

The Salemite

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Thursday, February 20, 1975

editorial

Editor's note: The following is one student's views on the proposed student Senate discussed at the last SGA meeting. It is the feeling of the Salemite that students should be informed of both pros and cons before voting for or against the proposal. We actively encourage all discussion in this matter. Please address all letters to the editor of the Salemite and place in the Salemite box in Main Hall mail room.

There are many positive aspects to a Senate system, and they will soon be presented and further discussed, but I feel that ideas in favor of our present system should be remembered before all of us Progressive Salem Students start to knock out what still might be a good thing, simply for the sake of Change.

Under our present SGA system every individual has a vote. The business at SGA meetings thus far hasn't been the most exciting, but certainly facets of the actual meetings can be altered. For example, only announcements of immediate importance should be made, with more use made of the announcement sheet. New constitutions or amendments should be posted before SGA meetings, the responsibility thus placed upon the students for reading them, and then in the meetings the changes would be simply explained and discussed. But more important, major issues, and problems concerning academics, clubs, SGA, (of course, the Refectory), and the Outside World should be discussed by all the students. This would, I believe, bring our campus closer together, because of the exchange of ideas within the entire student body, as well as negating the problems we have presently. These and other possibilities are inherent in retaining the structure we have now.

I almost reached that conclusion until we had our last SGA meeting. Suddenly, unexpectedly, there came a glimmer of hope. At our last meeting people spoke their minds — they said what they believed, and nobody was "planted in the audience". Indifference dwindled for a few short moments and Concern prevailed. The process of Thought was evident on the part of those present and a shared experience happened in Hanes.

For this reason I believe our present system can work. Granted, the business at SGA meetings thus far hasn't been the most exciting, but certainly facets of the actual meetings can be altered. For example, only announcements of immediate importance should be made, with more use made of the announcement sheet. New constitutions or amendments should be posted before SGA meetings, the responsibility thus placed upon the students for reading them, and then in the meetings the changes would be simply explained and discussed. But more important, major issues, and problems concerning academics, clubs, SGA, (of course, the Refectory), and the Outside World should be discussed by all the students. This would, I believe, bring our campus closer together, because of the exchange of ideas within the entire student body, as well as negating the problems we have presently. These and other possibilities are inherent in retaining the structure we have now.

Salem is, in addition, small enough to have an SGA as we have it now; if we were the size of Carolina or even UNC-G, it would be impossible. What does this mean? Perhaps that here at Salem it is still possible to retain our individuality, and not become just one of many.

If you have considered a Senate system, I am sure you have considered its pros. I would like to present some things I have considered. It has become evident to me just this year the fact that unless you are involved in change or are present when change occurs, that you do not realize what went into effecting something different. (ie, We can't imagine not having self-scheduling exams, wearing skirts to class, not smoking in our rooms, or not intervisiting.) Pretty soon, these privileges are taken for granted, and then often abused. I believe there is a possibility that a Senate system would be really great — but for how long? Four or five years? Would representatives who did not experience the change in this system take it as seriously as would those who have considered it thoroughly, its pros and cons, and strived to make it work initially? Would these people in five, ten years from now make a sincere effort to present the opinions of those they represent?

It is also possible that a Senate member, in presenting to her constituency the issues and details of meeting discussions, does not convey the entire issue accurately. This is simply a possibility, but it happens. However, if she takes her job seriously, this is unlikely . . . just something to think about.

I admit, these points have their counterpoints, but I maintain that our present system can work. Many people suggested knocking out the quorum at meetings. It sounds like people want the right and privilege to vote, but not the responsibility that goes with it. In addition, if we delete the quorum, we begin to break down the system we have now. We do indeed "free disinterested students from the horrible burden of SGA meetings," but we also begin a deterioration of the organization we have. Without a quorum, how long will it be before even a simple majority doesn't show because they think the other half will?

So what does that leave us? It leaves us with no compromise. Either a Senate system or SGA. For yourself as well as for Salemites in years to come, think about it. The choice is yours.

An Interested Student

Letter to The Editor

Dear Editor:

Ron Hudson, a Spanish guitarist was one of the four Lecture-Assembly speakers this year for Salem College. He came on February 3, 1975 playing classical and flamenco music. In case you are not sure exactly when Ron Hudson came, it was the Monday over January Break. (Approximately thirty-five students were on campus.) Upon inquiring further, I found out that the schedule was set last year and a contract had been signed. Therefore, we could not cancel. But, we could have rescheduled the program.

When the chairman of the committee was confronted with this prospect, he informed me they had tried but had been unable to get in touch with Mr. Hudson during the month of January.

Everyone I have talked with said the program was quite good. There is some talk about having him back next year so the students can enjoy the concert. Maybe next year he can "meet with some classes" like the announcement sheet said. It will only cost an additional \$350.00 to have him back.

