Senate of the Associated Students of the University of Nevada

86th Session, 2018-2019

AN ACT TO CREATE A BOOK FUND FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS

Bill Number: 24

Authored By: Senators Ahmed, Aziz, and Flangas

Sponsored By: Committee on Academics

Whereas, the University of Nevada, Reno currently has no merit based scholarship for transfer students;

Whereas, the University of Nevada, Reno has only a handful of need-based grants for transfer students, such as SEOG, Access Grant, and State Access Grant which all begin their process of awarding money with the February 1st deadline [1];

Whereas, transfer students can qualify for the Pell Grant, also a need-based grant at any time, meaning this is one of the only need-based grants for transfer students in their first year [2];

Whereas, research shows that transfer student enrollments have increased, noting research from fall 2008 to fall 2009, that demonstrates that enrollments of transfer students were up an average 11 percent nationally, and from 2007-2009 enrollments increased close to 17 percent (AACC, 2010) [3];

Whereas, the demographics of our institutions transfer students show that for the past 5 years about 25% of transfer students are non-traditional students [4];

1 https://www.unr.edu/financial-aid
2 https://www.unr.edu/financial-aid
3 https://cornerstone.lib.mnsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1143&context=etds
4 UNR Transfer Student Profile 2018-2014
5 UNR Transfer Student Profile 2018-2014
6 UNR Transfer Student Profile 2018-2014
7 https://naspa.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/10668926.2018.1520658?needAccess=true&
8 https://hechingerreport.org/federal-study-finds-nearly-40-percent-transfer-students-got-credit/
9 UNR Transfer Student Profile 2018-2014
10 https://www.unr.edu/financial-aid
11 https://www.unr.edu/financial-aid

Whereas, the demographics of our institution's transfer students show that for the past 5 years 7 more than 25% of students are from underrepresented racial groups, more than a third of students are first generation 5;

Whereas, over the past 4 years about 49% of transfer students each year were Pell Grant applicable demonstrating that this demographic of students are also generally low income 6;

Whereas, creating a merit-based scholarship specifically for transfer students in their first semester could assist many diverse students and could help with retention of those students as the cost of education has been cited as one the major barriers to accessibility;

Whereas, according to NASPA research, "even among students who do transfer, research suggests that those who first enroll in community colleges encounter penalties, or lower educational attainment and longer paths to bachelor's degree completion compared to students who begin at four-year institutions" 7 ;

Whereas, a study, by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics, found that 35 percent of a sample of more than 18,000 students who began in the 2003- 20 2004 academic year changed schools at least once and nearly 40 percent got no transfer credit, losing an average of 27 credits apiece, or almost a full year of college 8;

Whereas, the University of Nevada is no exception in creating longer paths to bachelor's degree completion and increased costs accompanied as the process of transferring credits and following the university discipline-specific path forces 61% of the past cohorts to spend an additional 4 years at the university along with the time spent at the previous institution 9;

Whereas, the University of Nevada is no exception in creating scholarship barriers or 'penalties' 6 for transfer students as the vast majority of scholarships are only accessible through the February 1st deadline so many transfer students go their first, if not their first and second semester without merit based aid 10;

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Whereas, the University also offers very distinguished tiered-based merit scholarships for any incoming freshman qualified student, but any student with more than 30 credits cannot qualify for that tiered aid [11];

Whereas, creating this book fund would offer a book scholarship and, ideally, not interfere with the FASFA and university scholarship award limits;

Whereas, creating this book fund would split the current $3,000 awarded to non-traditional students and give $1500 in scholarships to specifically non-traditional students and up to $1500 to transfer students through the book fund, which can also encompass non-traditional students;

Whereas, academic items purchased through this book fund from the Wolf Shop will include any materials that can be used in the classroom for academic success including, but not limited to, pencils, pens, laptops, notebooks, scientific googles, lab coats, textbooks, and online access codes;

Whereas, creating this book fund calls for the ASUN Committee on Academics to create a special meeting at the beginning of every semester to decide who to award the scholarship to based on the requirements of a GPA of more than 3.20, and two essay questions: 20 a) Why are you transferring to the University of Nevada, Reno? (250 word max) 21 b) What does civic engagement mean to you? (250 word max)

Whereas, creating this book fund through the Wolfshop would be the first step to creating merit based scholarship aid for transfer students and allow ASUN to lead the way in creating institutional support for the retention of transfer students;

Be it resolved by the Senate of the Associated Students, that the Non-Traditional ASUN scholarship be converted into the newly defined ASUN Nontraditional Student Scholarship and ASUN Transfer Student Scholarship as defined in Addendum A and B and be funded through the ASUN Scholarship Endowment Fund; 8 Be it further resolved by the Senate of the Associated Students, that this resolution be sent to the

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Committee on Academics Chair of the 87th Session, Raul Rodriguez, to the create the infrastructure for the scholarship on the ASUN website, and the Office of Financial Aid

Adopted in Senate on April 10th, 2019

Attest:

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Anthony Martinez, Speaker of the Senate

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Hannah Jackson, President of the Associated Students

I certify that this Act originated in the Senate.

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Andrea Godoy, Secretary of the Senate

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