

Associated Students of Western Washington University Student Senate Resolution for Asynchronous Learning

WHEREAS On 13 March 2020, Governor Jay Inslee issued Proclamation 20-12, which prohibits all public and private universities, colleges, etc., from conducting in-person classroom instruction and lectures,” in effect from 12:01 a.m. on 17 March, 2020 until 12:00 p.m. on 24 April, 2020; [1] and

WHEREAS On 19 March 2020, Western Washington University President Sabah Randhawa announced that “all classes and instruction will be offered remotely throughout spring quarter on our main campus, and at all centers, facilities and operations statewide;” [2] and

WHEREAS On 16 March 2020, the Imperial College COVID-19 Response Team published a report recommending that our present condition of population-wide social distancing (combined with home isolation of cases and school and university closure) be sustained for upwards of 18 months -- at least until a safe and reliable vaccine is readily accessible to the general public; [3] and

WHEREAS As of the start of spring quarter, 6 April 2020, faculty have had 12 calendar days (from Governor Inslee’s Proclamation 20-12) to at least partially adapt their courses to online teaching and learning and 12 calendar days (from President Randhawa’s March 13th Coronavirus Update) to make the full conversion; [1] [4] and

WHEREAS There is no university directive mandating that lectures, quiz sections, lab sections, seminars, etc. be accessible asynchronously; and

WHEREAS Requiring synchronous participation in lectures, quiz sections, labs, seminars, etc. disadvantages:

1. Students who do not reside within the Pacific Standard Time (PST) Zone -- namely out-of-state students and international students;
2. Students who do not have reliable and consistent access to the internet and/or the equipment needed to participate in instruction at the time that it is provided;
 - a. Students do not have access to free WiFi hotspots at local businesses or the ability to rent WiFi hotspots from Western Washington University.⁵
3. Students who are affected by COVID-19 directly. For example:
 - a. Students who are currently afflicted by COVID-19 and do not have the capacity to participate in synchronous instruction due to general symptoms or hospitalization;
 - b. Students who need to care for loved ones afflicted by COVID-19;

- c. Students whose mental health has been impacted by COVID-19;
- 4. Students whose learning styles don't necessarily translate well to online learning; those who may benefit greatly from reviewing lectures, quiz sections, labs, seminars, etc. including:
 - a. Students with learning disabilities, Dyslexia/Dysgraphia, ADHD/ADD, anxiety, and any other conditions that may impact their learning.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ASSOCIATED STUDENTS OF WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY STUDENT SENATE:

THAT, the administration issue a directive mandating asynchronous access for all online instruction, including, but not limited to: lectures, quiz sections, and lab sections; and

THAT, if the directive cannot be complied with while maintaining the integrity of a course, 1) WWU faculty instructing the course must provide adequate justification as to why through a process defined by the administration, and 2) faculty must reasonably accommodate students who do not have synchronous access to instruction for any reason; and

THAT, according to the Office of the University Registrar, “‘reasonably accommodate’ is defined as coordinating with the student on scheduling examinations or other activities necessary for completion of the program and includes rescheduling examinations or activities or offering different times for examinations or activities;” [4] and

THAT, Faculty Senate take action to instruct all professors to maintain a 67 percent minimum passing grade in the Pass/No Pass grading system for Spring Quarter 2020; [6] and

THAT, the Associated Students of Western Washington University Student Senate condemns any party or parties (courses, programs, departments, etc.) directing students to alter their course schedule because asynchronous access and/or reasonable accommodations allegedly cannot be provided; and

THAT, this resolution be forwarded to President Sabah Randhawa, Vice President Melynda Huskey, Provost and Vice President Brent Carbajal, Vice President Stephanie Bowers, Vice President Richard Van Den Hul, Vice President Donna Gibbs, Vice Provost Steven Vanderstaay, Assistant Dean Michael Sledge, WWU Board of Trustees, Director of University Residences Leonard Jones, Resident District Manager of Campus Dining Stephen Wadsworth, and all WWU Deans.

CITATIONS

[1] -

<https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/proclamations/20-12%20Coronavirus%20College%20Closure%20%28tmp%29.pdf>

[2] -

<https://westerntoday.wvu.edu/news/coronavirus-update-for-march-19-wwu-spring-quarter-entirely-online>

[3] -

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/medicine/sph/ide/gida-fellowships/Imperial-College-COVID19-NPI-modelling-16-03-2020.pdf>

[4] -

<https://westerntoday.wvu.edu/news/coronavirus-update-for-march-13-plans-for-spring-quarter>

[5] -

<https://wwuhelp.atlassian.net/servicedesk/customer/portal/1/group/1/create/172>

[6] -

<https://www.wvu.edu/spring-guide>