



The State University of New York
Student Assembly

1617– 047
Rufrano

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RESOLUTION 1617–047

TO: Members of the Executive Committee

FROM: Evan Rufrano, Director of Academic Affairs

DATE: October 15, 2016

SUBJECT: Transparency During Academic Advising and Course Registration

Action Requested

I recommend, after consultation with and approval of the Academic Affairs Committee, that the Executive Committee of the Student Assembly of the State University of New York (SUNY SA) adopt the following resolution to encourage campuses to take part in the creation of a more transparent academic advising and registration process.

Resolution

Whereas the State University of New York’s (hereafter SUNY) institutions enroll approximately 600,000 students across all sixty-four campuses with over seven thousand degree programs, and aiding nearly 167,000 students within SUNY Transfer Paths; and

Whereas the SUNY administration, faculty, and staff are dedicated to providing a comprehensive program of higher education, to meet the needs of both traditional and nontraditional students and to address local, regional, and state needs and goals; and

Whereas the SUNY administration, faculty, and staff continue to strive to fulfill their mission of education, research, and service; and

Whereas academic advising has been used as a means to measure the readiness of a student, to track their development, and to trace their pathway to graduation; and

Whereas academic advising is not only beneficial to the institution, but primarily for the student to be able to track their success, and be given the opportunity to discuss the path to graduation in such a timely manner as is recommended by campus advising offices; and

Whereas a good academic advising experience has led to an increase in morale, confidence and overall academic pursuit; and

Whereas inadequate academic advising has led to a delay in graduation and a greater financial expense to students pursuing post-secondary education; and

Whereas inadequate academic advising results from a lack of information regarding individual courses, course requirements, frequency of course offerings, student expectations, faculty reviews, and additional expenses required for student success in an academic course; and

Whereas campuses in the New York City and Long Island regions have determined that lower graduation rates are not solely correlated to the academic aptitude of individual students, but that factors contribute to lower graduation rates, such as social and economic reasons; and

Whereas not only have the Chief Academic Officers of the respective campuses located that social and economic barriers, which lead to a decrease in graduation rates; and

Whereas Daniel Sullivan author of The Hidden Costs of Low Four-Year Graduation Rate and President emeritus of St. Lawrence University and Senior advisor to the president, chair of the AAC&U Presidents' Trust believes students that attend low cost four-year institutions that hidden costs are involved, Sullivan says What they don't think enough about, however, are the opportunity costs incurred if students do not complete college on time, or if they decide to transfer to another institution. Transfer students may be required to retake courses already begun (and fully or partially paid for) but not completed at the previous institution. Or they may take courses they thought would be available at their initial institution but were not, so other courses were taken and paid for instead. These "in principle" unnecessary opportunity costs can add up to the point where they equal or exceed the anticipated tuition savings of attending a lower-tuition public institution; and

Whereas the State University of New York has a Four Year Graduation Rate of 48.9% compared to the average National Public Four Year Graduation Rate of 33.6% and a National Private Four Year Graduation Rate of 52.3%, the State University of New York has a Five Year Graduation Rate of 63.4% compared to the average National Public Five Year Graduation Rate of 52.5% and a National Private Five- Year Graduation Rate of 62.7%, the State University of New York has a Six Year Graduation Rate of 65.7% compared to the National Public Six Year Graduation Rate of 58.1% and a National Private Six Year Graduation of 65.0%.

Whereas campuses in the New York City and Long Island region have located three major problems within post-secondary education, namely enrollment, retention, and graduation rates; and

Whereas part of a solution to these problems would include better engaging and educating students during the academic advising process; and

Whereas more information may include, but is not limited to, syllabi, lists of materials needed for success in courses, reviews of faculty, and estimated additional course costs, including textbooks, course books, and software; and

Whereas the inclusion of the additional information during the academic advising period will allow students to be able to better gauge the economic burdens, time trade-offs, and overall expectations of the course as a whole; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that the Student Assembly of the State University of New York recognizes that an increase in transparency during academic advising and registration is a precursor for academic success; and be it further

Resolved that the Student Assembly of the State University of New York recommends and supports the involvement of SUNY System Administration in encouraging the involvement of campuses to implement the inclusion of the additional information above in accordance with SUNY Policy and individual host campus policy; and be it further

Resolved that the Student Assembly of the State University of New York suggests that the SUNY System Administration further develops the initiative in hopes of creating the most beneficial operating system during academic advising period; and be it finally

Resolved that copies of this resolution be distributed to the SUNY Board of Trustees, Chancellor Zimpher, Provost Cartwright, the Executive Committees of the University Faculty Senate and Faculty Council of Community Colleges, Presidents and Chief Academic Officers of State-Operated and Community Colleges, the Deans of the Statutory Colleges at Cornell and Alfred, and SUNY Student Government Presidents.