



### **Student Government Resolution 118.008**

## **A Resolution in Support of Delaying the Implementation of the Dialogues Curriculum until the Fall of 2020**

**Sponsored by Deanna Schmidt, Vice-President of the Student Government; Katie Alexander, Academic Affairs Committee Chair; Maddie Meyer, Academic Affairs Committee Member; Sam Tillman, Secretary**

### 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 Undergraduate Council and Faculty Senate passed the Dialogues curriculum in November of 2018<sup>1</sup>; and
- The Dialogues curriculum introduces many complex components, including:
  - The Social Perspective, STEM Perspective, and Humanities and Aesthetic Perspective to replace the current curriculum's "Modes of Inquiry"; and
  - A Communication Skills perspective; and
  - The Health & Wellness perspective; and
  - A one-credit hour experience for freshman students known as the Symposium; and
  - A three-credit hour introductory course for freshman students known as the Self and Society Seminar; and
- The Social Perspective, STEM Perspective, and Humanities and Aesthetic Perspective committees were charged and staffed this September to formulate curriculum replacing the current curriculum's Modes of Inquiry; and
- Each committee is required to present its work by January of 2019; and
- This abbreviated timeline may impact the success of their charges; and
- Student representatives on the Humanities and Aesthetic Perspective committee report that the committee met for the first time on November 30; and
- The Freshman Symposium pilot course has experienced several major obstacles, including:

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<sup>1</sup> <http://wp-internal.truman.edu/provost/files/2015/01/DRAFT-Minutes-NOV-2017-1.pdf>

- A course enrollment decrease of 41%<sup>2</sup>; and
- Negative feedback from the Student Advisors who have been facilitating the group discussion element of the Symposium<sup>3</sup>; and
- The feedback from students who were enrolled in the Symposium will not be available until the spring of 2019; and
- Based on the feedback from faculty and Student Advisors, the Symposium will undergo substantial modifications prior to its implementation in the fall of 2019; and
- It is likely that student feedback, once available, will inspire more changes in the Symposium programming and implementation; and
- Because the full implementation of the Symposium is set for the upcoming fall, it is impossible to facilitate a second trial of the experience; and
- After redesigning many aspects of the program, proceeding without another trial may result in an experience for the incoming freshmen which does not maximize the full potential of the Symposium; and
- Another major component of the Dialogues curriculum is the Self and Society Seminar, a three-credit hour experience for all incoming students “that serves to facilitate bonding, establish common definitions and expectations, explore the relationship between the individual and society, and improve intellectual skills including critical thinking, problem-solving, writing, speaking, working in teams, and digital literacy”;<sup>4</sup> and
- The Self and Society seminar, unlike the freshman Symposium, did not undergo a pilot experience this fall; and
- The need for substantial modifications to the Symposium was recognized only after the program underwent a pilot experience; and
- Similarly, the Self and Society seminar may also benefit from a pilot experience; and
- If the curriculum is truly to be implemented on time (by the fall of 2019), the quality of the new curriculum risks being compromised due to inadequate amount of time to properly discuss the details and collect feedback from interested parties; and
- The Dialogues curriculum will set the tone for students’ academic experience at Truman; and
- Implementing a curriculum that may benefit from more time and consideration in faculty governance could drastically and negatively impact incoming students’ initial experiences at Truman; and
- Truman’s freshman retention rate may drop if freshmen students are unsatisfied with the Dialogues curriculum; and
- Truman State University is not under immediate pressure from the state to implement a new curriculum to adhere to the Core 42; and
- The Undergraduate Council voted not to delay the Dialogues on November 8, 2018;

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<sup>2</sup> <http://tmn.truman.edu/blog/news/campus/freshmen-drop-pilot-seminar/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1IWUOtX1IrrqnA-uhPEacJag-S0D9KJFtOV9fi-5e1Bc/edit>

<sup>4</sup> <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Q0maeRXKIDYTYsgqBbRFNkKDqRa6X-o-kK3s9vYYLa0/edit> (“A Proposal for a Self and Society Seminar,” passed by Faculty Senate in November 2018)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT,

- Commends the members of Undergraduate Council, Faculty Senate, and the Truman State University administration for the significant progress made towards the Dialogues curriculum; and
- Supports the continued effort towards the implementation of the Dialogues; and
- Respectfully voices its concern that the curriculum needs another year of preparation before being ready to implement; and
- Supports delaying the implementation of the Dialogues curriculum until the fall of 2020, in order to ensure that the curriculum is fully developed for the incoming freshman class.

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; Chair of the Undergraduate Council, Justin Jarvis; Chair of Faculty Senate, Scott Alberts; Truman Media Network; and the University Archives.

Passed 9-1-2, 12/9/18



President of the Student Association, Keaton Leppanen