

Benjamin Erhardt, *Keough Hall Senator*  
Elaine Teeters, *McGlinn Hall Senator*  
Ricardo Pozas Garza, *Club Coordination Council President*  
Sarah Galbenski, *Student Body Vice President*  
Isabella Garcia, *Badin Hall Senator*  
Margaret Allen, *Flaherty Hall Senator*  
Michael J. Murakami, *Dunne Hall Senator*  
Daniel Schermerhorn, *Baumer Hall Senator*  
Grace Franco, *Walsh Hall Senator*

**A RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING THE PURSUANCE OF VARIOUS STRATEGIES  
TO ALLEVIATE CAMPUS COMMUNITY BURNOUT DURING THE SPRING 2021  
SEMESTER**

*Whereas*, [the Principles of University of Notre Dame's strategic plan](#) state that, “[o]ur first and most fundamental operational charge is to protect the safety of our students, faculty, staff, and visitors. All of us at Notre Dame assume responsibility for creating an environment that prioritizes the physical and emotional wellbeing of members of our community”;

*Whereas*, on September 23rd, 2020, University President Fr. John Jenkins, C.S.C. [announced](#) plans to begin the Spring 2021 semester with in-person classes starting February 3rd, 2021, forgo a spring break, and end classes on May 11th, 2021;

*Whereas*, it is the position of the Student Senate that the student body, faculty, staff, and administration of the University of Notre Dame are currently experiencing unrelenting burnout in the face of an unprecedented Fall 2020 semester that proceeded without a Fall Break at the semester's midpoint (a result of the COVID-19 pandemic), and that a similar wave of detrimental burnout would be inevitable if the Spring 2021 semester proceeded without a spring break, as has been announced;

*Whereas*, the McDonald Center for Student Well-Being recently engaged the Notre Dame community in [Restoration Week](#) -- which the Student Senate thanks the McDonald Center for organizing -- to give members of the community “opportunities to relax, laugh, experience memories from home, have a little change of scenery, and learn how to develop a restorative routine to help [...] brave a very challenging semester”;

*Whereas*, it is the position of the Student Senate that, while Restoration Week demonstrated awareness on the part of University leadership of extensive student burnout and exhaustion, the weeklong series further shed light on the reality that many students are simply unable to effectively relax, rejuvenate, or relieve themselves from their studies because they simply do not have the time allotted in their rigorous schedules -- which include academic, extracurricular, athletic, spiritual, etc. commitments -- to partake in such rejuvenation, especially in a semester that is without the traditional Fall Break;

*Whereas*, Notre Dame Student Government's Executive Cabinet released a mental health survey to the student body on October 13th, 2020, whose respondents (including 800+ in the first 24 hours after the survey's release) unanimously advocated and suggested ideas for potential breaks during the Spring 2021 semester to alleviate student stress and burnout;

*Whereas*, the Student Senate encourages the consideration of strategies that can be implemented well ahead of the projected start date for the Spring 2021 semester to better promote student well-being and mental health with minimal disruption to both the academic calendar and campus health and safety measures in effect to prevent COVID-19 spread;

*Whereas*, numerous campus groups, including the Campus Life Council, have previously discussed and supported the idea of integrating sporadic and brief breaks from in-person instruction and extensive coursework during the Spring 2021 semester;

*Whereas*, on October 23rd, 2020, Provost Marie Lynn Miranda shared in a [video message](#) to the campus community that the University is potentially planning for "a few days off as little mini-breaks during the middle of the week" during the Spring 2021 semester;

***Resolved*, the Student Senate of the University of Notre Dame du Lac calls on University administration to consider implementing adjustments to campus life and the academic calendar to alleviate burnout amongst members of the campus community during the Spring 2021 semester -- including the following:**

- 1. The inclusion of singular "rest days" in the academic calendar, during which no classes are to be held, no examinations are to be held, and no homework assignments, projects, or any other coursework materials are due to be submitted;**
- 2. During the weeks when the aforementioned "rest days" occur, all University colleges and academic departments should avoid administering midterm examinations to promote "rest weeks" for students; these would serve as guaranteed weeks when students could allot time for rest and relaxation outside of regular course instruction time, and would minimize disruption to the continuous academic calendar in effect throughout the semester;**
- 3. Encourage each of the University's colleges and academic departments to survey their respective student populations at the conclusion of the Fall 2020 semester to measure the impact of the semester on their mental, social, and physical well-beings, and field suggestions for burnout alleviation strategies from those students to determine College- and department-specific adjustments to academics that could be implemented in the Spring 2021 semester to alleviate student burnout; and be it**

***Further resolved*, the Student Senate commends the efforts of University administration as they aim to alleviate burnout amongst members of the campus community in the current and upcoming semester.**

---

Rachel Ingal  
*Student Body President*