

Associated Students, Inc.
California Polytechnic State University
San Luis Obispo

Resolution #20-04

RESOLUTION TO UPDATE THE CLASS ATTENDANCE POLICY TO INCLUDE
STUDENTS WITH DEPENDENTS

- WHEREAS: The ASI Board of Directors serves as the official voice of students at California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly), San Luis Obispo; and
- WHEREAS: Current Cal Poly Class Attendance Policy¹ omits mention of students with dependents, who are parents, guardians, or caregivers at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional school level²; and
- WHEREAS: The United States Government Accountability Office reveals there are nearly four million undergraduate students who are raising children, representing 22 percent of all students attending United States colleges³; and
- WHEREAS: California Education Code section 48213 stipulates that children with obvious signs of illness are not accepted into a childcare facility and are excluded from care for a minimum of 24 hours⁴; and
- WHEREAS: At Cal Poly, the Orfalea Family & ASI Children's Center Policy Handbook⁵ states teachers assess each child's wellbeing upon arrival and send sick children home⁶, creating unintended consequences for students with dependents who rely on child care providers in order to attend class; and
- WHEREAS: In California policy regarding K-12 public schools, Assembly Bill (AB) 2289⁷ states a student with dependent shall be excused from school due to an illness or medical appointment of their child, including absences to care for a sick child; and
- WHEREAS: Other institutions such as Mississippi State University have adopted explicit excused absence policies for students with dependents, excusing absences for issues regarding a student's immediate family members including a: parent, legal guardian, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, spouse or partner, as well as natural, adopted and/or in-law children⁸; and

1 "Campus Administrative Manual." Academic Senate, 1991, academicsenate.calpoly.edu/cam

2 California Student Aid Commission. Students with Dependent Children (SWD) FAQs. Csac.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/swd_frequently_asked_questions.pdf

3 United States Federal Government Accountability Office. "More Information Could Help Student Parents Access Additional Federal Student Aid." Aug. 2019, Online. <https://www.gao.gov/assets/710/701002.pdf>

4 United States. California State Education Code. Title 2. Division 4. Part 27. Chapter 2. Section 48213.

5 Associated Students Incorporated, "ASI Children's Center Policy Manual," March 2019, Online. https://www.asi.calpoly.edu/form_policies/show/129

6 University of California San Francisco, California Child Healthcare Program, "Excluding Children due to Illness," Sept. 2009, Online.

https://cchp.ucsf.edu/sites/g/files/tkssra181/f/excl_en0909.pdf

7 United States. California State Assembly. "An act to amend Section 66281.7 of, and to add Section 66061 to, the Education Code." AB 2289. Print.

8 "Class Attendance and Reporting Absences." Mississippi State University Policies, 2016, Online. www.policies.msstate.edu/policy/1209.

WHEREAS: In compliance with Title IX⁹, the California State Legislature passed AB 809 in September 2019, requiring higher education institutions to post the notification of protections for pregnant students and students with dependents on their website, emphasizing the rights of students with dependents¹⁰; and

WHEREAS: Despite evidence that nationally, students with dependents have higher grade point averages than their traditional peers, only about eight percent of students with dependents in college will obtain an associate's or bachelor's degree within six years¹¹; and

WHEREAS: While the California State University system has implemented the Graduation Initiative 2025 in an effort to increase graduation rates for all CSU students by eliminating opportunity and achievement gaps¹², current graduation rates suggest that students with dependents require additional support to succeed in college; and

WHEREAS: Cal Poly's Diversity and Inclusion Initiative states the university will recruit and maintain a diverse student body¹³; and

WHEREAS: Nationally, students with dependents constitute one-third of first-generation college students, and nearly 37% of black students are students with dependents¹⁴; hence, this issue dramatically impacts Cal Poly's Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives, yet no policy exists to bridge this achievement gap.

THEREFORE
BE IT
RESOLVED:

The ASI Board of Directors hereby urges the Cal Poly Academic Senate to revise the wording as it pertains to the class attendance policy to include the following:

Class Attendance

It is strongly urged that instructors accept the following "excusable" reasons for allowing students to make up missed work while considering implementation shall be equitable for all qualifying students:

- A. Illness with a doctor's statement*
- B. Serious illness, death, or any extenuating circumstances of close relatives (including but not limited to parents, legal guardian, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, spouse or partner, as well as natural, adopted, and/or in-law children)*

⁹ Title IX prohibits discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities

¹⁰ United States. California State Assembly. "An act to amend Section 66281.7 of, and to add Section 66061 to, the Education Code, relating to public postsecondary education." AB 809. Print.

¹¹ Wladis, Claire. Alyse C. Hachey, and Katherine Conway. "No time for college? An investigation of time poverty and parenthood." *The Journal of Higher Education* 89.6 (2018): 807-831, Online.

¹² "Graduation Initiative 2025." The California State University, Online. <https://www2.calstate.edu/csu-system/y-the-csu-matters/graduation-initiative-2025>.

¹³ "Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives – Diversity & Inclusion: Cal Poly." Diversity & Inclusion | Cal Poly, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, 2018, Online. diversity.calpoly.edu/initiatives/.

¹⁴ Institute for Women's Policy Research. "College Students with Children are Common and Face Many Challenges in Completing Higher Education." Mar. 2013, Online. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED556715.pdf>.

FURTHERMORE
BE IT

RESOLVED: This resolution will be sent to University President Jeffrey D. Armstrong, Interim Provost Mary Pedersen, Vice President for Student Affairs Keith Humphrey, Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion Jozi De Leon, Academic Senate Chair Dustin Stegner, Dean of Students Kathleen McMahon, College of Engineering Dean Amy Fleisher, College of Architecture and Environmental Design Dean Christine Theodoropoulos, College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences Dean Andy Thulin, College of Science and Mathematics Dean Dean Wendt, College of Liberal Arts Dean Philip Williams, and Orfalea College of Business Dean Scott Dawson.

Certified as the true and correct copy,
in witness thereof, I have set my hand
and Seal of the San Luis Obispo Cal
Poly Associated Students, Inc. this
_____ day of _____, 2020.

ADOPTED at the regular meeting of
the Board of Directors at San Luis
Obispo Cal Poly Associated Students,
Inc. this _____ day of _____ 2020.

Attest:

ASI Secretary

Signed:
ASI Chair of the Board

Signed:
ASI President

Authored By:

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Alan Faz, Board of Directors, College of Engineering

Tess Loarie, Board of Directors, College of Engineering

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