

University of Montana

ScholarWorks at University of Montana

Senate Resolutions, 2007-Present

ASUM Student Government

Spring 2-3-2021

SB59-20/21: Resolution Urging Bereavement and Crisis Leave at the University of Montana

Lyssa Ann Schei

Adrianna Medina

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/asum_resolutions

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

1 **The Associated Students of the University of Montana**
2 **Resolution Urging Bereavement and Crisis Leave at the University of Montana**
3 **February 3rd, 2021**
4 **SB59-20/21**

5 **Authored by: Lyssa Ann Schei, ASUM Senator; Adrianna Medina, ASUM Senator;**
6 **Sponsored by: Patrick James Flanagan, ASUM Vice President;**
7

8 Whereas, It is the Associated Students of the University of Montana (ASUM)'s responsibility to
9 advocate for students' success;

10
11 Whereas, Students at the University of Montana (UM) and Missoula College (MC) have been
12 negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent restrictions;

13
14 Whereas, Students who have lost a loved one or live with chronic illness are disproportionately
15 affected by the COVID-19 pandemic;

16
17 Whereas, UM currently has a Leave of Absence policy for graduate students experiencing losses
18 or other unprecedented large roadblocks in their academic success, but does not currently have a
19 similar policy for undergraduate students;

20
21 Whereas, UM struggles with retention, and students who experience large crises throughout
22 college are less likely to return to campus and/or continue their baccalaureate or post-graduate
23 education;

24
25 Whereas, Bereavement leave is not explicitly outlined in either UM's human resources policy for
26 employees or within absence and attendance policies for students;

27
28 Whereas, Currently, the only mechanism through which undergraduate students can receive
29 flexibility in attendance policies is through Disability Services for Students (DSS), which
30 requires having a registered disability, which may or may not present itself comorbidly with
31 chronic illness or death of a loved one;

32
33 Whereas, DSS's resources are overwhelmed due to the impacts of COVID-19 and increased
34 student demand as a result of the pandemic;

35
36 Whereas, Currently, an unsaid expectation within most undergraduate programs at UM is for
37 students to have less than three absences in a class, with unexcused absences often leading to a
38 deduction of grade points and possible failure;

39
40 Therefore, Let It Be Resolved, That ASUM urges that bereavement and crisis leave be
41 implemented for the remainder of the 2021 Calendar Year;

42
43 Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, That ASUM additionally urges that the three-class
44 absence limit be waived retroactively for the Fall 2020 semester for students who have
45 documented proof of legitimate ongoing crisis or loss of an immediate family member;

46

47 Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, That ASUM agrees to work with Faculty Senate upon
48 passage of this legislation to ensure the implementation of bereavement and crisis leave;

49
50 Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, That this bereavement and crisis policy read:

51
52 *In cases such as, but not limited to: death of a loved one, serious or chronic illness, debilitating*
53 *mental illness, loss of full-time employment, etc., bereavement or crisis leave may be granted to*
54 *students at the professor's discretion. Under bereavement or crisis leave, students may be granted*
55 *flexibility in class attendance and deadlines but will still be expected to meet the necessary*
56 *workload expected to pass the course. Bereavement or crisis leave will be granted with a verified*
57 *doctor's note, psychiatrist recommendation, or after the death of an immediate family member.;*

58
59 Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, That this resolution be sent to: Chris Palmer, Chair of the
60 Faculty Senate; Seth Bodnar, President of the University of Montana; Sarah Swager, Vice
61 Provost for Student Success; Nathan Lindsey, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs; Maria
62 Mangold, University of Montana Registrar.

63
64
65 Passed by Committee: _____, 2021

66
67 Passed by ASUM Senate: February 3, 2021

68
69
70
71 _____
72 Noah Durnell,
Chair of Relations and Affairs

70
71 _____
72 Patrick James Flanagan,
Chair of the Senate