



The Student Senate

Texas A&M University

S.B. 71-14

**The Student Senate
71st Session
Texas A&M University**

Introduced By: Jacob Powell, Academic Affairs Chair, College of Engineering Caucus
Mathew Walther, Finance Chair, Mays Business School Caucus

Sponsored By: Mitch Parker, Speaker of the Senate, College of Engineering
Tate Banks, Speaker Pro-Tempore, Off-Campus Caucus
Karina Wilson, Rules and Regulations Chair, CEHD Caucus
Ashali Chimata, Student Services Chair, College of Liberal Arts Caucus
Colton Mandel, Constituency Affairs Chair, Off-Campus Caucus
Eric Mendoza, Legislative Affairs Chair, Off-Campus Caucus
Gilberto Reboloso, Community Relations Chair, Off-Campus Caucus
Adel Quntar, Diversity & Inclusion Chair, College of Engineering Caucus
Olivia Krog, Off-Campus Caucus
Breina DeGrate, College of Education and Human Development Caucus
Virginia Krog, Mays Business School Caucus
Caroline Moore, Off-Campus Caucus
Julio Maldonado, On-Campus Caucus
Perla Lopez, College of Liberal Arts Caucus
Jackson Maples, Corps of Cadets Caucus

Action Taken



Certified By:

Mitch Parker
Speaker of the Senate

Duly Approved:

Amy Sharp
Student Body President

The Rewriting of S.R. 7 Bill

“A bill supporting the inclusion of job interviews, immigration proceedings, and research events as university excused absences”

Whereas(1): The Student Government Association Senate is tasked with improving the welfare of the student body; and,



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Speaker of the Senate

Whereas(2): Job interviews¹ are necessary to acquire post-graduation employment and pre-graduation internships; and,

Whereas(3): Immigration proceedings¹ are often unable to be rescheduled without detriment to the applicant; and,

Whereas(4): The mission of Texas A&M involves furthering, promoting, and sharing research, often at conferences¹ where travel is necessary

Whereas(5): No current unitary system is in place to ensure that students can receive an excused absence to attend any of the aforementioned¹ events.

Therefore

Let it be

Enacted(1): That **Student Rule 7** be amended to read:

Introduction

Class attendance and participation is an individual student responsibility. Students taking traditional face-to-face courses are expected to attend class and to complete all assignments by stated due dates. Students enrolled in distance education courses are expected to regularly engage with instructional materials and complete all assignments by stated due dates. Instructors are expected to provide notice of the dates on which major exams will be given and assignments will be due on the course syllabus, which must be made available by the first class period. Graduate and professional students are also expected to attend all examinations required by departments or advisory committees as formally scheduled such as, but not limited to, qualifying exams, preliminary exams and final defenses.

The School of Law requires regular and punctual attendance of students in all courses. Juris Doctorate (JD) students are not required to seek an excused absence from an instructor or equivalent, but students will be administratively dropped from a class for excessive absences as defined in the School of Law Academic Standards. JD students are expected to take examinations as scheduled. Requests to reschedule an examination must be submitted to the



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Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in accordance with the process set forth in the School of Law Academic Standards.

Students who are requesting an excused absence are expected to adhere to the Aggie Honor Code and Student Conduct Code (See Rule 24).

7.1 Notification of Absence

7.1.1 Except in the case of the observance of a religious holy day, to be considered for an excused absence the student must notify the instructor in writing (e-mail message is acceptable) prior to the date of absence if such notification is feasible. In cases where advance notification is not feasible, the student must provide notification by the end of the second business day after the last date of the absence. This notification should include an explanation of why notice could not be sent prior to the date of absence. This notification must also comply with Section 7.2.2 below if applicable.

7.2 Absence Documentation and Verification

7.2.1 If required as described in Section 7.3 or in the course syllabus, the student is responsible for providing documentation that is satisfactory to the instructor substantiating the reason for the absence within 5 business days of the last date of the absence.

7.2.2 If required as described in Section 7.4 or in the course syllabus, the student shall apply for an excused absence with the college dean or dean designee as soon as possible but no later than 48 business hours after learning of the reason for the proposed absence. The student is responsible for providing documentation that is satisfactory to the dean or dean designee substantiating the reason for absence. The student shall inform the course instructor as soon as possible but no later than 48 business hours after receiving approval from the dean or dean designee

7.2.3 As described in Student Rule 24.4.1., a student furnishing false information to a university official is subject to conduct sanctions as outlined in Student Rule 27.

