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SB70-19/20: Resolution Urging the University of Montana to Create the Position of "Director of Student Employment"

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1 **The Associated Students of the University of Montana**
2 **Resolution Urging the University of Montana to Create the Position of “Director of Student**
3 **Employment”**

4 **April 3, 2020**

5 **SB70-19/20**

6 **Authored by: Abbigail Belcher, ASUM President**
7

8 Whereas, The Associated Students of the University of Montana (ASUM) represents the interests
9 of all students at the University of Montana (UM);

10
11 Whereas, Student employees are a unique population of students at UM who have needs that
12 differ from other employees and students;

13
14 Whereas, Student employees are a vital piece of the operations of the UM campus, and without
15 student employees UM would be forced to turn to more expensive labor and suffer reduced labor
16 resources;

17
18 Whereas, Although ASUM is willing and able to represent the interests of this population of
19 students, in the interest of privacy, it is inappropriate to expect students to address specific and
20 unique personnel concerns between students and their supervisor;

21
22 ~~Whereas, Many student employees have had their hours reduced or have been laid off from their~~
23 ~~positions as a result of COVID-19 at UM;~~

24
25 Whereas, The guidance that student employees have received concerning their status at UM
26 during the COVID-19 crisis can be reduced to individual conversations with their supervisor;
27 Whereas, Even the most well-meaning supervisors can provide incorrect information to students
28 and make misguided decisions regarding hour reductions and layoffs for student employees;

29
30 Whereas, Staff and faculty at UM are protected by a union, but student employees have little to
31 no bargaining power on campus;

32
33 Whereas, In times of crisis, student employees and their supervisors deserve the ability to fall
34 back on consistent policy regarding the status of student employees;

35
36 Whereas, Existing policies concerning student employees are largely derived from state and
37 federal regulations and do not grant student employees rights, but rather outline the ways in
38 which they don't have rights;

39
40 Whereas, Current policy states that student employees cannot access benefits (health insurance
41 and unemployment) or work full time, and may be terminated at any time;

42
43 Whereas, ASUM recognizes the time and effort all UM affiliates are spending to address
44 concerns related to COVID-19, but also must acknowledge that it took far too long for student
45 employee concerns to be addressed in the limited ways they can be under current policy;

46 Whereas, Student employees have approached ASUM Executives prior to COVID-19 with
47 concerns about their workplace;

48
49 Whereas, Many of these students have wished to remain anonymous for fear of retaliation, and
50 thus ASUM's ability to advocate has been stunted;

51
52 Whereas, ASUM understands that the Human Resources Services office takes responsibility for
53 student employees, but also can clearly see the limited bandwidth of the office both prior and
54 during COVID-19;

55
56 Whereas, Student employment is a complex topic that requires confidentiality, sensitivity, and
57 expertise to fully understand;

58
59 Whereas, Student employees deserve an advocate that has both the time and understanding to
60 help them navigate their needs on campus;

61
62 Therefore, Let It Be Resolved, That when able, the University of Montana Human Resource
63 Services office hire a Director of Student Employment who would be responsible for regularly
64 meeting with students to address questions about student employment, providing advice and
65 mediation for conflicts between supervisors and student employees, keeping supervisors updated
66 about policies and best practices concerning student employees, understanding policy related to
67 student employees and using such knowledge to find unique solutions for student concerns, and
68 distributing guidelines for student employees and supervisors in a timely manner during times of
69 crisis;

70
71 Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, That this person work closely with the Financial Aid
72 Office and the office of Experiential Learning and Career Services;

73
74 Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, That this resolution be forwarded to: Terri Phillips,
75 ~~Associate Vice President of Operations and Finance; Paul Lasiter, Vice President of Operations~~
76 and Finance; Emily Williamson, Director of Financial Aid; Andrea Vernon, Director of
77 Experiential Learning and Career Services, and Seth Bodnar, President of the University of
78 Montana.

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80
81 Passed by Committee: _____, 2020

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83 Passed by ASUM Senate: April 8 _____, 2020

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87 _____
88 Noah Durnell,
89 Chair of the Relations and Affairs Committee

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87 _____
88 Ethan Hanley,
89 Chair of the Senate

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91 Passed by ASUM Senate: 20Y, 0N, 0A