

**Resolution 017**  
**A Resolution to Establish a Student Observer to the Board of Trustees**  
**Sponsored by: Senator Colquitt**  
**Co-Sponsored by: Senator Ortiz, Senator Avila, Senator Janssen**

***Whereas,***

The Catholic University of America, as the national university of the Catholic Church in the United States, affirms the principles of solidarity, subsidiarity, and the dignity of every human person, which encourage authentic participation in the governance of the institutions that shape one's community.

***Whereas,***

Meaningful student participation at the highest levels of university governance is consistent with a synodal model of leadership, in which the voices of students are heard and considered without diminishing the distinct authority and fiduciary responsibility of trustees.

***Whereas,***

The Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of The Catholic University of America already provide for the attendance and participation of non-trustee observers at meetings of the Board, including faculty representatives and the President of the national alumni association, who may participate in discussion but do not possess voting authority.<sup>1</sup>

***Whereas,***

Numerous universities — including comparable Catholic, regional, and peer institutions — currently include students in governing board deliberations through student trustee, observer, or representative roles, such as the University of Maryland System (student regents),<sup>2</sup> American University (student trustee),<sup>3</sup> St. Mary's College of Maryland (student trustee),<sup>4</sup> Dominican University (student member),<sup>5</sup> and the integrated boards at the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University (student trustee representatives).<sup>6</sup>

***Whereas,***

Student trustees at peer institutions have strengthened communication between administrators and students, improved trust during strategic planning, and helped boards better understand campus culture, student well-being, and the practical impact of policy decisions.

***Whereas,***

Students at The Catholic University of America have previously been entrusted with meaningful participation in University governance, including service on presidential search committees, the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.catholic.edu/about/leadership/board-trustees/bylaws>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.usmd.edu/regents/bylaws/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.american.edu/student-affairs/student-trustee.cfm>

<sup>4</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20140228071911/http://www.smcm.edu/studenttrustee/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://our.dom.edu/about-dominican/leadership/board-trustees>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.csbsju.edu/about/boards-of-trustees/>

Academic Senate, and other University-wide advisory bodies, demonstrating both the capability and responsibility of student leadership.

***Be it resolved 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 that:

- The University establish a Student Observer position on the Board of Trustees, appointed by the Student Government Association, who shall attend all open sessions of the Board of Trustees and serve as a conduit for student perspectives and concerns at the University's highest level of governance. The Student Observer shall be strictly non-speaking and non-voting, and shall not participate in Board discussions, deliberations, or decisions. The Student Observer's role shall be limited to observation of open sessions and reporting through Student Government channels. Within five (5) to seven (7) days after each open session attended, the Student Observer shall submit a short written report to the SGA President, SGA Vice President, and the SGA Senate summarizing: (1) agenda items discussed in open session, (2) matters with clear student impact, and (3) any relevant next steps or follow-up items for Student Government.

***Be it resolved 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 that the University Board of Fellows amend Article III, Clause 13 (3.13) of its Bylaws to read:

- "The Board of Trustees shall permit the attendance at meetings of the Board of Trustees of the Vice Presidents of the University representing the major divisions or operations of the University, as well as other persons upon invitation of the Chairman or the President. Any such Vice President attending a meeting of the Board of Trustees may participate in discussions with the Board of Trustees as appropriate but shall not have the right to vote on any matter. In addition, the Board of Trustees shall permit the attendance at meetings of the Board of Trustees of five (5) observers, three (3) of whom shall be faculty representatives selected by the faculty, one (1) of whom shall be a student representative selected by the Undergraduate Student Government, and one (1) of whom shall be the President of the national alumni association of the University. Any such observer attending a meeting of the Board of Trustees may not participate in discussions with the Board of Trustees and shall not have the right to vote on any matter."

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael Kish

*President of the Student Government Association*

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Matthew Moskowsky

*Vice President of the Student Government Association*