7.2.4 Absence documentation may include, but is not limited to, the following:

7.2.4.1 A medical confirmation note from the student's medical provider. The medical professional can provide a medical confirmation note only if medical professionals are involved in the medical care of the student. The medical confirmation note must contain the date and time of the medical assessment and the date at which the student may return to classes. Students cannot be required to provide detailed medical information.



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Mitchell Parker

Speaker of the Senate

7.2.4.2 A medical confirmation note from the medical provider involved in the care of the student's immediate family member or dependent. The medical professional can provide a medical confirmation note only if medical professionals are involved in the medical care of the immediate family member or dependent. Students cannot be required to provide detailed medical information.

7.2.4.3 Death notice, obituary, or death certificate for a student's immediate family member.

7.2.4.4 Documentation regarding the scheduling of legal proceedings, immigration hearings, administrative procedures, or mandatory interviews for employment, internships, or professional or graduate school.

7.2.4.4.1 Documentation for 7.2.4.4 must include confirmation that the reason for absence cannot be rescheduled without detriment to the student

7.2.4.5 Documentation regarding the scheduling of presentations of research, scholarship, or creative work at a professional conference. Documentation for professional conference presentations must include confirmation of the student's role as a presenter.

7.2.4.6 The university authorized activity list, on-line interfaith calendars, athletic competition schedules, and other published resources may be used to confirm student absences.

7.3 Absences Excused by Course Instructors

7.3.1 Excused Absences Defined by State and Federal Regulations

7.3.1.1 In accordance with Texas Education Code Section 51.911 Religious Holy Days, Texas A&M University shall excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. An instructor may appropriately respond if the student fails to satisfactorily complete the assignment or examination within a reasonable time after the absence. Questions about religious holy days should be directed to the Dean of Faculties.

7.3.1.2 In accordance with Texas Education Code Section 51.9111 Excused Absence for Active Military Service, Texas A&M University shall excuse a student from attending classes or engaging in other required activities, including examinations, in order for the student to participate in active military service to which the student is called, including travel associated with the service. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to complete an assignment or



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take an examination from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. An instructor may appropriately respond if the student fails to satisfactorily complete the assignment or examination within a reasonable time after the absence.

7.3.1.3 In accordance with Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Texas A&M University shall treat pregnancy (childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy and recovery there from) and related conditions as a justification for an excused absence for so long a period of time as is deemed medically necessary by the student's physician. Requests for excused absence related to pregnancy should be directed to the instructor; questions about Title IX should be directed to the University Title IX Coordinator.

7.3.2 Excused Absences Defined by Texas A&M University (Muster¹)

7.3.2.1 Participation in an activity appearing on the university authorized activity list. (see List of Authorized and Sponsored Activities)

7.3.2.2 Injury or Illness that is too severe or contagious for the student to attend class.

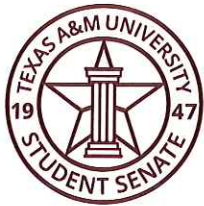
7.3.2.2.1 Injury or illness of three or more days. For injury or illness that requires a student to be absent from classes for three or more consecutive days (to include classes on Saturday), the student should obtain documentation as described in Section 7.2.

7.3.2.2.2 Injury or illness less than three days.

7.3.2.2.2.1 For injury or illness that requires a student to be absent from a laboratory, due date for a major assignment, or major exam noted on the course syllabus (to include classes on Saturday), the student must obtain documentation as described in Section 7.2.

7.3.2.2.2.2 At the discretion of the instructor or academic department standard, instructors may require documentation confirming student injury or illness that is serious enough for a student to be absent from class for a period less than three consecutive days (to include classes on Saturday) as described in Section 7.2. Any requirement for documentation confirming student injury or illness of less than three consecutive days must be included in the course syllabus. If the course syllabus does not include requirements for documentation, no documentation is required for injury of illness less than three days.

7.3.2.3 Death or major illness in a student's immediate family. Immediate family may include: parents, siblings, grandparents, spouse, child, spouse's child, spouse's parents, spouse's grandparents, step-parents, step-siblings, step-grandparents, grandchild, step-grandchild,



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legal guardian, and others as deemed appropriate by faculty member or student's academic dean or designee.

7.3.2.4 Illness of a dependent family member.

7.3.2.5 Mandatory participation as a student-athlete in NCAA-sanctioned competition.

7.3.3 Instructors may excuse a student from attending class on the day of a graded activity or when attendance contributes to a student's grade, for the reasons stated in Section 7.3, or other reasons deemed appropriate by the student's instructor.

