

November 22, 2021

The Residence Hall Association (RHA) is proud to formally endorse the Undergraduate Student Government's Department of Academic Affairs and Professional Development's Academic Policy on Student Support and Equitable Practices. We believe that supporting mental health and wellness is crucial to driving student success and that the rigid nature of our current academic policies places an undue burden on students seeking to explore their professional and academic interests. We applaud the Executive Branch of Undergraduate Student Government for proposing a policy that embraces our student body's diverse needs and increases equity within Carolina's academic policies. Specifically, by allowing students to repeat courses up to two times without written permission from an advisor, the new course repeat proposal not only addresses extenuating circumstances, but also destigmatizes mental health crises and helps students to feel safer.

Furthermore, RHA feels that the proposed academic forgiveness policy will increase student exploration in course selection and ultimately lead to more interdisciplinary collaboration between majors. Through the ability to forgive up to three courses from one's cumulative GPA calculation, students avoid being penalized for trying out a new subject area or challenging themselves with a higher-level class. As students, we are often incentivized to attain the highest GPA or class average possible, facing continuous pressures to pass/fail or drop a course altogether if we are struggling. This policy provides grace and peace of mind for students, aiding those who step out of their comfort zone, who have experienced personal struggles while enrolled in a class, or who may have pivoted their academic focus over the course of the semester.

This semester, the need to support student mental health has been exposed more than ever. By adopting this policy, the University has the opportunity to demonstrate to students through clear action that its words of mental health support and prioritization are more than simply words. We stand behind the Department of Academic Affairs and Professional Development in their proposal and look forward to seeing these changes enacted towards the achievement of a more equitable academic experience for all students.

For the Residents,

Residence Hall Association, 2021-22 Executive Board

