NORTH DAKOTA STUDENT ASSOCIATION | THE VOICE OF THE STUDENTS

NDSA-15-2526

A Resolution in Support of Adding a Fall Break to the NDUS Calendar

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

[2]**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,

[3]**WHEREAS,** the NDUS Academic Calendar has eighty scheduled days of classroom instruction required for students in the fall semester; and,

[4]**WHEREAS,** of these required classroom instruction days, fifty of them take place consecutively without a break for students, staff, or faculty between September and November; and,

[5]**WHEREAS,** the NDUS is the "only university system in the region that has sixteen weeks of a semester rather than fifteen weeks";

[6]**WHEREAS,** according to the United State Department of Education's Final Regulations as provided in 34 CFR 668.8(k) and (l), defines a credit hour as, "an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than— (1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit,"[1]; and,

[7]**WHEREAS,** data from an NDUS institution indicates that the highest utilization of campus counseling services throughout the year occurs from September through November, with October being the highest of the entire year [2]; and,

[8]**WHEREAS,** seven weeks of uninterrupted classroom instruction days can lead to increased difficulties such as: "suicidal ideations, attempts, depression, anxiety, and stress"[3][4][5]; and,

[9]**WHEREAS,** over this time many new and international students experience these significant difficulties being away, unable to return home over the weekend like many local students; and,

[10]**WHEREAS,** to promote the mental and physical wellbeing of students, staff, and faculty [5], the NDUS has an opportunity to change systemwide policy to create an additional day off for students, staff, and faculty in the middle of the seven-week period; and,

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[11]**WHEREAS,** the process of adding a day off of classroom instructions for students was completed in the last 10 years, resulting in the Wednesday before Thanksgiving no longer being a day of classroom instruction; so,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the North Dakota Student Association petitions the North Dakota University System and State Board of Higher Education to consider creating a break in classroom instruction in October.

Approved by the North Dakota Student Association General Assembly
Saturday, January 24th, 2026

Supplemental

[1] https://fsapartners.ed.gov/sites/default/files/attachments/dpcletters/GEN1106.pdf
[2] Counseling Services Numbers graphs from Fall 2024 to Fall 2025
[3] Shankland, R., Kotsou, I., Vallet, F. *et al.* Burnout in university students: the mediating role of sense of coherence on the relationship between daily hassles and burnout. *High Educ* **78**, 91–113 (2019).
[4] Aranas, Kenneth Roy, Jet Buenconsejo, and Ciara Janica Zalameda. "Dimensions of school burnout as predictors of symptoms of anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation among college students." *Brillar* 1 (2020): 33-42.
[5] Hanzen, Elstor. "Depression, anxiety and exhaustion increase significantly among students, and suicide is one of the leading causes of death among young people." *Jornal da Universidade, 14 dez. 2023, ed. 175* (2023).