



Student Government Resolution 118.005

A Resolution in Continued Support of the Proposed Changes to the Current Course Repeat Policy

Sponsored by Katie Alexander, Academic Affairs Committee Chair; Deanna Schmidt, Vice President; Sam Tillman and Maddie Sarasio Meyer, Academic Affairs Committee Members

WHEREAS,

- The Student Government is the official governing body of the Student Association and exists to represent the present and long term best interests of the Student Association in the formulation of the University policy and in the fulfillment of the University mission; and
- Truman State University's current course repeat policy states that "if a course description indicates that the course may be repeated for credit, all attempts are counted in calculating the grade point average"¹; and
- This policy does not offer strong incentives for students to repeat a course with the goal of achieving a higher grade; and
- This policy is also not particularly forgiving for students who struggle in their first semester here at Truman, especially first generation or international students who have significant barriers to overcome at the beginning of their college experience; and
- This policy was implemented after the Truman Student Government advocated for more rigorous GPA calculation procedures in 1998²; and
- The 1998 Student Government cited various concerns in their plea to change the course repeat policy, including but not limited to the following:
 - "The current policy is not commensurate with the University's mission of being a highly selective, challenging, premier liberal arts institution; and
 - ...the current policy is not applicable at other institutions of Truman's caliber (including the Council of Public Liberal Arts College schools); and
 - ...both graduate schools and future employers show a tendency to disregard repeat policies in general, refiguring the grade point average with the retaken class' grade included"³
- After discussing the course repeat policy with students, faculty, and administration throughout the 2017-2018 school year, the Truman Student Government of 2017-2018 reevaluated these concerns and deemed them to be outdated for various reasons mentioned below⁴:

¹ http://catalog.truman.edu/content.php?catoid=13&navoid=624#Grades_and_Grade_Point_Average

² Student Senate Resolution 981.001: "Repeat Policy Change" (McCarty)

³ Ibid.

⁴ Student Senate Resolution 117.0021: "A Resolution in Support of Changing the Current Course Repeat Policy" (Cooper)

- While Truman State University is indeed a “highly selective, challenging, premier liberal arts institution,”⁵ the University’s mission as Missouri’s only public liberal arts and sciences university also encapsulates the belief that “a strong education is the best means of preparing for a life of continuing personal growth and service,”⁶ thus encouraging students to take risks, especially in the academic sphere, that could lead to personal growth as well-rounded students; and
- A more forgiving course repeat policy would encourage Truman’s students to take more risks, because students would view daunting coursework as potentially less negatively consequential towards their GPA; and
- Other institutions of Truman’s caliber, including other Council of Public Liberal Arts College schools, currently do have more encouraging course repeat policies compared to Truman’s^{7,8,9}; and
- Because graduate schools and future employers “show a tendency to disregard repeat policies in general,”¹⁰ implementing a more forgiving policy would not be to the detriment of students’ future pursuits, especially because, according to Career Readiness Coach Jenni Nuhn from Truman’s Career Center, “the choice to retake a course would demonstrate self-reflection, determination, and accountability to prospective graduate schools and employers”; and
- Political Science professor Dr. John Quinn drafted a “Resolution for changing the policy for calculating the GPA for classes that can be retaken” in the Fall 2017 semester and then presented the bill before Undergraduate Council as a discussion item; and
- Dr. Quinn’s resolution advocated for the implementation of a more forgiving course repeat policy that will only count the higher grade earned from a course in a student’s calculated GPA; and
- In the spring of 2018, Student Government passed Resolution 117.0021 to support Dr. Quinn’s resolution of a more forgiving course repeat policy; and
- In the spring of 2018, Undergraduate Council passed Dr. Quinn’s resolution; and
- Faculty Senate returned the resolution to Undergraduate Council “for revisions and clarification” following discussion surrounding concerns about “limiting the number of credit hours for this policy, clarification of repeatable topics courses, the potential financial impact to students, [student] abuse of the repeat system, and having enough seats in classes”¹¹; and
- The Student Government believes that students are unlikely to attempt the same course more than a few times for various reasons mentioned below:
 - Repeating the same course will require students to pay tuition longer than necessary to complete their degree; and

⁵ Student Senate Resolution 981.001: “Repeat Policy Change” (McCarty)

⁶ <http://www.truman.edu/about/>

⁷ Eastern Connecticut State University:

http://www.easternct.edu/academics/files/2018/02/Eastern_Catalog_2017-18.pdf

⁸ Keene State University: <https://www.keene.edu/administration/policy/detail/course-retake-policy/>

⁹ Midwestern State University: <http://catalog.mwsu.edu/content.php?catoid=7&navoid=228>

¹⁰ Student Senate Resolution 981.001: “Repeat Policy Change” (McCarty)

¹¹ Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes, May 10, 2018

- Even if each attempt will not factor into a student's GPA, each attempt will be visible to future employers on the student's transcript; and
- A student's academic advisor may not clear their student for registration if the student plans to attempt the same course for an excessive number of times; and
- Undergraduate Council, and possibly Faculty Senate, are expected to vote on the proposed resolution, and thus the future of Truman's course repeat policy, before the end of this academic year; and
- The 2018-2019 Student Government would like to voice its continued support of a more forgiving course repeat policy for the reasons listed above and those cited from Student Senate Resolution 117.0021;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT,

- Supports the implementation of a more forgiving course repeat policy; and
- Continues to support faculty's "Resolution for changing the policy for calculating the GPA for classes that can be retaken"; and
- Encourages members of Undergraduate Council and Faculty Senate to vote affirmatively for this resolution and any changes to the current course repeat policy which will result in a more forgiving policy overall, in the best interest of the student body.

THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT DIRECTS THAT,

Additional copies of this resolution be disseminated to President Sue Thomas; Truman State University Board of Governors, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Janet Gooch; Executive Secretary to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, DeeDee Moore; Vice President of Student Affairs, Janna Stoskopf; Faculty Senate Executive Committee; each current member of the Truman State University Faculty Senate; Undergraduate Council Executive Committee; each current member of the Truman State University Undergraduate Council; Truman Media Network; and the University Archives.

Passed by Unanimous Consent, 10/28/18



President of the Student Association, Keaton Leppanen