



Senate of the Associated Students of the University of Nevada

91st Session, 2023-2024

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF CANCELING CLASSES ON ELECTION DAY

Resolution Number: 65

Authored By: Senator Acklin

Sponsored By: 2023-2024 Student Government Assembly

Whereas, for students at the University of Nevada, Reno, the exercise of their right to vote has become increasingly challenging, rendering the campus less conducive to fostering a culture of voter participation;

Whereas, this resolution seeks to redefine election day at the University of Nevada, Reno, transforming it into a vibrant celebration of democracy, volunteerism, civic literacy, and accessible voting for both students and faculty. It emphasizes the importance of maintaining uninterrupted university operations during this transformative process;

Whereas, students encounter obstacles in casting their votes due to time constraints imposed by classes, work, homework, and personal commitments. Passing this resolution would alleviate these challenges, as increased volunteerism on election day would lead to reduced poll wait times, making voting more accessible for the university community;

Whereas, in the 2022 midterms, a mere 24.5 percent of eligible voters participated, as reported by Tufts University.¹ This stark reality underscores the urgency of implementing measures to enhance voter engagement and turnout;

Whereas, the belief persists that by fostering a more voter-friendly campus environment and advocating for voting-related issues, a substantial impact can be made on the civic engagement of our

¹ "2022 Election: Young Voters Have High Midterm Turnout, Influence Critical Races." Circle at Tufts, circle.tufts.edu/2022-election-center. Accessed 11 Jan. 2024.

university. A Rutgers poll revealed that 95 percent of students supported the idea of making election day a university holiday.² Notably, prestigious institutions like the University of Michigan and Stanford have already successfully implemented similar policies³;

Whereas, Loyola Marymount University in California serves as a compelling example, where months-long organizing efforts by students and faculty led to the campus closure during the 2018 midterms, resulting in an expanded number of student voters⁴. Moreover, law professors organized a program for law students to volunteer at the polls, answering voters' questions and contributing to the overall success of the initiative⁵;

Whereas, many students don't get the opportunity to vote because they are in class during election day. As election and poll workers are short staffed this would be a great opportunity to allow students and faculty to assist with the pressure these workers may feel from being understaffed, while simultaneously giving students and faculty the opportunity to engage with the democratic process which would align with the University of Nevada, Reno's commitment to be a voter friendly campus;

Be it resolved that, the Associated Students of Nevada shall draft a comprehensive ballot question to gauge student openness to the idea of canceling classes on election day. This resolution aims to cultivate a culture of engagement, volunteerism, and civic literacy, enhancing voting accessibility for both students and faculty, all while ensuring the continued operation of the university's essential functions. By doing so, UNR has the opportunity to become a trailblazing example for other universities in Nevada contemplating similar policy changes;

Be it further resolved that, The Senate of the Associated Students shall propose a detailed ballot question to the students of the University of Nevada, Reno, seeking their opinion on canceling classes for election day. The intention is not only to promote volunteerism, civic literacy, and increased voting accessibility but

² Dopico, Chloe. "Student Pushes Administrators to Acknowledge Election Day as University Holiday." The Daily Targum, 15 Feb. 2017, dailytargum.com/article/2017/02/student-pushes-administrators-to-acknowledge-election-day-as-university-holiday

³ "2022 Election: Young Voters Have High Midterm Turnout, Influence Critical Races." Circle at Tufts, circle.tufts.edu/2022-election-center. Accessed 11 Jan. 2024.

⁴ Retta, Mary. "Free the Students: Why There's a Push to Make Election Day a Campus Holiday." The Guardian, Guardian News and Media, 7 May 2020, www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/may/07/universities-election-day-students-shut-down.

⁵ Lopez, Lolita. "Law Students Set to Hit Polls on Election Day to Answer Big Questions and Small." NBC Los Angeles, NBC Los Angeles, 31 Oct. 2018, www.nbclosangeles.com/local/law-students-set-to-hit-polls-on-election-day-to-answer-big-questions-and-small/49003/.

also to maintain the university's essential operations. Through this collective effort, UNR has the potential to set a new standard for universities committed to fostering an engaged and empowered student body;

Be it further resolved that, a copy of this resolution be sent to:

- University President, Brian Sandoval
- Director of ASUN, Sandra Rodriguez
- Associate Director of ASUN, Amy Koeckes
- President of ASUN, Boris Carpio Guerra
- Attorney General of ASUN, Jimmy Grecco
- Chief Justice of ASUN, Brayden Taubel
- Director of Government Affairs, Dawson Deal
- Director of Elections, Dillion Moss

Adopted in Senate on January 24, 2024

Attest:

Ally Chavez, Senate Secretary

Fayza Salah, Speaker of the Senate