



Student Government Resolution 120.002

A Resolution Endorsing the Proposed “Bill on Temporary Attendance Policy” for the Fall 2020 Semester;

Sponsored by Katie Alexander, President of the Student Association; Josh German, Vice President of the Student Association; Adam Barker, Health, Wellness, and Safety Committee Co-Chair; Tori Woods, Health, Wellness, and Safety Committee Co-Chair; and Caroline Lesch and Richard Parks, Members of the COVID-19 Response Team Ad Hoc Committee

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 University policy and in the fulfillment of the University mission; and
- In a proposed bill¹ to be brought before Undergraduate Council on July 9, 2020, Truman State University faculty are seeking to “implement a temporary revision of our existing attendance policy² to be in effect during the fall semester of 2020,” and;
- The purpose of this bill is to limit the spread of COVID-19 among students, faculty, and staff by revising the University’s attendance policy to be in line with recommendations from the CDC; and
- The CDC is encouraging institutions of higher learning to “examine and revise policies for excused absences and virtual learning” and states that these policies “should be flexible, not be punitive..., should allow sick...students to stay home and away from others” and “should also account for...students who need to stay home with their children if there are school or childcare closures, or to care for sick family members.”³; and
- In seeking to follow these recommendations, Undergraduate Council has drafted a bill revising the University Attendance Policy as follows:

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<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1h63xd5iDsVodyzbCMm7VanlxMkqAUPtbnqBg7lxXso0/edit?usp=sharing>

² http://catalog.truman.edu/content.php?catoid=14&navoid=691#Attendance_Policy

³ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/considerations.html>

- “No student having a sanctioned absence shall be penalized for such absence on account solely of being absent. Nothing in this policy is intended to excuse a student from the responsibility to make up missed work within a reasonable length of time.
- No faculty member will require documentation in support of a health-related absence.
- Nevertheless, students are strongly encouraged to attend required in-person class meetings when they can (i.e., they show no signs of illness and have no other sanctioned reason to be absent).
- Though, in general, no part of a student’s final semester grade should be calculated based on in-person attendance, courses for which in-person interactions are necessary to achieve the learning outcomes of the course (such as courses with a significant laboratory or performance component) may require in-person attendance at some of those course elements not to exceed 50%. In extreme COVID-related circumstances where a student cannot meet even this expectation, the faculty member is advised to issue a grade of incomplete and require the student to fulfill the in-person requirement in a future semester.
- The course’s policy must be in the syllabus and communicated with students by the first day of class.
- Courses with field or clinical placements may defer to the attendance policy of the cooperating agencies;” and
- Removing penalties from any absence, with limited exceptions, will provide the flexibility recommended by the CDC that is necessary to ensure sick students will not risk spreading COVID-19 to others by attending class; and
- Flexibility with attendance is a necessary step in these uncertain times to create a safe environment for students, faculty, and staff as we plan to resume in-person classes in the fall semester of 2020;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT,

- Commends all University administration and faculty who contributed to the proposed bill; and
- Requests that administration and faculty continue to support flexible policies as necessary to maintain academic success and community health; and
- Endorses the proposed “Bill on Temporary Attendance Policy” that will be considered by Undergraduate Council on July 9, 2020.

THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT OF TRUMAN STATE 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; Faculty Senate; The Undergraduate Council; Truman Media Network; and the University Archives.

Passed 11-0, July 8, 2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Alexander". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Katie Alexander, President of the Student Association