



**HARVARD LAW SCHOOL
STUDENT BODY
SPRING TERM
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-TWO**



RESOLUTION NO. R.-205-005

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A RESOLUTION TO: REQUEST REINSTATEMENT OF THE PRINTING CREDIT

THE STUDENT BODY OF HARVARD LAW SCHOOL ENACTS:

WHEREAS, a policy change was made in Summer 2021 eliminating the \$50 annual printing credit given to all Harvard Law School students in favor of reducing the cost per page of printing; and

WHEREAS, upon the Fall 2021 return to campus the loss of the printing credit quickly became an issue of extreme student concern, especially considering the concurrent announcement of the University's massive endowment growth; and

WHEREAS, the Dean of Student Services has confirmed to Harvard Law School Student Government that no students were consulted on this policy change; and

WHEREAS, there was not prompt notice of the policy change, resulting in students acting in reliance on the credit and being stuck with unexpected charges; and

WHEREAS, printing charges go to a student's account and balances of even small amounts can result in a registration hold that disrupts their educational experience; and

WHEREAS, a significant number of HLS professors do not allow computers in class, forcing students to print their reading notes or other materials to be prepared for class; and

WHEREAS, a significant number of HLS professors do not utilize the printing center but expect students to read materials uploaded to Canvas, posing another printing expense for students; and

WHEREAS, the loss of the printing credit disproportionately impacts low-income students who could ration their printing to stay under the credit before but now must pay out-of-pocket; and

WHEREAS, the new printing policy's benefits are felt solely by high-volume printers at the expense of the majority of students; and

WHEREAS, on October 13, 2021, the Student Body Co-Presidents presented this issue to the Dean of Student Services as one that impacts student morale, and were derided with laughter; and

WHEREAS, Student Government then conducted a survey and gathered testimonials from students, garnering nearly 100 responses with 91% in favor of restoring the printing credit over maintaining the lower printing cost; and

WHEREAS, Student Government continued to bring up the printing credit in meetings with Administrators including the Dean of Student Services, culminating in the December 1, 2021 delivery of a packet to the Dean of Student Services formally requesting the reinstatement of the previous printing policy (Appendix 1); and

WHEREAS, Student Government continued their advocacy to the Dean of Student Services in a meeting on January 5, 2022, and again on January 12, 2022 to the Dean of Student Services and Chief Information Officer, and a final time on March 23, 2022, yet this issue remains unresolved; and

WHEREAS, many other law schools offer printing credits to their students in combination with low printing prices, including University of Chicago Law (\$195 print quota), Cornell Law (500 free pages), and Yale Law (no cost for academic printing); and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, Harvard Law School Student Government calls upon the Administration to reinstate the pre-pandemic printing credit of \$50 for all students; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Student Government requests a data-informed investigation to determine whether the reinstatement of the credit must be paired with a per-page price hike; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Student Government affirms the importance of student input on policy decisions that directly impact student life and/or finances; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Student Government requests that students receive prompt and fair notice from Administration of any student-facing policy changes.

PASSED IN THE STUDENT COUNCIL: March 23, 2022

VOTE TOTALS:

13 YES

0 NO

0 ABSTAIN

Appendix 1

Dean Soban,

Please see the below packet we have compiled in support of changing the printing policy. We bring up many open-ended topics in our weekly meetings but are hopeful that we have all the information we need to wrap up *this* particular conversation by the end of the semester. Due to the clear survey results asking for a reinstatement of the policy, student statements on the practical impact of the policy, and the prevalence of similar credits at similar schools and programs, **Faith and I are formally requesting a reinstatement of the pre-2021 printing policy.**

Survey Results

At the beginning of the semester, we broached this issue and were asked how students really felt about the new printing policy. Though Faith and I knew students were disheartened by the policy change, even we underestimated just how upset students were about losing their printing budget. Nearly 100 students answered questions on our student interest survey about the printing policy, with **91% stating that they preferred a restoration of the printing credit over maintenance of the lower printing costs.** We feel this is a clear declaration of student preferences on printing – students would rather have some free printing in the form of a \$50 credit than cheaper printing across the board. Some student comments on this topic include:

“I try not to print too much so taking away the \$50 in lieu of reduced cost of printing has definitely disadvantaged me. I am sure I would not have printed more than 500 pages throughout the semester, and it would have been better if we had kept the \$50 credit rule.”

“I’m in two intense doctrinal classes with huge reading requirements and strict technology bans; I don’t care about the cost reduction; I care that I’m not able to enjoy the same 500 pages of free printing my predecessors enjoyed.”

“We were told we had credit for printing at the start of the year, and then it was taken away from us without warning. It is surprising that the school would do this without asking or warning us, even if it is just \$50 for printing. I don’t think that the price reduction is helpful for people like me who just print notes for class and do not print large amounts of documents because now we have to pay for something that we thought was essentially free.”

Student Statements

Dozens of students took time to provide additional feedback on the printing policy via written survey comments and direct communication to Student Government. **These statements highlight the frustrations and inequities the new printing policy reinforces.** We know these consequences were likely unforeseen, so we want to underscore a few of them for you.

