

RESOLUTION ON THE AVAILABILITY OF CLASS RECORDINGS IN TAMIU-FLEX COURSES

WHEREAS Spring Semester 2021 has been underway for two weeks and TAMIU faculty are involved in a wide variety of course offerings, subjects, pedagogical needs and styles, scholastic level of students, and have brought to the Faculty Senate different reasons and various needs regarding the recording of their classes and release of said recordings, this Resolution has been brought, and

WHEREAS TAMIU faculty believe they are the appropriate entity to determine to whom and when recordings of their classes should be released, and have enumerated a variety of considerations in this belief regarding this issue, including the following:

- There are solid pedagogical reasons for allowing students to view recordings of classes after the synchronous class has ended. Faculty are aware many students request and do utilize course recordings after having attended class so they may review, reinforce, and better understand the materials presented during class.
- Many students report having issues with internet quality, such as inconsistent availability and a lack of a private, designated learning space which would allow viewing their synchronous classes uninterrupted from children and other family members.
- Students find attending a class over the internet can result in issues such as difficulty in hearing/understanding the professor or other students, particularly those who have language barriers that are difficult to maneuver in person, let alone online.
- Students with children or very young siblings (as they often experience interruptions) report a desire to have recordings available so they can review them when the children are sleeping.
- Students report fear in coming to campus, not out of fear for themselves, but for their parents and extended family members who they have no choice but to be in contact with. They are acutely aware that the COVID-19 vaccine is not available to them, nor to many of their family members, and won't be for some time.
- Students, at registration, lacked enough fully online courses available to them though they would have preferred to take a class online. A review of enrollment will often show that online classes filled up first, leaving students with having to take synchronous face-to-face flex classes if they wanted to stay on track and graduate "on time."
- Students with younger siblings are finding difficulty in synchronous attendance when they must share computer equipment, bandwidth and learning space with these siblings who are attending LISD or UISD and who are required to virtually attend classes under penalty of truancy.
- Some students do not have internet availability in their homes at all and must go to other venues simply to access the internet. Some of these students lack reliable transportation to travel very far from their homes and therefore find it difficult to attend at specific synchronous times.
- Students report facing difficulties stemming from their financial, cultural, and familial situations which they believe have not been taken into consideration by the university and are unanticipated and outside the experience of TAMIU faculty and administration.

Further, these issues are not considered in the excused-absence policies of the TAMIU Student Handbook.

- Some students report the belief that they are responsible students being punished by the current policy for the decisions of other students.
- No one would argue that a student's synchronous attendance of class is not the ideal; however, under the extraordinary circumstances we are all presently living under, and most importantly the students are living under, the current policy does not adequately allow for genuine, reasonable situations which are arising in the current situation. Faculty believe it is inappropriate to impose a "one size fits all" approach to this issue.
- Faculty are finding the downloading and saving class recordings to their computers, uploading them to Echo360 and then providing them to students on an individual basis, after hearing each student's request and "excuse" is a quite cumbersome and needlessly time-consuming process. These recordings are required to process and moving them from one file to another is not an instantaneous process and can take several minutes and up to an hour in some instances.
- Faculty further believe the number of students who might take advantage of the availability of class recordings and not attend classes synchronously even though they could do so, is outweighed by those who would legitimately benefit from having said recordings available if faculty deem it appropriate.

WHEREFORE, on the 5th day of February 2021, based on the foregoing reasons and considerations, TAMIU Faculty Senate passed, with the full support of the student members present, the following resolution:

The current Flex Class policy should be and is respectfully requested to be returned to the policy that was in effect during the Fall 2020 semester. More particularly, TAMIU Faculty request that each faculty member be allowed the responsibility to make the determination as to what and how recordings of classes are released to students, and for determining what is in the best interests of their students and their own courses as to class recordings.