

Associated Students of Northern Arizona University

Resolution Label: ASNAU-SR- 3407

Date Introduced: 21 April 2022

Sponsors: Senators Shealyn Leedy and Lian Muneno

Signatories:

Resolution to Implement a Student Bereavement Policy

Whereas, Student bereavement is defined as an excused absence from institute-related coursework and responsibilities granted when a death occurs in a student's immediate family or similar close relationship.

Whereas, Many students experience a significant loss in college and the period after a loss is a very difficult and strenuous time. 22% to 30% of college students are within 12 months of having experienced the death of a family member or friend.¹

Whereas, Northern Arizona University has no clear bereavement guidelines for how faculty is expected to support students who have lost an immediate family member or loved one.

Whereas, Professors are instructed to individually decide how to allocate assignments and exams to students facing familial loss. This system can harm students by leaving them to be overwhelmed by demands to complete assignments and exams while they attempt to grieve or attend funeral services. A lack of accommodations by professors can force students to miss funeral services, drop classes, or disenroll from the university.

Whereas, Many colleges across the country have a Student Bereavement Policy in place. For example, the University of Illinois has a Student Bereavement Policy in place that guarantees students up to 5 excused absence days of bereavement leave for the death of an immediate family member and 3 excused absence days for the death of a loved one.²

Whereas, Faculty at NAU may request up to three consecutive paid working days for the death of a covered family member, and two additional paid working days may be granted for out-of-state funeral arrangements or services.

¹ [Prevalence and Severity of College Student Bereavement Examined](#)

² [University of Illinois Student Bereavement Guidelines](#)

Therefore, be it Resolved by the Senate of the Associated Students of Northern Arizona University:

Recommends that the University Administration implement a Student Bereavement Policy at Northern Arizona University to protect and support students on campus.

Be It Further Resolved, The Associated Students of Northern Arizona University recommends that the deaths of immediate family members and loved ones are covered in this policy. Here, an “immediate family member” includes spouses, parents, children, brothers, sisters, grandparents, and grandchildren. A “loved one” is a person not under the previous category, such as a close friend.

Be It Further Resolved, The Associated Students of Northern Arizona University recommends that once the death occurs in that student’s life, if the Office of the Dean of Students has not already been notified of the death, the student will notify the office and provide appropriate forms of documentation before receiving accommodations. The allowed documentation could include copies of death certificates, obituaries, or letters from funeral directors. This will ensure that students do not abuse the system by falsifying deaths.

Be It Further Resolved, The Associated Students of Northern Arizona University recommends that the Student Bereavement Policy allocates students grieving the loss of an immediate family member 5 excused absence days of bereavement leave and students grieving the loss of a loved one 3 excused absence days of bereavement leave.

Maylee Acosta
ASNAU Student Body President
Date of Approval: _____

Jacob Carter
ASNAU Senate Chair
Date of Approval: _____