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February 9, 2022

To: Vicki Reitenauer,
Presiding Officer

Richard Beyler
Secretary to the Faculty Senate

From: Stephen Percy
President

Re: Response from the President and Provost Regarding Faculty Senate Resolution

On behalf of myself, as PSU President, together with Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Susan Jeffords, we wish to commend the PSU Faculty Senate for adopting the resolution “Defending Academic Freedom to Teach and Research Race and Gender Justice and Critical Race Theory.” We strongly support the Faculty Senate’s defense of Academic Freedom as the foundational pillar of our higher education action system, including our key missions of instruction, research, creative endeavors, racial and social justice.

With the AAUP, PEN America, the American Historical Association, the Association of American Colleges & Universities, and over seventy other organizations, we endorse the [Joint Statement on Legislative Efforts to Restrict Education about Racism in American History](#). To quote one of the most eloquent passages of that document:

“Americans of all ages deserve nothing less than a free and open exchange about history and the forces that shape our world today, an exchange that should take place inside the classroom as well as in the public realm generally. To ban the tools that enable those discussions is to deprive us all of the tools necessary for citizenship in the 21st century.”

We must all work to protect the Academic Freedom of professional educators who are at the front lines of developing the informed, curious, skeptical and engaged citizenry necessary for a robust democracy.

Through this communication we wish to formally respond to the Faculty Senate’s request that we endorse this resolution.