

Duke University

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MEMORANDUM

TO: DSG Senators, Executive Officers and Cabinet Members

FROM: Elliott Wolf

DATE: April 26, 2007

RE: Update on Duke Student Government's activities over the spring 2007 semester

First and foremost, it has been a pleasure working with all of you over the past year; thanks for all the time spent in meetings, on email, talking with other students and, most importantly, getting things done. I am quite relieved to have the opportunity to sleep again and enjoy a restful senior year, but will certainly miss this position. I have great faith in next year's senate, cabinet, and executive board, particularly President Paul Slattery, to continue DSG's mission of advocating on behalf of student interests, and look forward to seeing them carry out their agenda.

Without further ado, this memo is meant to provide an overview of all of our organizational accomplishments for the spring 2007, as we have provided at the end of summer and fall of 2006. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to email me (egw4@duke.edu). This memorandum does not include most ongoing projects, as the new executive board will determine what it will follow through on over the summer:

Accomplishments

- At the invitation of the Chair of the Durham Martin Luther King Commemoration Committee, the DSG President and the President of the North Carolina Central University Student Government Association jointly delivered the "Call to Unity" at the annual Durham MLK celebration. In attendance were numerous community members and government officials, who reacted positively to the joint statement delivered on behalf of the students of Duke and NCCU. [See attached speech].
- In order to cover the increased cost of Duke's new primary food service contractor, COMPASS Group, administrators proposed an increase in dining fees of approximately \$417 per undergraduate student. When this figure was originally disclosed during the December meeting of the Business and Finance committee, student representatives on the committee expressed concern that the proposed fee increase would encourage seniors to live off-campus and make Duke less financially accessible. With the assistance of the Vice President for

Finance, the Executive Vice Provost for Finance and Administration and the Executive Vice President, a compromise was reached that involved restructuring the freshman meal plan and increasing the University subsidy to Dining Services, allowing next year's increase in dining fees to match inflation.

- Following discussions between DSG and the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Executive Vice Provost for Finance and Administration, the “administrative portion” of the Student Activity Fee will now appear as a separate line item on students’ bursar bills from the portion of the fee that directly supports student groups. Currently, the “Student Activity Fee” line item includes both the fees that support student groups through Duke Student Government and on-campus programming through the Duke University Union, and an administrative fee to support the Division of Student Affairs. As of the 2007-2008 academic year, the administrative portion of the fee assessed for overhead will exceed the portion of the fee that directly supports student activities. Although we do not support these increases, separating the fees will allow students and their families to better understand where their money is going and allow the Student Activity Fee to be completely student-controlled. [See attached email to Jim Roberts and Peter Lange, and response from Larry Moneta]
- The DSG Line Monitor Committee ran a very successful Krzyzewskiville in preparation for the February 7 home game against the University of North Carolina. Due to the peculiarities of the 2006-2007 basketball schedule, the tenting season was shortened from two months to one month, and students only tented for the UNC game. DSG, the Duke University Union and the Duke University Stores coordinated various events in K-ville near the end of the tenting season, which included student bands, giveaways and contests. In addition, there were markedly fewer transports of students to the Emergency Room due to excessive alcohol consumption than in recent years.
- The Vice President for Athletics and Campus Services and several other student leaders (inside and outside of DSG) successfully delayed implementation of the new West Campus faculty-in-residence apartments. The \$3.5 million project was approved by the Building and Grounds Committee in December, but student representatives to the committee and several Trustees considered the expenditure excessive and questioned the impact the apartments would have on faculty-student interaction, especially considering the opportunity costs in programming and other initiatives that could be far more successful. In addition, the project would have eliminated approximately 50 West Campus beds, further exacerbating the housing shortage on West and forcing more students to move to Central Campus or move off-campus. [See attached memorandum from David Snider]
- After the implementation of the new C-4 (“West-Central”) bus route over the summer and the bus to Brightleaf Square/Ninth Street, the Athletics and Campus Services Committee has successfully pushed for a myriad of other transportation-related changes at Duke. There is now direct East-West service on weekdays and an additional bus on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. Students who live off-campus but regularly commute by foot or by bike can now receive 12 free “bad weather day” parking passes per semester that will allow them to park on-campus. In addition, there is now significant student representation on the Parking Ticket Appeals Committee. Lastly, thanks to ACS’ efforts, Parking and Transportation filled several potholes near Markham Street and on Towerview Drive.

