

56-R-29

A Resolution to Urge the University to Implement University-Wide Flexibility in Attendance

Echo Joyce (for herself) introduced the following resolution to the Academic Affairs Committee where it passed. Then, to the Steering Committee where it passed, and to the floor where it passed/failed.

* * *

Whereas the Undergraduate Student Government represents all undergraduate students at The Ohio State University; and

Whereas the university rules provide guidance and regulation of assessment within classes; and

Whereas rule 3335-8-19 of the Administrative Code places restrictions on examinations that would be opposed to the spirit of learning;¹ and

Whereas there is no university-wide regulation regarding limits of assessment based upon participation and attendance; and

Whereas the Administrative Code permits each school or department to create their own regulations regarding student absences leading to inevitable inconsistencies between departments; and

Whereas rule 3335-9-21 of the Administrative Code states that if a student is absent for a prolonged period of time, their instructor has the duty to report that absence to the dean of the college;² and

Whereas there are a multitude of reasons for which a student may be absent from class that may not be documentable including sudden and temporary illness that does not require medical attention; and

Whereas as of Autumn 2023 Student Life Disability Services (SLDS) will no longer be providing flexible attendance letters for those who test positive for Covid-19;³ and

¹ <https://trustees.osu.edu/bylaws-and-rules/3335-8>

² <https://trustees.osu.edu/bylaws-and-rules/3335-9>

³ <https://safeandhealthy.osu.edu/accommodations>

Whereas as of February 8, 2024 the State of Ohio was reporting an average of 8,205 new cases of Covid-19 a week;⁴

Whereas mandatory attendance policies increase pressure to attend even when sick; and

Whereas SLDS attendance and deadline modifications in the form of Intermittent Flex Plans require both foreknowledge of an illness or disability and documentation of said illness or disability; and

Whereas One-Off Flexibility as Needed plans and Remain-In-Class Plans also require immediate communication at the onset of an acute episode of disability or illness, something that can be made more difficult by the acute episode itself; and

Whereas proper documentation of disability, especially invisible disability, can be difficult to obtain due to the inaccessible nature of the United States' healthcare system; and

Whereas the University does not consistently cancel classes when weather conditions create transportation concerns, especially for those who live in the off-campus area or those who commute; and

Whereas The Ohio State University holds compassion as one of its key values and states that “together we are compassionate and meet people where they are” and “support each other’s physical and mental health”;⁵ and

Whereas students should not be penalized by circumstances beyond their control that may impact their ability to attend class; and

Therefore, Let it Be Resolved that the Undergraduate Student Government calls upon The Ohio State University to reconsider the permitting of the implementation of mandatory attendance policies in classes; and

Let it Further Be Resolved that the Undergraduate Student Government calls on The Ohio State University to work with undergraduate students to establish a university-wide policy that allows for flexibility of attendance in classes; and

⁴ <https://data.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/data/view/covid-19-reporting>

⁵ <https://oaa.osu.edu/vision-mission-values>

Let if Finally Be Resolved that the Undergraduate Student Governments calls on the Board of Trustees to amend University Rules 3335-8-19 to include language to impose a limitation on the use of attendance in student assessment.

Floor Vote: Aye: ____ Nay: ____ Abstain: ____ Present: ____

Bobby McAlpine
President

Alex Poling
Speaker of the 56th General Assembly

Date Adopted: _____

Date Terminated: _____