believes there is a way to preserve the rights of all UCSD students to have an inclusive campus that is actively welcoming to underrepresented communities, while engaging in free speech and the kinds of debate that are integral to higher education;

**WHEREAS** the current Koala advisor is a Public Relations staff member<sup>5</sup> who does not appear to have the critical media background, knowledge of journalistic production practices or experience to effectively advise the successful or effective production of student satire or journalism;

**WHEREAS** said Koala advisor is tasked with “advising” all UCSD undergraduate media and political organizations, responsibilities that do not allow said staffer to offer assistance, advice or close readings of the content to be published by the dozens of organizations she is obliged to oversee;

**BE IT RESOLVED** that GSAUCSD affirms that all individuals have the right to freedom of expression, that all individuals have the right to personal safety, and that these rights are complementary when they are in balance;

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<sup>5</sup> <http://rangiroa.ucsd.edu/studentorgregistration/RdOnlyDetail.aspx?data=5979>



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**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that GSAUCSD stands with the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellors in denouncing the repugnant and repulsive speech of the Koala and further denounces the Koala's persistent racist and sexist rhetoric;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** however, that GSAUCSD does not condone those in a position of authority denouncing the expression of a particular group without acknowledging freedom of speech;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that GSAUCSD does not support the AS's decision to defund all media organizations due to its debilitating impact on other forms of media exercising their right to free and lawful speech;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that GSAUCSD demands that AS immediately reinstate its funding for undergraduate media organizations and publications that are in compliance with federal First Amendment protected speech;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** GSAUCSD advises that **all** UCSD media organizations be required to declare their funding sources every quarter and that those funding sources be published online, easily accessible to any UCSD students, faculty, staff or alumni;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** GSAUCSD advises that resources and opportunities of equal measure to create, produce, publish and distribute journalistic content, including that in the satirical mode as protected by First Amendment speech, be allocated for any campus communities seeking funding assistance from UCSD AS or administration;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** the GSAUCSD advises that the Koala be placed under the stewardship of a new advisor with a critical media production background capable of advising on matters of satire, journalistic ethics and protected speech categories;



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**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** the GSAUCSD challenges the Koala to further develop itself and distribute an effective satirical publication on the UCSD campus that will provide a necessary space and professionalizing opportunity for students interested in the art of satirical media for which it claims to be.

**Voted and Passed in GSA Council Meeting #5: 11/30/15 (Y/N/A - 32/2/3)**

**Certified: Lindsay M. Freeman, 12/01/15**