

Letter to College Deans Requesting Collaborative Learning

Drafted on 14 February 1999

Dear [Dean X]:

Last semester, the Student Union Senate sent you a letter requesting that you consider implementing a policy of encouraging students to submit multiple drafts of papers before their due dates. This letter has met with a very positive response, and we appreciate your efforts in this important area.

As part of our ongoing effort to improve the already high quality education that we receive from Notre Dame, the Student Union Senate would like to enlist your help in another area: collaborative learning. Currently, most students study for exams and do homework assignments alone, thereby denying themselves the opportunity to learn from and help each other. Not only does this limit students' ability to maximize what can be gained from their years in college, it leaves them lacking in experience with collaborative endeavors. Increasingly, as part of our careers, we will be called upon to work with others in order to accomplish a common task and reach a common goal. Collaborative learning offers students a chance to gain exposure to this before entering the professional world.

[Dean X], the Student Union Senate is aware that many professors in your college are already encouraging their students to work and study together by assigning group projects and allowing group study. We applaud these efforts and trust that they will continue. However, experience has shown that many students are reluctant to work collaboratively without the express blessing of their professors. As such, we would like you to encourage your faculty to endorse the notion of collaborative learning, either by assigning more group projects, or by stating their approval of group study. Together, hopefully, we can create an environment of collaborative learning within the Notre Dame community.

Sincerely,

The Student Union Senate

Submitted by the Student Senate Academic Affairs Committee

