

Does Student Government Reach Your Needs?

by Addison Sweeney
Contributing Writer

Of all campus organizations, there is one that is student organized specifically to reach the needs and concerns of all students on campus. This organization, divided into three branches—Executive, Legislative, and Judiciary, is Student Government. In addition to reaching student needs, another chief purpose is to represent students and their concerns to the faculty, administration, and other governments—campus, state, or national. As a matter of fact, student government is now establishing ties on an international level through a six-year old AAUS (American Association of University Students). This organization is set-up for the sole purpose of exchanging problems and solutions with colleges and universities around the United States and more recently the world. Our campus links to the AAUS through the student government, especially since Paul Parker, our Student Government President, is also President of AAUS.

Although all three of the branches are important for student affairs probably the most popular of the three is the Executive branch which is headed by Paul Parker. Its responsibility is to express and represent the concerns of students, and to actively seek better communications with members of the university and the community. Such actions from the Executive branch like negotiating with Davis Library administrators to change library hours so that students have longer study time on nights when study time is in higher demand, reflect this branch's representation of student's concern. This increased library time went into effect August 20, 1984 and will schedule the library to open an hour later (12:00 a.m., instead of 11:00 p.m.).

After two years of negotiations and planning, the undergraduate library officials agreed to house and fund a textbook reserve library, effective spring semester 1985, so that students unable to buy their books at the beginning of the semester will be able to check out books needed to keep up with their classes.

In addition, this year, there are National Student Savings Cards that will allow students, faculty, and administrators to receive discounts from twenty-two Chapel Hill area merchants. Those are just a few examples of how the executive branch has worked for students.

On the other hand, the legislative branch, better known as the Campus Governing Council (CGC), is broken down into three committees—the Rules and Judiciary, the Finance Committee, and the Student Affairs Committee. The head of this branch is Reggie Holley—Speaker of CGC. The most popular of its committees, the Finance Committee, is responsible for appropriating an estimated quarter of a million dollars received yearly from student fees. This money is used for other campus organizations and groups. The sad thing about appropriating money this year is scarcity. According to Holley, this is especially

bad news for groups which are just beginning or that are not well established because the organizations which are established will most likely be first to receive money (even though there will be some cuts made). His solution to the problem is a fee increase. "We need a fee increase because everybody should receive his fair share," says Holley.

The more legislative part of what the CGC does however "sp", deals with changes in the laws of student government (which is done under the Rules and Judiciary committee), as well as creating positions of various issues of student concern and voicing those positions to the appropriate University officials or, if needed, even the North Carolina General Assembly (which is done under the Student Affairs Committee). In a recent interview, Holley explained to me some of the issues on which he expects the Student Affairs Committee to develop positions. One of the two issues that Reggie expects is the new alcohol policy—which includes a discussion on the new drinking age of 21. In addition, Holley also "hopes that the committee will come out with a strong statement in support of Minority Hiring." This issue has been raised for years. "I don't think that the university is doing all that it can to hire more minorities. Maybe I'm expecting too much or I am looking for things to happen overnight, but I'm sure that the university could find and attract qualified minorities around this community and the state." Holley added that many of the black professors are in the African/Afro-American Studies department but very few are in the others. He stated "I think that something should be done to hire more blacks in other departments.

The Judiciary branch is headed by the attorney general, Keith Johnson. Its primary purpose is to protect students and their rights on campus. Most honor code violations are first reported to this branch and examined by the attorney general or one of the assistants to determine whether or not the case should be heard. Most students who are accused of honor code violations usually seek help from the attorney general or his assistants.

The courts total membership incorporates 30 students who are chosen in the spring. According to The Instrument of Student Judicial Governance, a booklet which contains the Code of Student Conduct, "at least twelve members shall be of the male sex and at least twelve members shall be of the female sex. At least eight members shall not be of the majority race, and at least eight members shall not be of the minority race." But according to the ruling of the Durham County Superior Court, this rule may be reverse discrimination. However, the instrument holds that "If requested by the defendant, provision shall be made for racial or sexual representation (but

not both) on the trial court, as follows:

a) At least three of the five members of the trial court, shall be of the same sex as the defendant;

b) When a defendant is not a member of the majority race, at least three of the five members of the trial court shall not be of the majority race;

c) When a defendant is a member of the majority race, at least three of the five members of the trial court shall be of the majority race. (p. 19, Sec. 4 c.e.)

When asked what he thought would be done since the court has handed down the decision, Student Government President, Paul Parker said that he thought that the university would appeal the decision. "For the same reasons that Chancellor Ferebee Taylor took up this issue ten years ago, I think that we should still fight for it." Noting that with any final decision made by the courts, the ramifications would not stop at stu-

dent government. But Parker added that he has no intention of taking that appeal out of the constitution. "I think it is important to safeguard the rights of minorities."

Altogether these branches—the Executive, the Legislative, and the Judiciary—work to represent the concerns and needs of the students of this university. Each is distinct and important in the functioning of student affairs.

Getting involved in these branches is not very difficult. All it takes is usually filling out an application and possibly going through an interview—which are usually available in the spring. For those of you who have an interest in becoming involved with student government, visit 217 in the Student Union, where all three branches are located, and ask them if there are any positions open, or watch for advertisements in the near future for openings □



Dip's Delivery & Take-Out

115 N. Graham St.
942-7454

*"We'll bring a taste of the South to you!"
We deliver home-cooked box meals.*

Deliver 11 am-1:30 pm Mon.-Sat.
4 pm-10 pm