*Resolution Calling for Health Insurance Coverage for Ph.D., M.F.A., and SJD Students*

Whereas strengthening SMU’s graduate programs is a central priority in the University’s strategic plan, and

Whereas the “Continuing the Ascent” document affirms that high quality graduate students “provide greater experiences for our undergraduates” and “increase our ability to place SMU Ph.D.s into faculty positions at world-class universities,” and

Whereas graduate students play a critical role in advancing SMU’s teaching, research, and service missions, and

Whereas procuring health insurance in the individual market creates significant financial strain for many graduate students, and

Whereas the vast majority of SMU’s peer and aspirational institutions, against whom we compete for quality graduate students, provide health insurance coverage for their doctoral students, and

Whereas SMU’s failure to provide health insurance for graduate students compounds the recruitment challenges created by the University’s relatively low doctoral stipends, and

Whereas providing healthcare security for graduate students and their families is consistent with the ethos and values derived from the University’s Methodist heritage, and

Whereas health insurance could be provided for all SMU Ph.D., M.F.A., and SJD students for approximately $1.5 million per year, much less than the cost of many other items on the University’s academic improvement agenda, now therefore be it

Resolved that the SMU Faculty Senate calls on the University administration to make funding health insurance for Ph.D., M.F.A., and SJD students a key priority in the coming year.