



# The Student Senate

Texas A&M University

S.B. 68-32

The Student Senate  
68th Session  
Texas A&M University

**Introduced By:** Nicholas Page, Academic Affairs Committee Chair, Engineering Caucus

**Action Taken**



*By voice vote 12/1/15*

**Certified By:**

*Aaron Mitchell 1/4*  
Aaron Mitchell *12/3/15*  
Speaker of the Senate

**Duly Approved:**

*Joseph Benigno 1/6*  
Joseph Benigno  
Student Body President

## Flipped Classroom Improvement Bill

*"This bill's intent is to address current student issues with flipped classrooms both in physical structure and in teaching practice."*

- Whereas(1):** The Texas A&M Student Senate is an elected body who represents the voice of the entire student body at Texas A&M University; and
- Whereas(2):** It is well understood that there is a scientific basis for flipped classroom environments and the incorporation of hands-on elements to courses; and
- Whereas(3):** There have been concerns raised that current execution of the inversion process has had detrimental effects on the educational experience of students; and
- Whereas(4):** New classrooms designed for the flipped classroom experience such as those in the EAB A-C have fundamental flaws which detract from the ability of students to be able to pay attention and learn the course material such as: inadequate soundproofing which renders it very difficult to hear the professor even while he or she is using a microphone as loud cars or lawnmowers drive by or other external noises including thunderstorms occur, ineffective thermal insulation and climate control systems that result in uncomfortably cold and warm spots and little in-between, inappropriate viewing angles where the majority of the class cannot easily see the professor or the whiteboard, television systems which are positioned in such a way that result in large glares and bad viewing angles,



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Further Certified By:

*Aaron Mitchell '16*  
Aaron Mitchell  
Speaker of the Senate  
12/3/15

typically larger class sizes detracting from individual attention from the course instructor(s), the inability to administer exams due to seating angles, among other things; and

**Whereas(5):** Professors in these inverted classroom environments often are either not adequately trained in how to leverage these technologies in the classroom or do not see these technologies as beneficial to their curriculum or teaching style and instead revert to methods appropriate to their teaching style or the content in which their course emphasizes (particularly in math intensive courses) in order to properly instruct their students; and

**Whereas(6):** The classes being put in these flipped classrooms do not appear to be well vetted in terms of appropriateness of material for such an environment, for example, having highly theoretical mathematical and derivation based courses where it is very difficult to conceive hands-on supplements as opposed to design-based or discussion-based courses, and in these cases the very benefits of the room become the aggressor which works to inhibit learning; and

**Therefore**

**Let it be**

**Enacted(1):** For future classroom assignments to EAB A-C and other 'flipped classrooms', that the professors of said courses be informed and spoken to beforehand regarding appropriateness of the course for such a room, and if they will take advantage of the benefits it *can* but does not necessarily provide *before* being assigned to such a room; and

**Let it be**

**Further**

**Enacted(2):** For courses which are trying to be inverted, that the professor of said course must undergo a mandatory training or agree that he or she is fully capable and possesses the proper knowledge of both how to make use of the technology in the classrooms and the correct way to 'flip' the course, in regards to the scientific studies that the inverted classroom concept cites its benefits from; and



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Aaron Mitchell  
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**Let it be**

**Further**

**Enacted(3):** For all inverted classrooms or courses being taught in rooms which are meant for such (EAB A-C, etc.), that there be a question added to course evaluations or some other kind of highly recommended per semester survey which gauges student opinion of both the room itself and the inversion process in at least a holistic sense, in order for Texas A&M Academic Affairs to be able to empirically validate the data from the studies it is basing the adoption and expansion of the flipped classroom concept from, firsthand, from Texas A&M students; and

**Let it be**

**Further**

**Enacted(4):** Should the flipped classroom concept be found to not be creating the optimal learning and teaching environment, and to not be working in the students and professors best interest to that end; that future classroom renovation and expansion plans shall reflect these results by limiting the number of new 'flipped' classroom layouts being created through these plans to only the true, non-arbitrary, need for it, judged by the expansion of the particular courses which showed significant favor towards these rooms from the aforementioned survey process.

**Let it be**

**Further**

**Enacted(5):** This legislation, upon passage, should be sent to the following administrators:

Michael K. Young – President of Texas A&M University  
Dr. Karan L. Watson – Provost and Executive Vice President  
Dr. Guy Battle – Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee Chair  
Dr. Ann L. Kenimer – Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies  
Dr. Katherine Banks – Vice Chancellor for Engineering for The Texas A&M University System and Dean of The College of Engineering