Senate changes for the 2009-10 academic year

By Kate Pozgay
STAFF WRITER

This year Community Senate will no longer be responsible for allocating funds to student organizations but will focus on policy-making issues. Instead, Student Affairs will take on the task of distributing funds to clubs and organizations on campus.

Student Affairs is the student committee co-chaired by the Academic Services chair and the Community Services chair. The committee meets every week and is comprised of 18 representatives from different clubs, organizations, and classes.

Student Affairs representatives vote on monetary proposals put forth by student organizations. Two thirds of the Student Affairs committee must be present in order to initiate a vote.

At the student interest meeting held by Community Senate on Aug. 26, senators said that this change will improve Student Affair's ability to work more closely with specific student organizations, and that there will also be more funds provided for residential programs.

"It looks like the new policies are intended to cut down on the back and forth that happens during meetings ... but at the same time, that back and forth debating is what made it a 'community senate'," said a former member of Community Senate and a leader in a campus organization.

Community Senate Vice President Trevor Corning said that these changes were brought about, in part, due to the inefficiency of Senate meetings in prior years.

According to Senate President Nancy Klosteridis, Community Senate could spend as many as three hours per meeting on monetary issues alone last year and an additional hour and a half on policy issues.

"I think I like the idea of Student Affairs allocating the money because Senate has to do so much and doesn't always know much about the clubs," said International Club Presi-

dent Yazmin Garcia Rico. "If student Affairs is more inclusive and can take more time it will be a better process.

"Every year there is an Ad Hoc By-laws committee. In years past, this committee has done small changes — this year, the committee reworked the by-laws in order to make Senate a more inclusive and effective body," said Corning

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on splitting the responsibilities of the Senate with Student Affairs.

This year's changes were also due to the fact that the administration has been asking the Senate for more policy help over the past years.

According to Klosteridis, the administration's need for Senate help was particularly visible in regard to the expansion of the student body and improving the diversity of the student body.

"It's the one thing about Guilford — we have so many factions on campus, you have to advertise to reach people on something they really care about," said Klosteridis. "It was really about clarity and giving students the opportunity to make changes. I think it is going to be really positive for our community."

The Senate is comprised of representatives from each year as well as residence hall representatives, transfer and day student representatives, international student representatives, a people of color student representative, a GLBTQA student representative, a NCAA athlete representative and club representatives.

The Senate core is comprised of Steering Committee and executive officers. The Steering Committee is responsible for communication with the Academic Affairs Committee, a major branch of Student Affairs, as well as other campus groups.

"One major message we want to get out is we can be a community at Guilford if we make it together," said Klosteridis.

Community Senate meets at 7 p.m. on Wednesday nights in Boren lounge. All members of the community are welcome.

Graduation rates head toward goal

"but sometimes the students aren't emotionally ready."

One of these is the new Resident Assistant program, which keeps RA's and hall directors (HD's) updated on student well being so that they can step in and assit those students who struggle socially or emotionally.

According to Vice President of Academic Affairs and Academic Dean Adrienne Israel, the goal is to "lend students guidance outside of class when they need it."

Isreal said that additional programs include hiring more faculty members for the Learning Commons and more tutors to help students. In fall '08, Academic Affairs hired Barbara Boyette as Academic Advisor Liaison to support students academically.

Doss said that through strengthening these programs Guilford should be well on its way to the 70 percent goal.

"The learning commons have gotten more effective because of more staff," said sophomore Ben Chaves, who has noticed improvements from his first to second year.

Doss said that a high retention rate and these new programs look to keep Guilford on the uptake and headed toward the goal of a 70 percent graduation rate.

Collective effort helps Guilford drop "Is it food?" burden this year

Guilford was ranked 4th.

Since 1992, the Princeton Review has yearly collected about 120,000 college surveys nationwide. Student responses are tallied, compared to those from other colleges, and then published in the following year's edition of the "Best 371 Colleges."

Buckner said that the number of students responding to the survey varies each year and that it is difficult to find out if they represent a cross section of the student population—traditional, CCE, and early college.

Fetrow said that Meriwether Godsey made an intentional effort to ensure that Guilford was removed from the list by being connected to its community. The dining service has its own Facebook page and comment cards in the dining hall so students can make suggestions/comments.

"Meriwether Godsey has been a little off this year, the food could be better," said senior Laura Herman. "They usually serve good food, though, and are receptive to student suggestions."

Jon Varnell, vice president of operations and facilities, said that Meriwether Godsey met many of the new

standards that the Dining Service Advisory Committee's Request for Proposal (RFP) set. Last fall Meriwether Godsey won a ten-year contract with the school, beating out other dining services Sodexho and Bon Appetite.

"Meriwether Godsey was a great fit and wanted to do the things we outlined in detail from sustainability objectives, local, and organic goals," said Varnell. "My job is to partner with them and work with the community on dinning issues. I had my semester kick off meeting with their managers last week and had a great time. We have lots of great things planned. "

Most students feel that the new catering service has greatly improved the food quality.

"There are a lot more fresh options than when Sodexho was here," said junior Amelia McLaughlin. "The salad and fruit bar are twice as large. I don't know if the grill is really that healthy because it serves fried foods, but it feels healthier."

"What I'm most impressed about is that they kept some of the older staff members," said senior George Decherney. "Their business is also great for the local economy."

Broken families fight for immigration reform

By Sean McNally
STAFF WRITER

Students, families, and experts gathered for a town hall meeting on Sept. 3 at the Congressional United Church of Christ to voice their support for a new, cohesive immigration policy. The current system has left many families separated by hundreds of miles.

While Sen. Kay Hagan was invited to attend the meeting, she was not present.

"All I ask for is that my husband be allowed to return to his children," Sandra Hernandez said as her son stood next to her, translating her Spanish to English.

Hernandez stood at the podium to tell her story for a town hall meeting on immigration policy reform. She is a naturalized citizen but she and her husband are separated by hundreds of miles and by the current immigration policy.

When Hernandez first heard the news that there would be a six-month delay until her husband would be able to join her, she thought, "How can it take six months to review a marriage license?" That was

in 2006, and now three years later, her husband is still in El Salvador.

Hernandez spoke about the strain that this separation puts on her family, "I worry every day that our marriage and our happy home will never be the same."

It is common for immigrants to have trouble getting their families to join them. Gerard Chapman, an immigration lawyer, explained that some delays could take up to 23 years.

Among the people in the audience, there were other speakers with similar stories—teachers and students affected by the current immigration system.

Sen. Hagan did send a staff member to listen and report back to her. People like Sandra Hernandez came to tell their stories in the hope that Hagan would eventually hear them.

Mike Palmer, an elementary school teacher, told the story of one of his students whom he called Lucia. She was having a bad day in class so Palmer asked her to stay behind and talk with him.

Lucia explained that her par-

ents were taken in the middle of the night. Because Lucia had been born in the United States, she was left behind.

Palmer asked her how, with no parents around, she got to school that day. She simply said that she had gotten up on her own and gone out to wait for the school bus by herself as yet another example of a family separated by the immigration system.

While not all the stories were personal accounts of broken families, it was a central issue to every speaker's presentation. Andrew Brod, the director of the Center for Business and Economic Research at UNCG, who was asked to come and speak about the economics of immigration, even made the argument that it was economically beneficial to allow the families of immigrants to come live with them.

Sen. Hagan's staffer ended the meeting by reading the notes that he had taken, explaining that he wanted everyone to know exactly what issues would be brought back to Washington. The Senate intends to introduce legislation on the issue in September.