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presented**  
10/05/2020

**Type of action:**  
Recommendation

**Final vote**  
11-0-0

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## 2021-0006: Excused Absence for Poll Workers

Sponsored by: Weiser

Co-Sponsored by: Murtha, Powers, Ruffino, Shea

Drawing attention to the November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020 general election requiring poll workers, 58% of whom are traditionally over the age of 60.<sup>1</sup>

Recognizing that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, many poll workers over the age of 60 are not comfortable working the polls due to health concerns, which has created a shortage of poll workers and consolidated poll locations.<sup>2</sup>

Recognizing that in most states, polls are open for at least twelve hours on Tuesday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, and poll workers must attend prior training and poll location set-up, which would require student-aged poll workers to miss classes.

Understanding that missing classes may be a deterrent to students interested in working the polls.

Drawing attention to the Ithaca College attendance policy which does not explicitly mention working the polls as an excused absence, thus leaving the decision to individual professors.<sup>3</sup>

**It is resolved that** Ithaca College take the following steps by October 9<sup>th</sup>, or immediately upon receiving this bill:

**Section 1.** Ithaca College should temporarily change the attendance policy to explicitly state that working the polls is an excusable absence.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.npr.org/2020/08/05/894331965/wanted-young-people-to-work-the-polls-this-november>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.npr.org/2020/08/05/894331965/wanted-young-people-to-work-the-polls-this-november>

<sup>3</sup> <https://catalog.ithaca.edu/undergrad/academic-information/registration-course/#:~:text=Students%20at%20Ithaca%20College%20are,during%20any%20absence%20from%20class.&text=In%20accordance%20with%20New%20York,or%20examinations%20on%20that%20day.>

**Section 2.** Ithaca College should ensure that the Ithaca College community is made aware of this new policy by:

1. Announcing the new policy to the Ithaca College community via mass email and/or other comparable mass communication system;
2. Announcing the policy on all of Ithaca College's social media platforms including, but not limited to, Instagram and Facebook;
3. Encouraging Deans and professors to reinforce the policy with their respective students and the Ithaca College community in relevant communications.
4. Adding a temporary announcement to the Ithaca College website that can be removed November 4th, 2020.

**Section 3.** Students should communicate with their professors in advance of working the polls to clarify requirements that professors may have regarding making up missed class and work.