

**SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY  
ONE WASHINGTON SQUARE  
SAN JOSE, CA 95192**

**SS-S20-3, Sense of the Senate Resolution, On Maximum Flexibility and Support of SJSU Students During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

**Legislative History:**

At its meeting of March 23, 2020, the Academic Senate approved the following Sense of the Senate Resolution presented by Senators Parent and Kaur from the floor of the Senate.

**Sense of the Senate Resolution  
On Maximum Flexibility and Support of SJSU Students  
During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

**Resolved:** That the SJSU Academic Senate supports Provost Vincent Del Casino Jr.'s message of March 20, 2020, "Managing Teaching and Learning in Times of Disruption," which expresses the need for maximum flexibility and understanding during this sudden period of mandatory remote instruction.

**Resolved:** That the Senate reiterate the importance for all SJSU faculty to accommodate students, many of whom have had or are experiencing hardships that include, but are not limited to, stress, anxiety, depression, other mental health issues, unexpected disruptions in work schedules, financial difficulties, shifts in housing and study environments, and the ability to access adequate or regular computer equipment or internet service.

**Rationale:** In the midst of the unprecedented disruption of regular instruction in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the sudden move to mandatory remote teaching during Spring 2020, we understand that all members of the campus community are adjusting to new modalities of teaching. However, accommodations are especially needed to help students during this difficult transition.

1) Students report that some faculty, during the chaos of the recent conversion, did not hold their normal office hours. We hope that as faculty and students adjust to the new format, faculty will schedule office hours since they are especially needed to help students during this difficult transition.

2) While rapid course conversion is difficult for all, it appears to some students that not all classes have successfully converted to an online or remote teaching format or made assignments available in alternative modalities. This has led to some understandable anxiety and confusion.

3) Since the cancellation of all courses between March 10th, 2020 - March 13th, 2020, some classes now appear to feature an increased workload for students. In some cases, there are efforts to compensate for the loss of a week of instruction as well as a lack of a face-to-face, in-class experience by increasing course work, particularly where hands-on learning is expected.

4) Under the extraordinary circumstances that confront both faculty and students during a rapid conversion to online and remote teaching modalities, some students experience hardship in the face of rigid assignment and exam deadlines as well as a lack of clear communication about any altered or shifted requirements. It is hoped that both students and faculty will make every effort to stay in close contact during these difficult times.

5) Additional student concerns address a lack of appropriate accessibility options (e.g., captions, sign language interpretation) in some hastily converted courses that were not originally designed for electronic distribution. Even when students need these options, they may not be able to obtain them or do not wish to self-disclose.

6) Some students have reported that instructors have required them to come to campus to turn in course assignments or take exams, despite class cancellation between March 10th, 2020 - March 13th, 2020 as well as mandated periods of quarantine and sheltering in place.

We hope as faculty and students adjust to new teaching modalities, they can resolve these issues in a mutually tolerant and respectful manner. Direct, timely, and open communication is essential to match the complexity and needs of online and remote instruction.