

Resolution 022

A Resolution to Encourage Academic Departments to Explore Alternatives to Comprehensive Exams

Sponsored by: Senator Farrell

Co-Sponsored by: Senator Birth, Senator Cunningham, Senator Sharpe

Whereas,

All students are required to complete a “Senior Comprehensive Assessment.”

Whereas,

A “Senior Comprehensive Assessment” can come in the form of a written or online exam, a thesis, or a capstone project at the department’s discretion.

Whereas,

Catholic University is one of only several universities across the country that requires undergraduates to complete comprehensive exams.

Whereas,

There are alternatives to written or online exams that similarly display a student’s mastery of what they have learned in their course of study. These include, but are not limited to, capstone projects.

Whereas,

Some departments at Catholic University allow students to opt-out of some portions of their comprehensive exams by completing a capstone project (e.g. senior thesis, independent study, or research project).

Whereas,

Completing a research project, independent study, or senior thesis as an alternative to a comprehensive exam would allow students to engage in a more intellectually worthwhile endeavor, learn something new, and create a project of their liking on their own or under the guidance of a faculty member. This would also better position students for applying to graduate school and/or employment opportunities.

Be it enacted that,

The Student Government Association Senate, acting in its official capacity as the representative of the undergraduate student body of The Catholic University of America, hereby requests all academic departments in all academic schools re-evaluate their comprehensive exams and

explore the possibility of creating other alternatives to comprehensive exams, including but not limited to a senior thesis, independent study, or robust research assignment.

Agreed to by a vote of _____ yeas to _____ nays on this date: _____ with _____ abstaining and _____ not present.

Abigail Anger
President of the Student Government Association

Monica Wallace
Vice President of the Student Government Association