Lack of Notice

“3Ls had told me that we received printing money, so I didn’t question it - then receiving the bill over the weekend really felt like a slap in the face. Even a warning on the printer when we were using it so that I knew I would be charged would have really helped. It felt like the

administration didn't tell us on purpose so we would print a lot and then they could charge us after."

"I find it incredibly disingenuous how the administration has slowly rolled back student accommodations with little justification and no warning. The printing credit is just one example: gym hours are massively reduced, student health visits are nearly impossible to get (when I signed up for a primary care visit in September, the earliest available was in December), and student org funds are much harder to use. I think this is taking advantage of the lack of institutional memory, since so few students on campus recognize the services that used to be available. Given this reduction in services, it's absurd to be paying the same amount in tuition."

"It feels extremely disruptive to have a policy changed without any notice from the university to plan accordingly. I really need to be able to print because I learn much better that way, and I feel frustrated by this sudden, hidden change to policy."

"As a 3, I feel there has been detrimental reliance on this policy when I've printed this year."

Burdening Students With Printers

"The loss of the printing credit has been burdensome even on students with printers or access to printers, who are having to assist others on their own time/with their own resources."

"No one wants to trigger charges to their student bill, which then have to be paid immediately to avoid risking a registration hold. I've had three friends ask to use my printer in the last two weeks alone, just for little things. I understand why they don't want to use the school's printers, but it's like the university is transitioning their labor to me."

Equity & Fairness

"If we were given a budget last year for printing materials so that we could print from home, why backtrack on that access with the removal of printing credits without notice (to 3L's)? I am not allowed to use a laptop while prepping my clinical client for direct examination, which means that FOR EVERY SESSION I am having to print out 40+ pages... all that printing adds up to the cost of SEVERAL meals. This, again, doesn't affect most students, but it DOES disproportionately affect low-income students, who are more likely to be students of color. Harvard is again implementing a policy that benefits the 1% (of society or the 99% of the HLS student body) and hurts the rest of us."

"The Boston Globe recently published an article saying that despite ongoing economic fallout from the pandemic, Harvard University ended the fiscal year with a \$283 million surplus and a \$53.2 billion endowment. And they can't find the money to pay for students' printing?"

"The lack of printing and lack of notice has had a huge negative impact on my academics. Throughout the semester, professors have required that we print things in order to be fully prepared. The lack of a printing allowance ensures that first gen and low income students stand out negatively and are less prepared than class mates. I have had this occur in no fewer than three separate courses. During trial advocacy workshop, we were tasked with printing our outlines and other trial prep. In another course, paper handouts for the entire class were expected. Lastly, I have one course where computers are not allowed. Each week I am tasked with

two choices: run up a printing bill I cannot afford or be unprepared for class without the ability to look at case briefs or other notes."

Similar Credits at Similar Schools

Jessica Valenzuela Ramirez, Ph.D., is a 2L who took the time to write an extensive email to DOS explaining their many concerns about the printing policy change. They forwarded us their carefully crafted message in support of our efforts to change the policy. In their email, they included research on the **printing quotas provided by many of our peer institutions:**

"Many institutions provide their students with printing quotas. Several of them still maintain low printing prices, even after providing their students with printing quotas. In addition, after students have exhausted their print quota, they may add funds and retain the low printing prices. See these examples: [MCPHS](#) offering students \$25 print quota at \$0.05 per page, [BU](#) College of Engineering offering students \$150 print quota and in general [BU](#) offers graduate students 500 B&W pages, [Emmanuel](#) College offering students \$35 print quota at \$0.04 per page with cost incentives to reduce paper by printing double-sided, [Boston](#) College Law offering students \$15 print quota at \$0.03 per B&W page and \$0.50 per page for color printing, [Michigan](#) Law offering JDs/LLMs 800 pages and SJDs 1200 pages in addition to the U-M wide \$24 quota at \$0.06 per B&W page and \$0.24 per color page, U [Chicago](#) Law offering students \$195 print quota at \$0.13 per B&W page and \$0.18 per color page, [NYU](#) offering students \$50 print quota per fall/spring semester and \$25 print quota per summer/winter term, [Columbia](#) offering students unlimited printing and noting their commitment to information and technology while still valuing the [tactile](#) experience of reading, [Cornell](#) Law School offering students a 500 page print quota, [Yale](#) Law School grants students access to a shared print account that bills directly to the IT department for academic printing and students may add funds for personal printing. The list goes on. The new HLS printing cost per page at \$0.02 double sided and \$0.05 single sided is marginally competitive only in comparison to the [U Penn](#) printing cost per page at \$0.05 double sided and \$0.06 single sided."

Conclusion

On behalf of Student Government, and in our official capacities as Student Body Co-Presidents, we are asking that you return the printing policy to the way it was before the pandemic. Students should receive a \$50 printing credit and the previous rates for additional pages should be reinstated.

Students were not consulted before the printing policy change, which became the source of this problem. When the administration changes policies that impact student life, they must consult with students to determine whether they accurately grasp the needs and desires of those students and the unintended consequences their changes may have. This packet is the culmination of a great amount of effort by students to

remedy a problem that we did not create. We respectfully ask that the policy be reformed, and that in the future students are consulted in advance of such impactful decisions.

Best,

Gabrielle Crofford, HLS Student Body Co-President
Faith Jackson, HLS Student Body Co-President