Referendum Question No. 2
Princeton University Undergraduate Student Government Election—Spring 2019
Sponsored by AJ SIBLEY ’19

On March 24, 2019, the USG Senate approved the language of this condensation (ballot question) and referendum resolution as being neutral and clear (13 members in favor, 0 members opposed, 0 members abstaining).

Condensation (Ballot Question)
Shall the undergraduates call on the University administration to (1) establish and execute an annual health awareness initiative educating students on the serious health threat that computer and other screen use poses, and how to protect their eyes from these dangers; and (2) install on campus computers and screens, blue light protection software for use if desired?

Explanation (Submitted by the Sponsor)
The purpose of this referendum is two-fold: to express the collective concern of the undergraduate student body regarding a serious health threat present in all of our lives, and Princeton students in particular; and likewise, to call for action on the part of the University administration to educate students on how to protect their eyes, protect themselves, and ensure their capacity for continued excellence.

Modern screen use habits, particularly those employed by Princeton students, threaten eye health and can potentially alter life prospects. Ophthalmologists and other medical experts are only just beginning to understand the damage being caused to our eyes and vision by blue light and extensive screen use. Long hours in front of a screen, especially when reading text on a white background (eg. typing on a Word document, building a program, or reading a webpage) has been linked to severe eye strain, Computer Vision Syndrome, and Meibomian Gland Disorder. It is typical for a Princeton student to spend hours in front of a screen each day, often intensely staring without break. Indeed, when also considering smartphone, social media, and Netflix use, it is likely easier for a student to calculate how many minutes they spend not looking at a screen.

Fortunately, there are a number of simple steps that Princeton students can take to largely protect themselves from the harmful effects of blue light. However, there is a considerable lack of awareness that prevents action from being taken. Therefore, we call upon the University administration to implement an annual eye health awareness campaign to educate and protect current and all future generations of Princetonians.
Referendum Resolution
Calling on the administration to establish and execute a comprehensive eye health initiative to educate and protect students on the threat that screen use poses and to install blue light protection software on all campus computers.

Whereas computer use poses a significant health threat to current and future Princeton students: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the undergraduates of Princeton University,

SECTION 1. ADMINISTRATION.

The undergraduates call on the administration to establish and execute an annual health awareness initiative educating students on the serious health threat that computer and other screen use pose, and offering solutions on how to protect their eyes from these dangers; and install on campus computers and screens, blue light protection software for use if desired.

SECTION 2. USG SENATE.

The undergraduates direct the Senate of the Undergraduate Student Government to form an ad-hoc committee for the purpose of exploring options for eye health awareness campaign initiative.

SECTION 3. TRANSMITTAL OF RESOLUTION.

The Executive Secretary of the Senate shall transmit an official copy of this resolution to each of the following university officers:
(1) President Christopher L. Eisgruber ‘83, President of the University.
(2) Provost Deborah A. Prentice, Provost and Alexander Stewart 1886 Professor of Psychology and Public Affairs.
(3) Vice President W. Rochelle Calhoun, Vice President for Campus Life.

Approved April __, 2019.

LAURA ZECCA ’20,
Chief Elections Manager

Attest:

CLAIRE MCCARRIHER ’21,
Executive Secretary of the Senate.