



NDSA-20-2425

A Resolution in Opposition to HB 1220: Accelerated 3-Year Bachelor's Degrees

WHEREAS, the North Dakota Student Association (NDSA) represents the voice of North Dakota's 45,000 public college and university students; and,

WHEREAS, the purpose of NDSA is to represent all students enrolled in the North Dakota University System (NDUS) and advocate on issues of higher education in support of access, affordability, quality, and the student experience; and,

WHEREAS, during the 69th North Dakota Legislative Session, the legislature introduced HB 1220 which would allow for institutions under the control of the State Board of Higher Education to create accelerated three-year bachelor's degrees; and,

WHEREAS, the Association of American Colleges & Universities have stated that "baccalaureate education should, at a minimum, prepare students with the following: intellectual skills such as quantitative literacy and critical thinking, knowledge of cultures and the physical world, awareness of ethical reasoning and civic literacy, and an understanding of how to form and answer questions using a variety of intellectual approaches that different disciplines require; and,¹

WHEREAS, there is no feasible way to effectively create accelerated degrees without diluting these concepts due to the need to cut general education courses from these degrees to make them short enough to attain in three years; and,

WHEREAS, the general education courses required for undergraduate students to take is crucial to their academic development in understanding disciplines outside of their field of study and in building a wider, educated worldview; and,

WHEREAS, the state of North Dakota has already taken steps to make a degree attainable in three years without changing the curriculum for a bachelor's degree, but rather expanding dual credit and Advanced Placement course access so that students can enter higher education with enough credits to only need to be in higher education for three years; and,

WHEREAS, there is concern in the NDSA that with accreditation in mind, these accelerated degrees may not be acceptable outside of states like North Dakota that would also offer this type of degree, which could put students' education beyond their bachelor's degree in jeopardy; so,

WHEREAS, the NDSA understands the concern from legislators to increase the matriculation rate of graduates to address critical workforce needs, however, these rates would remain relatively unaffected by this bill; so,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Dakota Student Association opposes HB 1220 and the creation of accelerated three-year degrees.

¹ Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. March 2024.
<https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2024/03/Three-Year-Baccalaureate-Degrees.pdf>.



*Approved by the North Dakota Student Association General Assembly
Saturday, January 25th, 2025*