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Type of Action:	Internal Policy
Status/Result:	New Business

S.A. Resolution #37

Creating a More Accessible Process for Student Assembly Religious Accommodations

ABSTRACT: This resolution seeks to create a more accessible process to request an excused absence for religious reasons, or request accommodations for meetings in the event of a religious conflict.

Sponsored by: Cat Huang '21, Samuel Zverev '21, Laila Abd Elmagid '21, Carlo Castillo '22, Mardiya Shardow '23, Morgan Baker '23

Whereas, SA meetings have been held during major religious holidays, forcing SA members to choose between missing meetings or attending their religious services;

Whereas, the SA maintains its integrity when all voting members are able to attend;

Whereas, SA meeting schedules should take into account coinciding with religious holidays;

Whereas, SA and community members should never have to choose between attending SA meetings and religious services;

Whereas, The current language in the Student Assembly Charter and Bylaws to request excused absences or accommodations in case of a religious conflict is as follows:

Bylaws, lines 234-244

ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS

Section 1: Regular Meetings

Regular meeting times and places will be publicly announced at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting date.

Section 2: Special Meetings

A. The President may convene special meetings of the SA to consider issues of immediate and pressing concern. The President will also call a special meeting after being instructed to do so by six of the voting members of the SA.

B. Conflicts - If there is a major conflict that affects a significant portion of the undergraduate student body, such as a religious conflict, any member may direct the SA president to call a special meeting in lieu of the regularly scheduled meeting. The request must be made 2 weeks in advance of the regularly scheduled meeting at issue.

Charter, lines 238-250

Section 5: Absentees

Any voting members who are absent for three regularly scheduled meetings cumulatively during their term will have their position vacated. At the discretion of the Executive Committee, a member will not be counted as if they were absent for an interview for a job, graduate school, or scholarship; if they were attending a required academic event for which accommodations could not be made; if they were representing the Student Assembly in an



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45 official capacity; if they were tending to a family emergency; if they are observing a religious
46 holiday; or if they were under the care of a physician. The Executive Committee will review
47 each circumstance individually and will determine a decision within 7 days of the request.
48 Executive Committee may avert such a vacancy by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of seated voting
49 members of the Executive Committee. The vote would be conducted by secret ballot. The
50 Executive Committee should consider the reasoning for past absences, the likelihood of
51 future absences, and the representative's supplemental actions to represent their respective
52 constituency in making their decision. The same action must be taken if the Executive
53 Committee wishes to avert a vacancy whenever the three cumulative absences mark is
54 exceeded. The Director of Elections will serve as Chair for these meetings.
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56 **Be it therefore resolved**, the language in the Student Assembly Charter and Bylaws to request
57 excused absences or accommodations in case of a religious conflict be changed to:
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59 Bylaws, lines 234-244

60 ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS

61 Section 1: Regular Meetings

62 Regular meeting times and places will be publicly announced at least 72 hours prior to the
63 scheduled meeting date.

64 Section 2: Special Meetings

65 A. The President may convene special meetings of the SA to consider issues of immediate
66 and pressing concern. The President will also call a special meeting after being instructed to
67 do so by six of the voting members of the SA.

68 ~~B. Conflicts—If there is a major conflict that affects a significant portion of the
69 undergraduate student body, such as a religious conflict, any member may direct the SA
70 president to call a special meeting in lieu of the regularly scheduled meeting. The request
71 must be made 2 weeks in advance of the regularly scheduled meeting at issue.~~

72 SA meeting schedules will be constructed in such a way that SA meetings do not fall on
73 religious holidays. These schedules will be made by Executive Committee at the beginning of
74 each semester. In place of regularly scheduled meetings, special meetings will be held.”

76 Charter, lines 238-250

77 Section 5: Absentees

78 Any voting members who are absent for three regularly scheduled meetings cumulatively
79 during their term will have their position vacated. At the discretion of the Executive
80 Committee, a member will not be counted as if they were absent for an interview for a job,
81 graduate school, or scholarship; if they were attending a required academic event for which
82 accommodations could not be made; if they were representing the Student Assembly in an
83 official capacity; if they were tending to a family emergency; if they are observing a religious
84 holiday; or if they were under the care of a physician. The Executive Committee will review
85 each circumstance individually and will determine a decision within 7 days of the request.
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89 future absences, and the representative's supplemental actions to represent their respective
90 constituency in making their decision. The same action must be taken if the Executive
91 Committee wishes to avert a vacancy whenever the three cumulative absences mark is
92 exceeded. The Director of Elections will serve as Chair for these meetings.

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94 In the event that a Student Assembly member is observing a religious holiday on the day of a
95 Student Assembly meeting, and that religious holiday has not already been accommodated
96 for in the yearly Student Assembly schedule, Student Assembly members may contact the
97 Vice President of Internal Operations for an excused absence before the start of the weekly
98 meeting.

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101 **Respectfully Submitted,**

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103 Cat Huang '21

104 *President, Student Assembly*

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106 Samuel Zverev '21

107 *College Human Ecology Representative, Student Assembly*

108

109 Laila Abd Elmagid '21

110 *College of Agricultural and Life Sciences Representative, Student Assembly*

111

112 Carlo Castillo '22

113 *College of Agricultural and Life Sciences Representative, Student Assembly*

114

115 Mardiya Shardow '23

116 *Dyson School Representative, Student Assembly*

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118 *(Reviewed by: Executive Committee, 6-0-0, 03/22/2021)*