Katherine Skinner

S. G. A. Questionnaire Incites Comments

1. Do you read your announcement sheet?  
 Yes — 96.3%  
 No — 0.16%  
 Sometimes — 2.1%

2. What would make Student Government meetings more beneficial to you?

PREVALENT COMMENTS:

- Start on time
- No required attendance
- Abolish meetings
- Strict attendance policy enforced
- More student participation
- More organization and less announcements
- More detailed information on events
- Announcements read by one person
- Do away with reading constitutions
- Can't force student interest
- Better publicizing of meetings
- Shorter and to the point
- Not required unless important voting
- Less trivial

SUGGESTIONS:

- Publicize key issues before meetings by newsletter
- More student discussion of issues; get more students involved
- Have speaker on a certain topic come
- Student discussion on previously announced topic

3. As an alternative to the present structure of Student Government, we have been considering changing to a Senate. This would mean that a small segment of students would represent you in making ALL decisions concerning the student body.

Making such a radical change will entail revamping the entire system. However, if you feel that the present structure of SGA is inadequate, it merits serious consideration on the part of every student.

How does this idea strike you?

PREVALENT COMMENTS:

- Good idea to have Senate: 43.67%
- Keep SGA as is: 25.9%
- Make changes in present system: 15.96%
- Abstentions: 6.33%
- Want to know more: 5.72%
- Noncommittal: 2.40%

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The Idiot and the Oddity

By Marilyn Turner and Sherrin Gardner

My seat was in upright position, my seatbelt was fastened, and my hands were playing white knuckles on the armrests as our charter plane glided in for a smooth landing and taxied towards the main terminal at Greensboro airport. I had been a courteous passenger up to this point, but when that plane touched the runway, I immediately tugged loose the seatbelt and stood in my seat to fetch my coat and scarf from the rack above. The stewardess only had to reprimand me once, however, for by the time she had politely told me to return to my seat, I had what I wanted, had put it all on, had gathered my precious parcels, and was ready to depart. All systems were go— heartbeat a little fast, respiration in short shallow breaths, digestion up (almost in my throat, to be exact), eyes beaming, and mouth running smoothly. I could just imagine all my fans out there, craning their necks to find who would spot me first. "There she is—the one in the wrinkled coat" or "That's her—the one with the kilt, scarf and ski sweaters on," or "There she is—the one with the stringy hair." It got a little depressing the more I thought about how I would appear to them after a month, until I looked around in the plane and saw numerous string heads of hair, copious kilt, ski sweater and scarf combinations, and a plethora of wrinkled coats. They would spot me regardless of all the others though, because I would be the one with the smile. There they would be as I emerged from the plane's exit and paused next to the stewardess at the top of the stairway ramp . . . Mother, Daddy, Nonnie, Hedge, Stephen, David, and several friends from school to boot. At least six pairs of gloved hands frantically waving as I grinned in recognition, the breeze waving my scarf in a return gesture. And then I'd stumble down the steps and into their arms, only to be squeezed and kissed and showered with questions.

"Miss, will you please move your package. You're blocking the aisle," the stewardess said politely again, though slowly forward, leaning more than actually moving, as the exit cleared and the mobile stairway rolled into place. As we began to inch out of the front exit past the neatly dressed stewardesses who had taken the convenient opportunity to freshen their make-up and comb their hair before landing, apprehension gripped my arm and held me temporarily. But quickly I broke away and stepped out onto the ramp.

There were no waving masses there, only a black sidewalk. And I suddenly found my coat and sweaters and scarves a bit unnecessary in the 70° kite-flying weather. Nevertheless, I hurried through the glass door into the terminal where I saw them . . . millions of them, parents, friends, siblings, boyfriends . . . a whole silent film of eager people separated from me by a glass partition. And then suddenly, a square segment of the glass wall opened and the sound rushed out like a sonic boom. I walked through the mass of manic mamas, hoping to see my fan club at any time. But they weren't there. I couldn't find them anywhere. "Mama," I called out, and six near-by mamas turned to stare at me as strangers.

Just as the tears began to well in my eyes, I felt a friendly tap on my shoulder. "They're over there," she said. "Your mother's looking for you." I followed her line of direction and found my mother and grandmother still craning their necks to see if I remained on the plane. I tapped Mama on the back and hugged her warmly, went to find Nonnie, who still hadn't seen me, and then sat down to wait for my luggage. After all of the anticipation, a fter the brief moment of disappointment at being without fans at the airport and after the relief of finding them, it was most pleasant to just sit with the ones I loved. The best part about going away is always coming home. Welcome home, Salemites!

On March 5 the YWCA will conduct their annual auction. Presented during dinner, the Y will be selling dinners, trips and bake goods, all donated by Salem faculty and administration. Proceeds from the auction go to the World University Service, which received \$600 from last year's auction.

The Salemite

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