**RESOLUTION TO FORM TASK FORCE TO CONSIDER STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH CAREGIVING RESPONSIBILITIES**

Educational Policy & Student Affairs (EPSA) Committee

Faculty Senate

Ohio University

DRAFT TO DISCUSS (updated on 04.19.2024)

Whereas nationally 32% of students pursuing an associate degree program and 16% of those pursuing a bachelor's degree report they are parents with caregiving responsibilities and 42% of student parents with caregiving responsibilities have considering stopping their education;[[1]](#footnote-1) and

Whereas Ohio has documented a lack of available childcare with 39% of Ohioans living in a “childcare desert”[[2]](#footnote-2) which are most prevalent in rural areas;

Whereas Ohio has documented a childcare affordability crisis, with a typical Ohio household able to afford only $4,700 annually on childcare despite an annual cost ranging from $7,977 to  $11,438 per child;[[3]](#footnote-3)

Whereas students with childcare responsibilities without childcare options may ask to bring minors to classes regularly or infrequently (in cases of emergency) when childcare responsibilities conflict with class attendance; and

Whereas there is no policy to guide faculty or students with caregiving responsibilities who are experiencing gaps in childcare coverage that affects class attendance; and

Whereas the Educational Policy & Student Affairs (EPSA) Committee of Faculty Senate has had an increase in the number of inquiries about university-level policies, practices, and/or guidance related to students bringing minors to classes;

Whereas policies related to minors in the classroom need to account for a wide variety of considerations including (but not limited to) physical space, safety, course content, minor well-being, student well-being, minor care/custody, and potential impact on other students;

Therefore, Be It Resolved that Faculty Senate recommends the creation of a task force charged with developing recommendations and considerations to 1) support faculty in creating course policies related to minors in the classroom and 2) to mitigate inequities associated with childcare for all members of the university community on all campuses.

Be it further resolved that Faculty Senate will collaborate with the Office of the Provost (or designee) to establish a task force that includes representatives from academic colleges and regional campuses, Faculty Senate, Legal Services, Human Resources, Office of Accessibility Services, Student Affairs, and Graduate Student Senate.

Be it further resolved that the task force recommendations and report be presented to Faculty Senate for review and consideration.

~~Whereas Ohio University recognizes that students may need or benefit from supports that enable them to persist in their courses and complete their degrees;~~

~~Whereas Ohio University’s campuses (and higher education institutions more generally) increasingly enroll students who also have caregiving responsibilities;~~

~~Whereas the United States continues to experience a societal shortage of affordable caregiving options and a lack of caregiving may force students to miss their classes;~~

~~Whereas Ohio University strives to create inclusive classroom environments for all students and make higher education a viable option for all;~~

~~Whereas some college students are bringing minor children with them to class in cases of a caregiving emergency or as a regular practice to manage caregiving responsibilities;~~

~~Whereas many Ohio University faculty have no policy to guide their responses to students with caregiving responsibilities who are experiencing gaps in childcare coverage that affects class attendance;~~

~~Whereas the presence of others in class may disrupt the learning of other students and some learning environments are not safe for all; therefore,~~

~~Whereas a diverse set of views and a broad range of considerations exist around the issues of how to support students with caregiving responsibilities in attending class (in being successful students?);~~

~~Be it resolved that Ohio University acknowledges that access to caregiving is an essential need which must be met in order for some students to persist and be successful in higher education;~~

~~Be it further resolved that a task force be formed to examine issues related to students’ (minor?) dependents attending class (or strategies to support students with caregiving responsibilities or or strategies to support class attendance of students with caregiving responsibilities)~~

~~Be it further resolved that the specific charge of the task force be determined by the Provost? Senate Chair? Someone else or some combination?~~

~~Be it further resolved that such a task force include representatives from members of Educational Policy and Student Affairs committee, each college, Legal Services, Human Resoucrces, Office of Acessibility Services, Student Affairs, and Graduate Facutly Senate.~~

~~ulty should examine their course content, learning environments, classroom capacity, safety concerns, need for advance notice and/or prior approval, department or college policy, and any other relevant factors to assess if and under what circumstances a minor child or other person for whom students have caregiving responsibilities might attend a class meeting in case of a caregiving emergency;~~

~~Be it further resolved that faculty within a department or college should discuss the development of a consistent college or department policy regarding minor children or other persons attending class meetings or particular types of classes;~~

~~Be it further resolved that faculty/instructors of record should make the results of that examination and resulting course policy available to all students at the beginning of the course in the syllabus so that students with caregiving responsibilities may plan appropriately when caregiving emergencies arise;~~

~~Be it further resolved that should a minor child or other person for whom students have caregiving responsibilities attend class with the student, the student is expected to be~~ **~~fully responsible for and maintain the care, custody, and control of the minors or other persons at all times~~**~~;~~

~~Be it further resolved that should a minor child or other person for whom students have caregiving responsibilities attend class with the student, and the student is unable to maintain the care, custody, and control of the minors or other persons or any class member is unable to achieve learning outcomes due to the presence of the minors or other persons in class, instructors of record can request the removal of the minors or other persons.~~

1. # Rothwell, J. (2021, January 29).College Student Caregivers More Likely to Stop Classes.*Gallup Blog*.

   [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Poe, K., & Smith, A. (2024, March 28). [Ohio’s Child Care Crisis](https://www.policymattersohio.org/research-policy/shared-prosperity-thriving-ohioans/basic-needs-unemployment-insurance/basic-needs/ohios-child-care-crisis). Policy Matters Ohio. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Poe, K., & Smith, A. (2024, March 28). [Ohio’s Child Care Crisis](https://www.policymattersohio.org/research-policy/shared-prosperity-thriving-ohioans/basic-needs-unemployment-insurance/basic-needs/ohios-child-care-crisis). Policy Matters Ohio. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)