SB91-12/13: University of Montana Health and Human Performance Policy

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The Associated Students of The University of Montana  
Resolution Regarding University of Montana Health and Human Performance Policy  
May 1, 2013  
SB91-12/13  
Authored by: Mike Hopkins, ASUM Senator  
Sponsored by: Chase Ellinger, ASUM Senator

Whereas, The University of Montana should promote student rights, including the right of students to practice the religion of their choosing;

Whereas, students at The University of Montana sometimes must be absent from class in order to observe religious holidays and/or practices;

Whereas, in the majority of cases, faculty and the administration understand this periodic time conflict and help students in these situations by excusing absences or providing the student with an opportunity to make up the missed class period(s);

Whereas, current Health and Human Performance (HHP) policy states that students have a total of six possible unexcused absences they can accrue throughout a semester and still receive credit for the course, but upon their seventh absence the student will lose credit for the course;

Whereas, according to HHP policy a student who has accrued seven absences may petition the director of the HHP department to extend the total number of allowed absences in order to regain credit for the course;

Whereas, having the total number of unexcused absences extended has the exact same effect as having missed class periods excused;

Whereas, HHP policy allows for the total number of absences to be extended but contains no policy outline regarding the determination of which specific situations will warrant the extension, making for an arbitrary decision making process;

Whereas, The Associated Students of The University of Montana (ASUM) categorically rejects the notion that allowing absences to be extended for religious observances would be considered unfair towards other students who may or may not be religious;

Therefore, Let It Be Resolved, that ASUM urges HHP to change and allow for a religious exemption to its unexcused absence policy according to the Equal Opportunity Offices reasonable accommodation guidelines;

Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, that ASUM pledges to work with Director of the Activity Class Program Chris Riley, HHP Department Chair Scott Richter and the HHP Department to work with ASUM to address problems with the unexcused absence policy;
Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, that a copy of this resolution be sent to Director of Accounting and Activity Class Program Chris Riley, HHP Department Chair Scott Richter and President Royce Engstrom.

Passed by Committee: _____________________________, 2013

Passed by ASUM Senate: ___________________________, 2013

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Damara Simpson,  Bryn Hagfors,
Relations and Affairs Chair  Chair of the Senate