



“Alternative Textbook Bill”

Bill # 08-02

Author: Senator Edwina Phillips

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Vote: Yes ___ No ___

Whereas the purpose of the Student Government Association is to provide a responsive forum for student opinions and interests and to actively seek out, investigate and resolve student complaints and concerns; and

Whereas the Student Government Association is the official voice of the students; and in experiencing fluctuating challenges with various instructors on many different occasions no precedents are available to assist disabled students and instructors find balance to equalize success in the learning process by employing alternative formats of course work as well as textbook information specific to the needs of the student; and

Whereas a need for the use of alternative formats in the teaching process often arises, however the faculty does not have any references or examples to assist disabled students; with the exception of the Office of Disability Services, wherein a rule of double time for exams is employed; and

Whereas during a regular exam sometimes even more than double time may be needed under certain circumstances, the instructor, with the assistance of the student, should be able to determine time extensions or limitations; and

Whereas on the first day of class, after presenting the request for individualized testing accommodations the instructor asked, “How do you expect to pass this course?” Similar events take place regularly at the beginning of each semester. The discouraging words of instructors leave an imprint of dissuasion in the mind of the student. Disabled students are unable to learn if the instructors are unprepared to teach them. The alternative formats of textbooks/learning materials will allow disabled students to properly learn the course material; and

Whereas currently disabled students must go to the bookstore, purchase the textbook, then go the Office of Disability Services to fill out forms and make copies of documents required by the Alternative Media Access Center (AMAC). In addition, there is a waiting period of 4 to 6 weeks before the materials are received by the student. Therefore, alternative formats to assist students with disabilities obtain audio, Braille, or electronically formatted textbooks in a timely manner are needed; and

Whereas the Student Government Association is mandated by their constitution to serve as partners in the administrative processes of the University; and

Therefore, let it be resolved that the Student Government Association is in favor of the following:

1. Allowing disabled student who purchase textbooks at the bookstore the opportunity to make the alternative format request at the register or another desk within the bookstore instead of traveling to the office of Disability Services
2. The request should include the format of the student's choice, with date to be received (by the student, mail, or the bookstore to be picked up by the student or forwarded to the Office of Disability Services) in focus.
3. Since the student will be receiving the textbook in an alternative format, it is illegal for the student to return the textbook after making a request for alternative text. If the student does not wish to keep the text nor give it to a fellow classmate, the student should be prepared to either donate the textbook to tutorial services throughout the university or the library.

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