



The Student Senate

Texas A&M University

S.B. 68-42

The Student Senate
68th Session
Texas A&M University

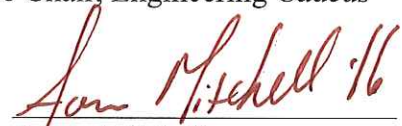
Introduced By: Tyler Bryant, Engineering Student
Nicholas Page, Academic Affairs Committee Chair, Engineering Caucus

Action Taken

PASSED

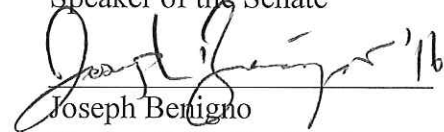
By unanimous vote 2/10/16

Certified By:



Aaron Mitchell
Speaker of the Senate

Duly Approved:



Joseph Benigno
Student Body President

Academic Transparency Bill

"A bill requesting an addition to the Texas A&M University Student Rules which requires that a student's grades, other than the final grade, be made visible to them within a timely manner."

- Whereas(1):** Keeping track of assignments and grades for individual students, whose numbers go potentially into the hundreds for a single class, and across multiple exchanging of hands between teaching assistants, graders, course instructors, students, etc. can be a difficult and error-prone process; and
- Whereas(2):** Final grades are immensely important this day in age for any number of reasons, including but not limited to the following: getting accepted into your major of choice, meeting a GPA cutoff for a job, applying to graduate school, etc.; and often times even a single assignment can make the difference between a full grade letter; and
- Whereas(3):** Many times, students have no idea of their cumulative grade until it is posted shortly after final examinations due to lack of receiving graded assignments back from the course instructor or the course instructor not utilizing an online gradebook where the student can view their progress. This can result in a student not even realizing their grade is ever incorrect without seeing, for example, a zero incorrectly being placed for an assignment they received a non-zero grade on purely by accident on the part of the one entering grades; and



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Whereas(4): By the time of final grade posting, the student or professor is often out of College Station for reasons related to vacation, family, job, etc. and with FERPA rules as cited by the Office of the Registrar stating that:

*“There is **no guarantee of confidentiality** when sending grades via email or the Internet. The institution would be held responsible if an unauthorized third party gained access, in any manner, to a student's education record through any electronic transmission method.”*

It becomes very difficult to have a meaningful conversation, sometimes until as late as the beginning of the following semester; and

Whereas(5): With Texas A&M Student Rule Part III: Student Grievance Procedures, Section 57.6.2 stating the following:

“Deadlines-Disputes Over Final Grades. The student must initiate a preliminary resolution procedure within ten (10) university business days of the day final grades are posted for the semester or summer session in which the disputed grade was earned.”

There are obvious timelines which must be observed in order to retain your right to file a grievance; and

Whereas(6): Often times course instructors may be hesitant to set up an individual meeting with every student in their class (or vice-versa) after final grades are posted in order to review their individual grades throughout the entirety of the course and compare them with the graded assignments/records to ensure accuracy; and

Whereas(7): The existing eCampus system has an online gradebook that allows students to view their grades if the professor chooses to utilize this tool. This enables students to catch the discrepancies, whether arbitrary and capricious or simply accidental, which could drastically affect their overall GPA over the course of four or more years.



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Therefore

Let it be

Enacted(1): That Student Rule Part I: Academic Rules, Section 10.16 be modified as follows: “10.16 At the close of each semester, a final report of the student’s semester grades, including a log of the individual grades earned through the course which apply to the ‘grading rule’ mentioned in Section 10.1, will be made available to the student at <http://howdy.tamu.edu>. Students may create a parent password which enables parents or guardians to access grade information.”; and

Let it be

Further

Enacted(2): That Student Rule Part I: Academic Rules, Section 10.15 be modified as follows: “10.15 Near the middle of the fall and spring semesters, a preliminary report, showing the current progress of all undergraduate students ~~who have completed less than 30 semester credit hours of course work~~ at Texas A&M University, will be made available. Preliminary grades are not recorded on the student’s permanent record.”

Let it be

Further

Enacted(3): This legislation, upon passage, should be sent to the following administrators:

Dr. Guy Battle - Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee Chair
Dr. Dave Parrott – Faculty Senate Rules and Regulations Committee Chair,
Executive Associate Vice President and Chief of Staff for Student Affairs
Dr. Ann L. Kenimer – Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies
Dr. Karan Watson – Provost and Executive Vice President