



Call to Change the University of San Francisco Mascot
Resolution: 22-23-07

Whereas: The University motto “Change the World From Here” implies actively seeking to repair injustices to create a more equitable and just world; and

Whereas: The University of San Francisco prides itself on providing students with “*a culture of service that respects and promotes the dignity of every person*” and “*the values and sensitivity necessary to be men and women for others,*” and “*distinguish[es] itself as a diverse, socially responsible learning community*”¹; and

Whereas: The University of San Francisco is ranked #2 in student diversity among national universities per the U.S. News & World Report from 2023²; and

Whereas: The University of San Francisco’s Mission aims to “*critically, thoughtfully, and innovatively [address] inequities to create a more humane and just world*” ; and

Whereas: The University of San Francisco Mission aims to “*empower and hold accountable our students, faculty, librarians, staff, administrators, alumni, and community partners [...] to care for our common home, including the native lands on which our campuses reside*”³; and

Whereas: The University of San Francisco Mission aims to “*humbly and responsibly engage with, and contribute to, the cultural, intellectual, economic and spiritual gifts and talents of the San Francisco Bay Area and the global communities to which we belong*”³; and

Whereas: The ASUSF Land Recognition Statement³ from 2019 describes:

*“Our collective relationship with Indigenous peoples by this institution, this city, this country, and this continent is in immediate and sincere need of reconciliation and reclamation... Many of us who have come to benefit from this land still participate in the ongoing displacement of its original stewards but we can choose to be better advocates and accomplices in favor of their restoration”*⁴; and

¹ [Vision, Mission and Values Statement | myUSF](#)

² [U.S News & World Report for Student Ethnic Diversity](#)

³ [Our Mission and Values | University of San Francisco](#)

⁴ [Resolution for Land Recognition Statement Resolution 20-21-13 Whereas: the University of San Francisco strives to uphold its ded](#)

⁵ [Spanish Period: 1776 to 1822 - Presidio of San Francisco \(U.S. National Park Service\)](#)

⁶ [Why the Dons? - University of San Francisco Athletics](#)

⁷ [Letter to the editor: Campus culture represented in our mascot – San Francisco Foghorn](#)

⁸ [Letter From the Editor – San Francisco Foghorn](#)



Whereas: According to the National Parks Service, Don Gaspar de Portola led the first Spanish expedition to the San Francisco Bay, representing the Don’s place in history as an instigator of the colonization of the Indigenous land which the University of San Francisco occupies⁵; and

Whereas: Per the University of San Francisco Athletics Department’s definition of the Don, *“the name references the early history of California and San Francisco, which was marked by the exploits of the adventuresome and swashbuckling Spanish Dons”*⁶, demonstrating the university’s own understanding that the Don is a figure representative of the history of colonization on the indigenous Ohlone land occupied by the university; and

Whereas: In Professor Rachel Beth Egenhoefer’s *“Letter to the editor: Campus culture represented in our mascot”* article, printed in the San Francisco Foghorn on 8/28/2021, she cites a USFFA (USF’s full-time faculty union) meeting with Provost Chinyere Oparah, calling for a *“cultural reset,”* following the *“many tragedies, mishaps, frustrations, pandemics, and issues USF has experienced in the past several years”*⁷; and

Whereas: Professor Egenhoefer writes:
*“As a Design Professor who teaches visual communication and identity, I can’t help but see the connection between a masked male mascot—known for controlling women, organized crime, Spanish colonization, unapologetically lassoing and sword fighting, and riding off on his high horse—and the culture that has allowed the many accounts of chauvinistic behavior, sexual harassment and assault to occur at USF”*⁷; and

Whereas: In Zoe Binder’s, *“Letter From the Editor,”* printed in the San Francisco Foghorn on 9/14/2022, she contends that descriptions of the Don *“point to a history of colonization”*, and that *“a colonial figure is an ironic mismatch for a student body focused on repairing injustices”*⁸; and

Whereas: Following a contest led by the Foghorn in 1931 that asked students for suggestions for a new mascot, Father President Edward Whelan, S.J. formed a committee of students, alumni, and administrators to select and implement a new mascot, setting precedent that such a change can be done again;

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² [U.S News & World Report for Student Ethnic Diversity](#)

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Therefore, be it Resolved by the Associated Students of the University of San Francisco Senate in its role as the sole representative body of all the undergraduates students of the University of San Francisco, that the following be enacted:

Resolved: A task force be formed upon the commencement of the 2023-2024 academic year to analyze and evaluate the implications and logistics of changing the mascot with the following stipulations:

- i. The task force be composed of at least 25% student representation, and
- ii. Consider the mascot suggestions collected from the San Francisco Foghorn's survey in the selection of the new mascot; furthermore, be it,

Resolved: The Don mascot be null and void by the 2024-2025 academic year; furthermore, be it,

Resolved: that this initiative be of no additional financial burden to the student body.

Submitted by:

Ethan Lee-Bellows, *ASUSF President*

Ariana Anayat, *ASUSF Vice President of Internal Affairs*

Supported by:

Zoe Binder, *Editor-in-Chief, San Francisco Foghorn*

Jada Commodore, *President, Culturally Focused Clubs Council*

Triniti Nguyen, *President, Campus Activities Board*

Calixta Lehman, *Executive Producer, USFtv*

Fen Wright, *Executive Producer, College Players*

Emely Rico Garcia, *President, ASUSF Voices*

Leo Tafoya, *Manager, Graphics Center*

Presented to the Senate on:

November 30, 2022

Passed by the Senate on:

December 7, 2022

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Signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ethan Lee-Bellows'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Ethan' being more prominent.

Ethan Lee-Bellows,
ASUSF President

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