



Executive Action Sheet for Senate Legislation

Senate Bill 331- **037**

Resolution 331-

I, Sydney Thayer, President of the Student Assembly of William & Mary do hereby:

Approve

Veto

The Student Assembly Senate Legislation:

**RISE: Reimagining Individual Study Environments**

*Sydney Thayer*

President, 331st Student Assembly (23-24)

DATE: **12/6/23**

331<sup>st</sup> Student Assembly,  
Senate Bill 331-037

A Bill

*To replace sitting desks with adjustable-height desks in Swem Library's individual study rooms*

**The Reimagining Individual Study Environments Act (RISE)**

Sponsored by Senator Sean Nguyen ('25)

WHEREAS, Swem Library, being a central hub for academic pursuits and research at the College of William & Mary, should be equipped with state-of-the-art amenities to optimize student well-being and productivity;

WHEREAS this year's renovation of the ground floor in Swem Library highlighted a progressive shift towards recognizing the benefits of adjustable-height desks, yet this change was predominantly for the staff members;

WHEREAS, the concept of an adjustable-height desk, as its name implies, offers users the flexibility to work in a standing position, which can be more ergonomically appropriate and beneficial for many users;

WHEREAS, scientific studies have repeatedly shown the harmful effects of prolonged sitting, which include exacerbated back pain, increased risk of heart disease, weight gain, and even type 2 diabetes. In contrast, adjustable-height desks have been documented to not only alleviate these risks but also enhance focus, mood, and overall energy, key factors in an academic setting;

WHEREAS, adjustable-height desks, being adaptable in nature, cater to diverse student needs, allowing adjustments in height and angles for maximum comfort and ergonomic benefits;

WHEREAS, of the 10 individual study rooms in Swem Library, none currently offer the flexibility and health benefits of an adjustable-height desk, despite these rooms being in consistently high demand throughout the academic year;

WHEREAS, since August 23, 2023, Swem individual study rooms have been reserved 3,700 times, totaling 7,527 hours of use. This figure does not include walk-in usage, as these hours are not captured in the reservation system;

WHEREAS, with each adjustable-height desk is estimated to cost \$1,594, this initiative represents a tangible and feasible investment in student health and productivity;

WHEREAS, Herman Miller, the chosen vendor for Swem Library furnishings, not only brings quality and durability but also aligns with sustainability goals through its eco-friendly manufacturing commitments;

WHEREAS, the introduction of adjustable-height desks in Swem Library's individual study rooms is a strategic move towards promoting a culture of health, well-being, and sustainability on campus;

WHEREAS, the current furniture, representing state property, will find a renewed purpose and life through the campus surplus system, ensuring minimal waste and maximum utility;

WHEREAS, while the overarching goal of replacing all desks within Swem Library with adjustable-height desks might be ambitious given the costs, targeting individual study rooms offers a strategic and impactful starting point;

WHEREAS, by facilitating an environment where students can seamlessly switch between sitting and standing, we are not only promoting physical health but also acknowledging the varied study habits and preferences of our diverse student body;

WHEREAS, this initiative, while rooted in enhancing the student experience at the library, extends beyond to send a strong message about the institution's commitment to holistic well-being;

WHEREAS, a comprehensive student survey regarding the purchase of standing (adjustable-height) desks in the study rooms at Swem Library was conducted. Launched on November 8, the survey reached students through various channels, including class president emails, a campus-wide email, Instagram, and Student Happenings. We received 434 responses, which provided valuable insights through four key questions: Would you like the option of a standing (adjustable-height) desk in Swem Library's individual study rooms?; How likely would you be to use a standing (adjustable-height) desk if it were available?; Do you think that adding standing (adjustable-height) desks would enhance your study experience at Swem Library?; Would you support the Student Assembly's funding for the addition of standing (adjustable-height) desks in the study rooms?;

WHEREAS, the outcomes of the survey are presented herein both as **data** and in the form of a **pie chart**;

WHEREAS, 83% (359 respondents) expressed a preference for having the option of a standing (adjustable-height) desk in the individual study rooms at Swem Library;

WHEREAS, 49% (214 respondents) indicated they are extremely likely to use an adjustable-height desk if one was available in the study rooms, with an additional 27% (118 respondents) being somewhat likely, totaling 76% likely to use;

WHEREAS, 52% (225 respondents) believe that the addition of standing desks in the study rooms would definitely improve their study experience at Swem Library, and another 27% (119 respondents) believe it would probably improve their experience, summing up to 79% in favor of improved experience;

WHEREAS, 82% (357 respondents) support the Student Assembly's decision to allocate funds for the addition of these standing desks, indicating strong backing for this initiative.

Now, therefore, be it,

RESOLVED, that the Student Assembly of William & Mary:

1. Allocates a total of \$18,000 from the Student Assembly reserves for the purchase of 10 adjustable-height desks for each individual study room in Swem Library.
  - a. Each 30" x 60" adjustable-height desk costs \$1,600
2. Stipulates that all unused funds will return to the Student Assembly Reserves.
3. Charges the Department of Outreach with the responsibility to spearhead an awareness campaign when the individual desks arrive, leveraging platforms like the Student Assembly Instagram and Student Happenings. The message should be:
  - a. "Thanks to Student Assembly, each of the individual study rooms at Swem Library is now furnished with cutting-edge adjustable-height desks. Embrace a healthier study posture and customize your workspace for unparalleled comfort and efficiency!"
4. Charges the sponsor of the bill to ensure that the transition from the traditional desks to the adjustable-height desks is carried out sustainably, with the old furniture being channeled through the campus surplus system to guarantee minimal waste and optimal reuse.