

# University of Delaware Graduate Student Government

## SR-1617-05

Sponsor: Senator Stijn Koshari (Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering)

5        Proposal for Accessible Peer-led Mental Health Support Groups at the University of Delaware

10        **WHEREAS** there are limited resources for University of Delaware graduate students struggling with mental health issues; and

15        **WHEREAS** mental health is not emphasized as part of new graduate student orientation and resources currently available are not tailored for each department’s needs; and

20        **WHEREAS** the University of Delaware’s mental health resources would be improved by training graduate students to help create their own support groups; and

25        **WHEREAS** trained peers offer an unbiased and confidential environment to discuss conflicts and possible solutions related to the graduate student experience; and

30        **WHEREAS** other major university graduate programs such as Massachusetts Institute of Technology, University of California–Berkeley, and Cornell University, as well as University of Delaware peer institutions like Georgia Institute of Technology, have implemented similar programs that provide peer-coaching services to their students; and

35        **WHEREAS** such a response to graduate student mental health is being tested by the Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering via their **Empathetic Peers Offering Wisdom, Encouragement and Resources (EmPOWER)** program; and

40        **WHEREAS** the University of Delaware Counseling Center is willing to develop a training program for and to work alongside the graduate student body,

45        **BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** the Graduate Student Government proposes that mental health—both the specific concerns of individual graduate students and the available resources at the University of Delaware—must be addressed and discussed during new graduate student orientation, and

50        **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Graduate Student Government supports the creation of accessible, peer-led, and confidential mental health support groups for graduate students at the University of Delaware, and

55        **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Graduate Student Government hereby creates a Student Affairs *ad hoc* committee charged with developing an appropriate plan of action for addressing graduate student mental health more effectively.