7.3.4 An instructor may excuse an absence mentioned in Section 7.4 below without requiring the student to follow procedures outlined Section in 7.2.2 and Section 7.4. This must be agreed upon by the instructor and the student in writing (email message is acceptable). The student would still be required to follow 7.2.1 in this instance.

7.4 Absences Excused by College Dean

7.4.1 The dean of the college where the student's academic program is housed may approve excused absences for other compelling reasons, not mentioned in Section 7.3, that are consistent with the educational mission of the university.

7.4.2 Among the reason absences may be excused by the dean under Section 7.4 are the following:

7.4.2.1 Participation in legal proceedings, immigration hearings, or administrative procedures that require a student's presence and that cannot be rescheduled without detriment to the student.

7.4.2.2 Mandatory admission interviews for professional or graduate schools that cannot be rescheduled without detriment to the student.

7.4.2.3 Mandatory interviews for employment or internships, provided that such interviews are related to the student's academic program and provided that the interviews cannot be rescheduled without detriment to the student.

7.4.2.4 Presentation of research, scholarship, or creative work at a professional conference.

7.4.3 For situations covered under Section 7.4 the academic dean may provide a written letter (email message is acceptable) for the student to take to the instructor stating that the dean has verified the student's absence as excused

7.4.4 An excused absence under Section 7.4 by the dean of one college shall be recognized by all other colleges.



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7.4.5 For the purpose of Section 7.4, the term “dean” includes the dean of the college where the student’s academic program is housed and the dean designee(s), as determined by each college. The term “academic program” refers, in the case of undergraduate students, to the student’s declared or intended major on the student’s official transcript, and in the case of graduate students, to the degree program in which the student is matriculated.

7.5 Make-up Work

7.5.1 Students may be excused from attending class on the day or due date of a graded activity or when attendance contributes to a student's grade, for the reasons stated in Section 7.3 or 7.4, or other reason deemed appropriate by the student's instructor. If the absence is excused, the instructor must either provide the student an opportunity to make up any quiz, exam or other work that contributes to the final grade or provide a satisfactory alternative by a date agreed upon by the student and instructor. If an instructor has a regularly scheduled make up exam, students are expected to attend unless they have an excused absence. Students are encouraged to work with instructors to complete make-up work in advance of known scheduled absences (interviews, administrative proceedings, etc.). Make-up work must be completed in a timeframe not to exceed 30 calendar days from the last day of the initial absence. Absences related to Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 (see Section 7.3.1.3) may necessitate a period of more than 30 days for make-up work, and the timeframe for make-up work should be agreed upon by the student and instructor.

7.5.2 The instructor is under no obligation to provide an opportunity for the student to make up work missed because of an unexcused absence.

7.5.3 See Part III, Grievance Procedures: 49. Unexcused Absences, for information on appealing an instructor’s decision regarding an excused absence.

7.6 Extended Absences

7.6.1 If the student is absent for excused reasons for an unreasonable amount of time during the semester, the academic dean or designee of the student’s college may consider giving the student a grade of W during the semester enrolled or a NG (no grade) following posting of final grades.

7.6.2 Whenever a student is absent for unknown reasons for an extended period of time, the instructor may initiate a check on the welfare of the student by reporting through the head of the student’s major department to the dean or designee of the student’s college.



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1 In accordance with Faculty Senate Resolution FS.14.101 (see Faculty Senate meeting minutes of Feb. 10, 1997), "faculty members are encouraged not to hold exams on the day of Muster. Any absence from classes beginning after 5 p.m. to attend Muster will be considered a university excused absence."

Let it be

Further

Enacted(2): A copy of this bill be sent to:

Michael Young, Texas A&M University President
Dr. Daniel Pugh, Vice President of Student Affairs
Dr. Carol Fierke, Texas A&M University Provost
Dr. Anne Reber, Dean of Student Life
Dr. Sorin Sorescu, Head of the Department of Finance
Dr. Ann Kenimer, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies
Dr. Julie Harlin, Speaker of the Faculty Senate, College of Agriculture
Dr. Stefanie Harris, Academic Affairs Chair, College of Liberal Arts
Matthew Whiteacre, Budget Information Chair, College of Engineering
Dr. Tamy Frank-Cannon, Core Curriculum Co-Chair, College of Vet Med
Dale Rice, Core Curriculum Co-Chair, College of Liberal Arts
Bruce Neville, Personnel & Welfare Chair, Libraries
Karina Wilson, Rules and Regulations Chair, CEHD Caucus
The Battalion
Amy Sharp, Student Body President