



SENATE OF COLLEGE COUNCILS  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

2201 Speedway A6210 • Austin, Texas 78712-0179 • (512) 471-3166 • Fax: (512) 471-3408 • [www.utsenate.org](http://www.utsenate.org)

**Senate of College Councils**  
**September 10, 2015**  
**J.R. 1501**

A Resolution In Support Of Creating A 30-Day Grace Period For Clearing Financial Bars

- 1 WHEREAS, The Office of the Registrar defines a bar as “a restriction placed on your record that prevents  
2 registration<sup>1</sup>,” and,
- 3 WHEREAS, These bars are classified into three separate categories: financial, nonfinancial, and advising; and,
- 4 WHEREAS, Financial Bars are defined as “A restriction placed on the record of a student to deny access to  
5 the registration system because of a delinquent debt to the University<sup>2</sup>,” and,
- 6 WHEREAS, Students have expressed concern with the lack of flexibility within the current system for initial  
7 course registration related to the repayment of university debt; and,
- 8 WHEREAS, Students face high costs of attendance along with living expenses that can amount to more than  
9 \$20,000 dollars per school year<sup>3</sup>; and,
- 10 WHEREAS, During the 2013 academic school year, 50% of graduating students had borrowed money in order  
11 to cover outstanding university debt and living expenses<sup>4</sup>; and,
- 12 WHEREAS, Financial Aid significantly affects the ability of a student to pay off university debt, yet only 15%  
13 of students reported that their financial needs were completely met in the 2013 school year<sup>4</sup>; and,
- 14 WHEREAS, The graduating class of 2013 accrued an average of \$25,300 in total indebtedness during the their  
15 time spent at The University of Texas at Austin<sup>4</sup>; and,
- 16 WHEREAS, The average student reportedly incurs about \$5,957 of student loans per year in order to cover  
17 cost of attendance<sup>5</sup>; and,

<sup>1</sup> <http://registrar.utexas.edu/students/registration/before/bars>

<sup>2</sup> <http://registrar.utexas.edu/schedules/132/terms>

<sup>3</sup> <http://finaid.utexas.edu/costs.html>

<sup>4</sup> <http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-colleges/university-of-texas-3658/paying>



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- 18 WHEREAS, Prior to Spring 2015 registration, 6,768 students had outstanding university debt that amounted to  
19 an average of \$359 per student<sup>6</sup>; and,
- 20 WHEREAS, These financial bars were related to debt for Tuition, Loans, Financial Aid, Academic Units,  
21 Returned Checks, Health Services, ID Center, Libraries, Housing and Food, Athletics, Parking  
22 and Transportation, Rec Sports, and the Texas Union<sup>6</sup>; and,
- 23 WHEREAS, Students must then often work part-time jobs or apply for student loans in order to cover the  
24 cost of attendance yet their full need may not be met; and,
- 25 WHEREAS, Many of these students live on a tight budget and may be unable to immediately pay off expenses  
26 as they continue to work on progressively repaying their outstanding debt; and,
- 27 WHEREAS, Four year graduation rates for undergraduate students remain a major priority for our university  
28 in order to reach the goal of achieving 70% four year graduation rates by 2016<sup>7</sup>; and,
- 29 Whereas; Timely graduation rates of graduate students as appropriate for each college and degree program  
30 remain a priority for our university; and,
- 31 WHEREAS, Flexibility with the time frame in which students may pay off their outstanding debt would allow  
32 for students to continue enrollment at the university and graduate on time; therefore be it,
- 33 RESOLVED, The Office of the Registrar enact a 30-day grace period after the initial registration time as listed  
34 on the student's RIS page for students to clear financial bars which would allow for students to  
35 register for classes; and, be it further,
- 36 RESOLVED, Students will receive an email reminder during the 30-day grace period in order to remind them  
37 that they have a limited time in order to pay their outstanding debt and secure their courses for  
38 the semester; and, be it further,
- 39 RESOLVED, Students will be dropped from their course if they do not clear all financial bars at the conclusion  
40 of the 30-day grace period; and, be it further,

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<sup>5</sup> <https://colleges.niche.com/university-of-texas---austin/statistics/>

<sup>6</sup> See attached table

<sup>7</sup> <http://news.utexas.edu/2013/09/16/ut-strives-to-improve-four-year-graduation-rates>



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- 41 RESOLVED, That this resolution be sent to Shelby Stanfield, Office of the Registrar
- 42 AUTHORS, Sergio Cavazos (Policy Director, Senate of College Councils)
- 43 Jennifer Clegg (Academic Affairs Director, Graduate Student Assembly)
- 44 Kallen Dimitroff (University-Wide Representative, Student Government)
- 45 Rachel Osterloh (President, Senate of College Councils)
- 46 SPONSORS, Rohit Mandalapu (Vice President, Student Government)
- 47 Xavier Rotnofsky (President, Student Government)
- 48 Brian Wilkey (President, Graduate Student Assembly)