



Student Government Resolution 119.018

A Resolution Encouraging More Frequent and Direct Communication with Students in Response to the COVID-19 Outbreak and Related Student Concerns

Sponsored by Deanna Schmidt and Katie Alexander, President and Vice President of the Student Association; Rachel Holt, Treasurer; Alek Nikitow, Secretary; Adam Barker, Chair of the Health, Wellness, and Safety Committee; and Shania Montúfar, Diversity Committee Chair

WHEREAS,

- The Student Government is the official governing body of the Student Association and exists to represent the present and long term best interest of the Student Association in the formulation of the University policy and in the fulfillment of the University mission; and
- Following the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in the state of Missouri on March 7, universities across the state have suspended in-person classes; and
- Truman State University has suspended in-person classes for the week of March 16-20 to “give students, faculty and staff who traveled time to self-evaluate and assess their probability of exposure,” and to “afford University leadership and academic departments the opportunity to explore a plan to complete the semester through alternative instructional methods should the need arise;” and
- Regional universities have taken measures to slow the spread of COVID-19, notably the decision of the University of Missouri system to move the remainder of the semester online; and
- Truman students have many anxieties and fears regarding their education and their lives in Kirksville for the spring semester; and
- Truman administrators face difficult decisions balancing the health risks of COVID-19 with the educational mission of the university;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT,

- Thanks university administration and COVID-19 response team for their leadership through unexpected changes; and
- Commends university faculty and staff for their perseverance in providing students with a Truman education; and
- Supports the decision of the university to move courses online for the week following spring break, in order for students to assess their health and for the university to prepare for a worst-case scenario; and
- Thanks Residence Life for accommodating students with extenuating circumstances that necessitate returning to their on-campus housing; and

- Thanks the university for allowing students who rely heavily on meal plans to access the Ryle Hall Dining Center during scheduled meal times; and
- Recognizes the limited ability of the Student Government to issue recommendations concerning the health of the campus and broader community, as well as strategies for limiting the spread of COVID-19; and
- Respectfully requests that administration seek the student perspective in decision-making as the situation allows; and
- Encourages the administration to communicate decisions made regarding the University's response to COVID-19 more frequently to students so as to reduce students' anxiety about limited information as much as possible, perhaps through more frequent emails or text TruAlerts; and
- As part of these communications, encourages the administration to include clear suggestions for topics of interest to students, including social distancing, online learning, and health resources; and
- Volunteers the Student Government to help compile these resources to help be involved in these efforts; and
- Respectfully reminds the COVID-19 Response Team to remember that while changes to the spring semester may be necessary to protect the health of students and the broader community, students may experience the following challenges:
 - Concern for personal health and the wellbeing of friends, relatives, and members of the Kirksville community; and
 - Inability to adequately participate in their coursework, especially in majors that depend upon on-campus instruction; and
 - Impediments to students' future studies, as they may not receive adequate instruction in prerequisite courses; and
 - Lack of accessibility in online course materials, in particular for students who require additional resources for such courses; and
 - Inability to access reliable internet access or technology in order to complete classwork; and
 - Loss of co-curricular and extracurricular experiences that give students a competitive edge in graduate school applications and career opportunities; and
 - Feelings of social isolation for students who have a home and a community at Truman; and
 - Lack of stable housing for many students who depend on on-campus housing, including first generation, low income, and international students; and
 - Severe financial repercussions for students who depend upon their on-campus position to pay their living expenses, and those who paid for on-campus housing and meal plans and are now unable to use them; and
- Urges the administration to act in their best judgement regarding the balance of health concerns with the continuance of students' on-campus education.

THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT DIRECTS THAT:

Additional copies of this resolution be disseminated to President Dr. Sue Thomas; Vice President of Academic Affairs/Provost Dr. Janet Gooch; Vice President of Student Affairs Janna Stoskopf;

Residence Life; Student Health Center; Department of Public Safety; Truman Media Network,
and the University Archives.

Passed by Unanimous Consent, March 15, 2020.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Deanna Schmidt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'D'.

Deanna Schmidt, President of the Student Association.