

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

Proposal 14-22 (Voting Units: Academic)

“Proposal on the Scheduling of Examinations, Projects, Presentations, and Papers on Election Day”

Introduced by: Academic and Instructional Policy

I. Introduction

On October 6, 2021, the Undergraduate Student Government (USG) passed a resolution requesting that the University Senate introduce a proposal that prohibits examinations, projects, presentations, and papers on Election Day starting in Fall 2022. The resolution also encourages (but does not require) instructors to release students from all assignments and mandatory class attendance on Election Day, and to continue working with students who must miss class for an Election-related reason to make up any missed assignments or class time.

II. Rationale

This proposal would facilitate the right to vote for students by relieving them from major coursework responsibilities on Election Day. Per the [National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement 2012 and 2016 Campus Report](#), only 34.3% of Michigan Tech students voted in the 2016 election. The University Senate and the Administration, by working together to create a policy that releases students from examinations, projects, presentations, and papers on Election Day, can promote student voter turnout by demonstrating that the institution recognizes the importance of citizen participation in our democratic process through voting.

The following text is from the resolution passed by the USG on October 6, 2021:

WHEREAS, on every even-numbered year, the election of local, state, and federal public officials takes place on the first Tuesday after

November 1 (November 8 in the year 2022), which will henceforth be referred to as “Election Day” for the purpose of this resolution;

WHEREAS, 23 states have established Election Day as a public holiday that requires workers be given some amount of paid time off on that day;

WHEREAS, there is no such holiday in the State of Michigan;

RECOGNIZING, Students who wish to vote on Election Day may be hindered from doing so by the demands of their coursework;

RECOGNIZING, That, of the Michigan Technological University students who voted in the 2018 Midterm Election, 60.5% opted to vote absentee (per the *2014 and 2018 NSLVE Report-MTU*, which is maintained by the Office of the President), demonstrating a logistical challenge to voting in the form of the large distances between Michigan Technological University and the locations where most students are registered to vote; and,

RECOGNIZING, The University Senate of Michigan Technological University, by proposing policy changes to the administration regarding major coursework on Election Day, has the ability to support and facilitate students’ right to vote.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Undergraduate Student Government at Michigan Technological University urges for the Fall 2022 semester and all future Fall semesters taking place on an even-numbered year, the University Senate shall pass a resolution to the administration that prohibits collection of regular examinations, major projects and papers, and presentations on Election Day

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Undergraduate Student Government at Michigan Technological University strongly encourages that instructors consider collecting no coursework, not mandating class attendance, and giving special consideration to students who must miss class on Election Day, whenever possible;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University Senate Liaison of the Undergraduate Student Government at Michigan Technological University presents this resolution at the first University Senate meeting after its adoption;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President of the Undergraduate Student Government at Michigan Technological University sends a copy of this resolution

to Michigan Technological University President Rick Koubek, University Senate President Sam Sweitz, University Senate Academic and Instructional Policy Committee Timothy Scarlett, Provost Jacqueline Huntoon, Center for Teaching and Learning Director Michael Meyer, Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students Wallace Southerland III, General Counsel and Secretary to the Board of Trustees Sarah Schulte, *The Lode* Editor-In-Chief Cat Madish, and other individuals subject to the approval of the Executive Board of the USG; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution appears in the official minutes of the first Undergraduate Student Government General Body Meeting after its adoption and will be circulated to the student body via publication on the USG website and USG social media accounts by the USG Public Relations Committee.

III. Proposal

The University Senate proposes that beginning in the Fall of 2022 instructors do not schedule due dates for major assignments, e.g., examinations, projects, presentations, or papers on the first Tuesday after November 1 (i.e. *Election Day*) on even numbered years. Furthermore, instructors are encouraged to not schedule any assignments for Election Day and are asked to be flexible regarding class attendance on this day in consideration of election related absences.