



The State University of New York
Student Assembly

1617-SC03
Webster

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MEMORANDUM 1617-SC03

TO: Members of the Student Assembly

FROM: Jakob T. Webster, Chair of the Military Affairs Committee

ENDORSED BY: Military Affairs Committee, Rules Committee

DATE: April 7, 2017

SUBJECT: Military Conflict with Restrictive Class Meeting Times

Action Requested

I recommend that the Student Assembly of the State University of New York (SUNY SA) adopt the following resolution to accommodate for students who serve in the military that are negatively impacted as a result of restrictive class meeting times.

Resolution

Whereas the State University of New York (SUNY) works to provide an accessible and high-quality education to more than 600,000 students within the state of New York; and

Whereas SUNY works to ensure that students receive a promised high-quality education with academic benefits including a variety of class options and degree selections, to justify the time and money required to succeed in obtaining a degree from a SUNY institution; and

Whereas SUNY SA works to promote the academic success and achievements of all SUNY students, to enhance the educations of SUNY alumni as they pursue successful careers with the other additional benefits that come with a college degree; and

Whereas in traditional classroom settings, professors hold regular class meetings to present materials related to the subject of that class, thereby maintaining a consistent learning experience that maintains relevant to the aforementioned subject. The same can be included for both hybrid classes and online classes that require regular and punctual class meetings, both physically and through online services that act similar to a physical presence in class; and

Whereas as various studies have reflected, students must attend classes regularly, to earn a successful grade that provides them credit for their respective degree, and ultimately contribute toward their eventual graduation; and

Whereas like a large group of college students, students who work for the military as a member of the military community are given a set number of hours per week, that satisfy their financial needs in maintaining their presence in SUNY as a student; and

Whereas these circumstances may include students veterans, students serving active duty in the military, students in reserves, and students in ROTC programs, who serve a variety of different roles that are subject to different required hours of work; and

Whereas strict military work schedules have resulted in direct conflicts with both required and optional classes, with classes offered only at one time slot, with one option for a professor, with the student unable to physically be present for the class at the specified class time. There have also been instances where this unavailable class was not offered every semester, thereby preventing the student from graduating by their predicted graduation date; and

Whereas as a result of these circumstances, students are required to do one of the following actions: take the course during the summer or winter, take the course at another SUNY institution, or take the course outside of SUNY, all of which result in negative uses of time and money for students; and

Whereas students must pay more money due to this inconvenience, resulting from the payment for credits outside of the regular Fall-Spring Academic setting, for the necessary transportation to get to these classes, and other arrangements that come about from the need to take these classes in the summer and winter; and

Whereas students may become disengaged with SUNY and their respective SUNY institution if they must receive required credits from institutions outside of SUNY System, and create negative opinions on that institutions; and

Whereas these inconveniences may occur with both required classes and non-requirements, with the focus on the required classes that students cannot take due to time conflicts and how that negatively impacts their access to an affordable education; and

Whereas another solution taken for this dispute was the creation of an Independent Study, which requires professors to assist students in these situations, requiring further hours from professors with a lack of available time to engage with students properly, without financial compensation; and

Whereas these situations have occurred more frequently in smaller SUNY institutions, such as SUNY Polytechnic Institute, where there are more limited resources to providing a large range of options for students to take classes required to earn their degree; and

Whereas the SUNY Student Assembly recognizes that a way to serve this community is to offer students of this community prior registration; therefore be it

Resolved that the SUNY Student Assembly recognizes one way in which we can help accommodate this community of students is by offering them priority registration for classes; and be it further

Resolved that SUNY SA recognizes the purpose of providing students in the military community with access to appropriate class times, especially for required classes pertaining to their respective degrees; and be it further

Resolved that SUNY SA recommends and supports the involvement of SUNY Administration for the adjustment of SUNY attendance policies across all campuses with students that face similar circumstances; and be it further

Resolved that the managers and coordinators of SUNY attendance policies, SUNY Administration, and other roles focusing on the academic success of students use this as a guideline to prevent similar situations from occurring in the future. This resolution and the solution that may be created by SUNY Administration may provide SUNY with the potential long-term goal of providing all SUNY students with more than two options for every required class, for all academic degrees, for all SUNY institutions; and be it finally

Resolved that copies of this resolution be distributed to the SUNY Board of Trustees, Chancellor Nancy L. Zimpher, Presidents and Chief Academic Officers of State-Operated and Community Colleges, Jan Trybula, Diana Pasterchick, Diversity Officers and Coordinators of all SUNY institutions, and SUNY Student Government Presidents.