

Resolution of Support for SMCCCD Students Affected by the Coup in Myanmar

Whereas, There is an ongoing military coup in Myanmar;

Whereas, Given the current and ongoing military coup, students from Myanmar are experiencing economic hardship due to the shutdown of many Myanmar businesses, including banks, and bank transactions throughout the country have been indefinitely frozen, as evidenced in students' own words:

“We don't know if we are gonna get financial support from our family for upcoming months, and being under F-1 student visa, we only have very limited opportunity to resources like: federal grants, financial aid, or even ability to work for your own survival. So, if we do not have financial support from our parents, we would not be able to survive here by ourselves.”

“With all the bank transactions being frozen, we are not able to pay for our tuitions. Consequently, if we cannot pay tuition fees on time, we will be dropped out of classes, and eventually we will be out of status which leads to being deported back to Myanmar.”

Whereas, Given the current and ongoing military coup, our students from Myanmar have been experiencing mental and emotional hardship, as evidenced in their own words:

“We are living in a very depressing and stressing state of mind. It is very difficult for us (both those in the US and those back in Myanmar) to stay mentally strong. For Myanmar International students here, it would be a huge help to those who need to talk to professionals about their mental health and ask for support.”

Whereas, There is a significant number of students from Myanmar currently enrolled in SMCCCD;

Whereas, International and domestic students from Myanmar face enormous challenges in focusing on academics at this moment, given the political unrest, violence, and killings occurring in Myanmar, resulting in feeling compelled to strain their emotional and financial resources to speak out against the injustice through participation in political protests and extensive activism on behalf of their nation;

Whereas, The military junta in control of Myanmar is blocking access to the internet from 12 AM - 9 AM each day, and because of the time difference, this effectively prohibits Burmese

students from participating synchronously in their SMCCCD classes due to time zone differences;

Whereas, Access to educational apps and other technology are under threat of ban or restriction, greatly impacting these students' ability to meaningfully engage with their classes or to communicate with their professors in a timely fashion; and

Whereas, The SMCCCD and our students stand in solidarity with our students from Myanmar and their families, in their fight for democracy, and we acknowledge all the challenges/difficulties that these students of SMCCCD colleges are dealing with due to the Military Coup in their country;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate encourage all faculty to reasonably accommodate the academic circumstances of students from Myanmar in their classes and support them with measures including but not limited to: extending deadlines on assignments, extending time to complete quizzes and exams, and/or providing a grace period for turning in past-due assignments;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate urge the District to work with students from Myanmar to solve the financial challenges caused by the civil unrest in their home country, including but not limited to:

- Allowing deferment of payment of outstanding and future fees; and
- Allowing registration for Summer and/or Fall session even when students are not in good financial standing;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate urge the three SMCCCD colleges make available personal counselling and any other appropriate support services, including Spark Point, and prioritize attending to the unique circumstances of each SMCCCD student affected by the coup in Myanmar; and that the Academic Senate urge the District to engage the Global Online Learning (GOL) program to reach out to students from Myanmar to seek options that will allow for maximum flexibility and accommodations for the completion of their programs.