

## Faculty Senate Resolution

To: SCSU President Cheryl Norton

From: John DaPonte, President of the SCSU Faculty Senate

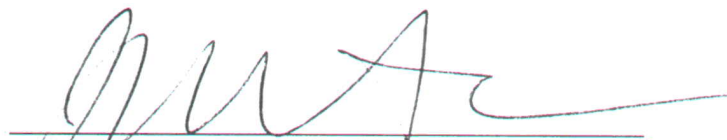
The attached Resolution of the Faculty Senate regards: **Opposition to Minimum Class Size As a Basis for Course Cancellation**

The Resolution is presented to you for your ☒ APPROVAL  
☐ INFORMATION

After considering this resolution, please indicate your action on this form and return it to the President of the Faculty Senate.

In accordance with the CSU-AAUP Contract (Article 5.10), the President of the University will return the Resolution to the President of the Senate within 15 school days of the receipt of the Resolution.

cc: Ellen Beatty

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John DaPonte, President, Faculty Senate  
11/8/04

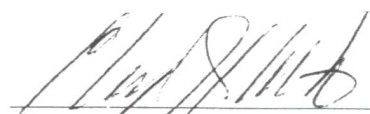
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### ENDORSEMENT of Faculty Senate Resolution, F-04-02

To: John DaPonte, President SCSU Faculty Senate  
From: Cheryl Norton, President of the University

- 1 Motion APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_  
2 Motion DISAPPROVED X (attach statement)  
3 Motion NOTED \_\_\_\_\_  
4. Comments See Attached

11/8/04  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

## OPPOSITION TO MINIMUM CLASS SIZE AS A BASIS FOR COURSE CANCELLATION

Whereas SCSU exists for the primary purpose of furthering academic excellence;

And whereas all administrative decisions should be driven first and foremost by the goal of academic excellence;

And whereas Section 3.11 of the Faculty Handbook states: "While there are no absolute standards for determining which courses to cancel (e.g., class size), guidelines include the type of course, the facilities used, the needs of students and the department's total faculty load. An important consideration is the cost of the course and projected University revenue."

And whereas historically administrators have attempted to enforce a minimum class size as the standard for course cancellation, to an extent in which courses with fewer enrollments routinely have been cancelled, thereby violating university policy;

And whereas the schedule of classes is a commitment to what the faculty have determined to be a valuable and necessary course of study, whether general education, major, program requirements or related electives;

And whereas the schedule of classes (electronic or hard copy) is relied upon heavily by students and faculty to plan their academic activities each semester; any alteration of class offerings is extremely disruptive to schedules and academic progress;

And whereas a minimum class size policy does not take into account issues such as program requirements, student timetables for graduations, and problems with last-minute substitutions;

And whereas a minimum class size policy does not take into account other ways in which SCSU might benefit from a course with small enrollments, such as through its newsworthiness, prestige, pedagogical innovation, and scholarly significance;

And whereas SCSU Public Affairs often promotes SCSU as featuring small classes

And whereas a minimum class size policy does not take into account monetary variables such as differences in graduate-level or part-time tuitions;

And whereas a minimum class size policy can result in lowered numbers of FTEs or higher rates of students transferring out due to course cancellations, and a consequent drop in overall enrollment numbers;

And whereas a minimum class size does not take into account an instructor's, program's, school's or entire university's average number of enrollments;

And whereas due to course cancellations full time professors can be put into a difficult position of having to teach an overload in the current semester, while being under-utilized in a later semester;

And whereas an independent study is an inadequate substitute for a class cancellation;

**Therefore be it resolved that:**

**The practice of requiring a minimum number of enrollments per section be immediately discontinued, and**

**therefore, be it further resolved that:**

**the Academic Vice President work with the Faculty Senate to provide an alternate set of guidelines for course cancellation; and**

**therefore, be it further resolved that:**

**while these guidelines are being developed, the Academic Vice-President and deans treat each class individually, welcoming faculty input; and**

**therefore, be it further resolved that:**

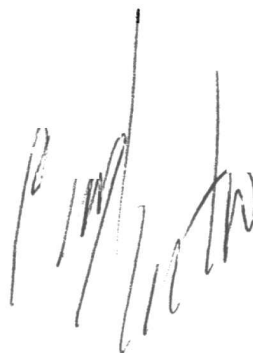
**SCSU administrators in consultation with the faculty, monitor and reduce the cancellation rate so that class cancellation is a rare event.**

Faculty Senate Resolution  
F-04-02

Upon consideration of resolution F-04-02, I have decided to DISAPPROVE this motion. Having made that decision, please understand that I, like the Faculty Senate, consider canceling classes not to be in the best interest of students or faculty. However, there are occasions when class size suggests that continuing this course offering is not an effective use of resources and thus, in the best interest of the student paying tuition. The Faculty Senate has offered that Section 3.11 of the Faculty Handbook does not identify low class enrollment as a legitimate reason for canceling a course. I would disagree. I would interpret the inclusion of the statement "...the needs of students..." to allow consideration of enrollment to be used as justification for course cancellation since enrollment is an indicator of the relative student need for a specific course offering. When enrollment is low, the students have demonstrated little "need" for the class. In this case, the resources allocated to teach a low enrolled class could better be used to meet a demonstrated, greater student need. If the institution had unlimited resources, then relative "student need" would, perhaps, not be an issue of concern. That is not the case. We must take care in the use of institutional resources to assist students towards completion of their degree program in the most effective way possible.

I do acknowledge that there are situations when a low enrolled class must be supported in order to facilitate program plans and address graduation requirements. This decision, however, is the responsibility of the Deans in consultation with the chairpersons and must be made on a case by case basis.

More importantly, since canceling classes is not the goal of this administration, I would like to engage the academic community in a discussion of how to minimize the number of low enrollment courses each semester. Why are classes low enrolled when we are increasing the size of the student body? How can we increase the effectiveness of scheduling classes and consequently, our students' ability to move through their degree program by using enrollment needs and trends as a guide to course scheduling? This is the issue I would encourage the Academy to address on behalf of our students. Thank you for your thoughtful attention to this matter.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "P. M. H.", is located at the bottom center of the page.