

Resolution 030

A Resolution to Increase the Variety of Technological Accommodations Available for Students who have Disability Support Services Accommodations

Sponsored by: Senator Roscoe

Co-Sponsored by: Senator Birth, Senator Brown, Senator Sijgers, Senator Zentz

Whereas,

The Catholic University of America has made many adjustments in the past year to ensure continuation of learning in a safe manner during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Whereas,

The Catholic University of America has made major investments into classroom technology so that students could participate in courses remotely during the pandemic.

Whereas,

The technology installed in classrooms includes cameras, microphones, and other technology to support entirely remote or hybrid modalities, including technology that has the ability to record and stream lectures so that students can participate synchronously or asynchronously as needed. .

Whereas,

As the university plans to hold in-person courses next semester, it is imperative to remember that the threat of the pandemic will not be gone, and even well into the future students on our campus will continue to live with health conditions that may affect their educational experience.

Whereas,

Students with disability accommodations may accrue absences from both virtual and in person courses due to the need to routinely follow up with specialists or due to the state of their health and wellbeing.

Whereas,

The Office of Disability Support Services provides audio recordings or note taking services to students in need of DSS accommodations. These services are not supplied to all students who are granted exceptions to course attendance requirements. These services also do not provide the same experience as attending the lecture in person.

Whereas,

The Catholic University allows “video or audio replication or photographic image recorded on devices including, but not limited to, audio recorders, video recorders, cell phones, Smartphones, digital cameras, media players, computers, or other devices that record images or sound.”¹

¹ <https://policies.catholic.edu/students/academicgrad/recordingclassroomlecturesgraduate.html>

Whereas,

It is not clear if students must be present to record lectures or if students are allowed to ask others, in the case of an absence, to record lectures for them.

Whereas,

There is no additional burden to any students should professors record their own lectures utilizing the technology already in place.

Whereas,

The Office of Disability Support Services promotes equal opportunity within the educational environment and classroom technology installed during the pandemic (classroom cameras and speakers) would allow students with accommodations who accrue absences to have the same lecture experience as other students.

Whereas,

Using technology that has already been paid for and implemented within the university community will allow students to experience the class just as students who were present during class time. Students with Disability Support Services accommodations would no longer have to rely on notes from other students when class is missed.

Whereas,

Many University professors are well versed in the use of this classroom technology after using it in some form for the past year.

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 requires the Office of Disability Support Services to investigate the adoption of technology implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic into routine accommodations offered to students who have a need to attend class online or asynchronously as a part of their accommodations. For example, allowing students with DSS accommodations to have lecture recordings available to them (if they must miss class because of illness, doctor's appointments, etc.) post pandemic using classroom technology implemented during the pandemic.

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

Gerald Sharpe
President of the Student Government Association

Gemma del Carmen
Vice President of the Student Government Association

