ASG Senate Resolution 1

Author(s): Chair of Senate Gabrielle Gies, Director of Academics Hailey Hoog, Senator Ky Mengler, Senator Jackson Terrell, Senator Lillian Taylor, Senator Henry Holtkamp, Director of Policy Cael Losenegger

Sponsor(s): Senator Abigail Lindsey, Senator Mary Eichenberger

A Resolution to Support the Development of a University Holiday on Election Day

Whereas, one of the most important rights and civic duties in the United States of America is the right to vote; and

Whereas, politics have a direct impact on student life, including but not limited to issues of education material regulation, federal aid and loans, food and housing, healthcare access, research funding, and post-graduate job availability and pay; and

Whereas, Arkansas elections this year will include the offices of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, US Senator, and several US House Representatives, in addition to representatives for the state legislature; and

Whereas, unlike other states that allow for broad mail-in voting, a resident of Arkansas must be unable to attend the physical polling site on Election Day due to one of the following criteria: unavoidable absence, illness or physical disability, military-related absence of one or their dependent, or temporary residence outside the United States¹; and

Whereas, early in-person voting is not a protected right and several nearby states including Alabama and Mississippi have recently reduced or eliminated early in-person voting²; and

Whereas, according to 2022 Fall enrollment data at the University of Arkansas, 3561 students are from Washington County, 221 students are from Crawford County, 111 students are from Madison County, and 3243 students are from Benton County. Assuming all persons are registered to vote, 7136 students and 4779 faculty and staff would be eligible to vote in-person on Election Day; and

Whereas, civic duties extend beyond simple voting, including volunteering for candidates or serving as a poll worker, which require at least Election Day off; and

Whereas, Election Day is an official University holiday at the University of Kentucky, Clemson University, and University of South Carolina; and

Whereas, in Fall 2020 the Associated Student Government Senate passed “A Resolution to Expand Students’ and Faculty the Opportunity to Vote,” which supported asynchronous learning on election day to allow students and faculty better opportunity to cast their vote; and

Whereas, asynchronous classes on Election Day would allow students and faculty better opportunity to vote but will not expand staff opportunity.

Be it therefore resolved: the Associated Student Government Senate strongly supports the use of asynchronous classes on November 8th, 2022.

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5 “Upcoming Staff Holidays Include Election Day and Bonus Days,” Upcoming staff holidays include election day and bonus days | UK Human Resources (University of Kentucky), accessed August 29, 2022, https://www.uky.edu/hr/news/upcoming-staff-holidays-include-election-day-and-bonus-days.
6 Holiday schedule (Clemson University Office of Human Resources), accessed September 25, 2022, https://www.clemson.edu/human-resources/benefits/holiday.html.
Be it further resolved: the Associated Student Government supports the creation of a University Holiday on future Election Days in order to expand student, faculty, and staff voting and civic engagement opportunities. The authors of this legislation and their predecessors will work with Faculty Senate and administration to accomplish this goal over the next two years.

Be it finally resolved: a copy of this resolution be sent to Interim Chancellor Charles Robinson, Interim Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Harwood-Rom, Interim Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Terry Martin, Staff Senate, and Faculty Senate.

Amendments: ________________________________

Vote Count: Aye 45 Nay 0 Abstentions 0

Legislation Status: Passed Failed Other

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Gabrielle Gies, ASG Chair of the Senate Date

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Lauren Loften, ASG President Date