

Student Government Resolution xxx
A Resolution in Opposition to the Elimination of the Test-Out Option for the Speech
Essential Skill of the Liberal Studies Program
Sponsored by Deanna Schmidt, Academic Affairs Committee Chair; Adam Barker, Katie
Alexander, and Maura Shimmens, Academic Affairs Committee Members

WHEREAS,

- The Student Government is the official governing body of the Student Association and exists to represent the present and long-term best interests of the Student Association in the formulation of the University policy and in the fulfillment of the University mission; and
- The test-out option for the speech Essential Skill requirement of the Liberal Studies Program has been offered for a total of 14 semesters (Fall 2009-Spring 2016)¹; and
- Much like the foreign language and math placement programs, the speech test-out program was designed for students who came to Truman with significant public speaking experience and could be fast-tracked to complete the speech Essential Skill or placed into the appropriate-level course to meet the requirement²; and
- The availability and purpose of the speech test-out program has not been appropriately clarified to all incoming Truman students, potentially barring many students who are capable of testing out from the opportunity to do so; and
- Although “the test out program is exploited by some students as a last ditch effort to complete the public speaking essential skill at the end of their college careers, and a critical mass of [these] students would benefit greatly from taking COMM 170,”³ there are preventative measures that can be taken to significantly limit the amount of students who attempt to accomplish this; and
- The elimination of the test out program would be an inefficient use of student resources, as it would require a significant amount of Truman students with sufficient prior public speaking experience to take a 3-credit hour class for a skill they can already prove competency in; and
- Student Government members met and discussed this possible elimination with Communication Department Chair Jay Self, asking questions about the the proposal and providing suggestions in regards to other options that would continue to offer a test-out option without placing as much of a burden on the Communication faculty.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT,

- Opposes the elimination of the test-out option for the speech Essential Skill of the Liberal Studies Program; and

¹ <http://wp-internal.truman.edu/ugc/files/2015/06/Bill-to-Eliminate-the-Test-Out.pdf>

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

- Asks that faculty continue to discuss possibilities allowing for students with sufficient public speaking experience to test out of the speech Essential Skill requirement; and
- Requests that the test-out option is still made available for students while these discussions continue; and
- Recommends that the test-out option be better publicized to all students in an attempt to reach more students across campus who are capable of testing out of the speech Essential Skill requirement.

THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT DIRECTS THAT,

Additional copies of this resolution be disseminated to President Sue Thomas; Truman State University Board of Governors; Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Janet Gooch; Executive Secretary to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, DeeDee Moore; Vice President of Student Affairs, Lou Ann Gilchrist; Undergraduate Council Executive Committee; each current member of the Truman State University Undergraduate Council; Communication Department Chair, Dr. Jay Self; Center for Academic Excellence Director, Jack Holcomb; Truman Media Network; and the University Archives.