**Associated Student Government**

*University of Arkansas*

*ASG Senate Resolution No. 18*

Author(s): Senator Cassidy Cook, Senator Kianna Sarvestani

Sponsor(s): Senator Tara Barsotti, Senator Emily Daniels, Senator Katie Gardner, Senator Colton Simpson, Senator Audra Karabinos, Senator Darynne Dahlem

**A Resolution Encouraging the Re-drafting of University Absence Policy**

Whereas, As a University with over 27,000 students the idea that students will never have to miss class for a reason outside of their control is out of touch with reality.

Whereas, The current class absence policy is open to interpretation and enforcement by professors and has created stark differences in the ways attendance matters are handled across majors, departments and colleges.

Whereas, The authors of this resolution have taken efforts to ensure a more cohesive policy is implemented.

Whereas, The current University of Arkansas policy is creating situations in which Confidential Rights of students and medical professionals are being breeched related to FERPA/HIPA. One place in particular this has occurred is at Pat Walker Health Center. Examples include professors asking for proof of an illness and students sending prescription bottles, pictures of them in doctor’s office, insurance information, and or information revealing the date/physician the student was seen by.

Whereas, The current University of Arkansas policy is creating an unbalanced system regarding appointments/triage as students refuse to follow triage instruction as they are wanting a doctor’s note which can only be obtained via appointment.

Whereas, The University of Florida Policy for class absence reads: “acceptable reasons for absence from or failure to participate in class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused. Over three absences, they can require documentation. If a professor asks for documentation for under 3, they must get written approval from the department to do so.

Whereas, The University of Arkansas current class absence policy reads: There may be times, however, when illness, family crisis, or university-sponsored activities make full attendance or participation impossible. In these situations, students are responsible for making timely arrangements with the instructor to make up work missed. Such arrangements should be made in writing and prior to the absence when possible. Examples of absences that should be considered excusable include those resulting from the following: 1) illness of the student, 2) serious illness or death of a member of the student’s immediate family or other family crisis, 3) University-sponsored activities for which the student’s attendance is required by virtue of scholarship or leadership/participation responsibilities, 4) religious observances (see Students’ Religious Observances policy below), 5) jury duty or subpoena for court appearance, and 6) military duty. The instructor has the right to require that the student provide appropriate documentation for any absence for which the student wishes to be excused.

Whereas, The University of Arkansas Faculty Leave policy reads: Paid sick leave is not granted as vacation but is permissible only when illness or injury to the employee causes absence from his/her work or if conditions require appointment with a physician, dentist, optometrist, chiropractor, or osteopath. Sick leave may also be granted to employees due to the death or serious illness of a member of the employee’s immediate family. Immediate family shall mean the father, mother, sister, brother, husband, wife, child, grandparents, in-laws, or any individual acting as a parent or guardian of an employee. Sick leave applies only to a period when the employee is in an appointed status. If sick leave begins during the Spring Semester it shall not be extended into the Summer Session, but, if necessary, sick leave may be extended into or begun in the Fall Semester if the individual has received a Personnel Action Form for the Fall Semester, even though the illness may begin in the summer when the individual is not in appointed status for the summer.

Whereas, There are inconsistencies in the way the current Faculty and Student absence policies at the University of Arkansas are written and therefore being enforced.

Whereas, The authors of this legislation have consulted Pat Walker officials, Faculty Senate committees, Faculty Senate chair and other universities policies to support the amendments that are being proposed.

Whereas, Faculty Senate supports and is open to the authors of this legislation drafting amendments to the current policy and considering it before their body.

Be it therefore resolved: The Associated Student Government Senate suggest the attendance policy be updated to read:

There may be times, however, when illness, family crisis, or university-sponsored activities make full attendance or participation impossible. In these situations, students are responsible for making timely arrangements with the instructor to make up work missed. Examples of absences that should be considered excusable include those resulting from the following: 1) illness of the student, 2) serious illness or death of a member of the student’s immediate family or other family crisis, 3) University-sponsored activities for which the student’s attendance is required by virtue of scholarship or leadership/participation responsibilities, 4) religious observances (see Students’ Religious Observances policy below), 5) jury duty or subpoena for court appearance, and 6) military duty. A student is allowed 1 excused absence for a course that meets once weekly, 2 excused absences for a course that meets twice weekly and 3 excused absence for a course that meets three times a week, without documentation. Documentation is necessary for in class tests, projects or other items detailed out by the instructor on the syllabus. Students are to only miss for excused absences listed above. Any additional absences will require formal written documentation provided to the professor and are up to the professor discretion for approval. Any attempts to create fraudulent documentation such as but not limited to falsifying a doctor’s note is a violation of academic integrity policy and action will be taken against the student and discretion is up to the professor.

Be it finally resolved: A copy of this legislation be sent to the Chair of Faculty Senate, Kathleen Lehman, Director of Pat Walker Mary Alice Serafini, and Dean Harvard Rom.

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Amendments:

Vote Count: Aye 41 Nay 0 Abstentions 0

Legislation Status: Passed Yes Failed­ Other

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Colman Betler, ASG Chair of the Senate Date

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J.P. Gairhan, ASG President Date