- Working in conjunction with the Director of Athletics and the Director of Facilities for the Athletic Department, the Athletics and Campus Services Committee extended the hours of Wilson Gym. Wilson now opens three hours earlier, at 9:00 AM, on Sundays, and will stay open one hour later on weekdays for a trial period beginning in the spring semester. Extended hours will help significantly during the tenting season and also provide an outlet for students at night.
- Thanks to the efforts of the Chair of the Student Organization and Finance Committee, the DSG Senate passed several important changes to SOFC bylaws designed to significantly streamline the funding and group registration processes. As a result of those changes, organizations whose applications for DSG chartering and/or recognition are approved by SOFC no longer automatically come before the DSG Senate. The DSG Executive Vice President will inform the DSG General Body of SOFC's recommendations shortly after each SOFC meeting, and if no senator objects the group will not have to appear before the Senate. Earlier this year, SOFC bylaws were changed by executive order to similarly adjust the funding process as well; if no senator objects to SOFC allocations under \$1,500, the request does not go before the Senate. These changes allow groups to gain status and obtain funding more quickly and allow the Senate to concentrate on more pressing matters.
- In response to concerns raised last year about the process by which DSG and the Inter-Community Council select the Undergraduate Young Trustee, DSG and the ICC have proposed and implemented several changes to the process that were approved unanimously by ICC and DSG. The new process give DSG and ICC equal representation on the committee that nominates the three finalists for Young Trustee and in the final body that votes on the winner. DSG longer has an overwhelming majority in the joint session that picks the young trustee, but plays significant role in vetting the applicants. In addition, in order to ensure the impartiality of the process, we stopped permitting members of the ICC who chose to run for Young Trustee to nominate replacements to serve on the Young Trustee selection committee. This ensures that the process is as fair and impartial as possible and that neither DSG nor ICC will have the final say in the selection. Benjamin Abram (Pratt '07) was elected as the new Undergraduate Young Trustee in February. [See attached article from The Chronicle]
- At the request of the DSG President and with the assistance of the DSG Vice President for Athletics & Campus Services, the DSG Chief of Staff led a task force to examine the current funding model for Auxiliary Services. Auxiliaries such as Dining, Parking and Transportation, and Housing, among others, are currently limited in that they have to earn enough revenue to support their operations. This often inhibits their ability to contribute to the academic mission of the University and facilitate community among students. A report, which includes a detailed overview of the current model and several recommendations on how it could be changed allow Auxiliary Services to better align its activities with the goals of the University, is included in this update. [See attached report from Paul Slattery]
- DSG was heavily involved in providing student input to the Campus Culture Initiative and, following its release, undertook multiple initiatives in response to the final report. DSG organized a town hall meeting, open to all students, with the Provost, the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, and other faculty and staff. We also provided input to the follow-up

process, under the direction of the Provost, by facilitating contacts between senior administrators and numerous student organizations. We have also been involved in discussions about potential policy changes and facilities improvements that are being considered in response to the CCI. [See attached Chronicle article, report from Elliott Wolf and Paul Slattery, and editorial from Elliott Wolf]

- Thanks to the assistance of the Vice President for Campus Services and the Office of the President, the Athletics and Campus Services committee secured permanent funding for the new “C-5” route between West Campus and Downtown Durham. The route operates every Thursday, Friday and Saturday night and data collected by Parking and Transportation indicate that several hundred students utilize the bus each night. The route was funded this spring as part of a pilot program initiated by Duke Student Government and Duke Parking & Transportation Services. [See attached Chronicle article]
- The Student Affairs Committee, with the assistance of the new Director of Student Life, surveyed Student Leaders and the entire student body on the Office of Student Activities and Facilities. OSAF is primarily responsible for helping students plan events, start and maintain student organizations, and manage student activity fee allocations. The results will be used as new staff members are hired and OSAF reevaluates its policies and procedures. The data is posted on the DSG website and was presented to the DSG General Body in April. [See attached survey]
- With the assistance of the Chair of the Student Organization and Finance Committee, DSG established a fund that will subsidize keg beer at on-campus events. Earlier this year the Executive Vice President agreed to pay for Alcohol Law Enforcement-certified bartenders for keg beer at on-campus events, a requirement stipulated by the University’s alcohol policy. This fund will allow keg beer (in limited amounts) to be completely free to student organizations who wish to increase turnout to their events by adding alcohol. This fund was created in response to several initiatives, including the CCI, that have sought to reduce the centrality of alcohol at student social events by integrating it with worthwhile programming and activities.
- The Community Liaison and the Community Interaction Committee solicited nominations from students for seven “Duke Excellence Team” awards to recognize non-faculty employees. Over 250 nominations for over 180 employees were submitted, and all of those who were nominated were treated to a banquet that was attended by President Brodhead, other senior administrators, and DSG executives. Those who won the award were treated to a free dinner for two at the Washington Duke Inn and numerous other prizes. DSG now plans to annually recognize employees in this manner.
- In response to numerous complaints from students about their experiences interacting with Durham Police, DSG petitioned the office of Judicial Affairs to change several practices that influence police encounters with students. Currently, Judicial Affairs will act on any citation issued to a Duke student, regardless of whether the citation was legally obtained or substantive enough to warrant criminal charges. Many citations issued to students have not resulted in criminal proceedings due to lack of evidence or illegally obtained evidence, but were still pursued by Judicial Affairs. Since Judicial Affairs will act on any information it

receives and serve the interests of the police regardless of their professional conduct, the current policy gives them a rational incentive to violate the rights of students in the course of obtaining information. [See attached memorandum from Elliott Wolf and response from Stephen Bryan].

- With the assistance of the Vice Provost for Academic and Administrative Services and the University Registrar, DSG pushed successfully to rearrange the fall 2007 exam schedule to extend the weekend reading period prior to finals. Formerly, exams were to start on Monday night of exam week, with a short reading period for three hours on Thursday morning. The Thursday reading period was incorporated into the weekend reading period, allowing students an extra night to study for exams by delaying the start of exams until the Tuesday of exam week. DSG will push for further changes in the fall reading period, but this could be implemented as early as next semester and did not involve significant changes to the Academic Calendar.
- Following the implementation of a University-sponsored course evaluation system, the Academic Affairs Committee facilitated an arrangement with pick-a-prof.com, an independent course evaluation system that has many more features than the current system. Pick-a-prof imported all data available from the current system and incorporated data on class schedules and professors from the ACES system. The site allows students to plan their schedules, view grade distributions in courses, submit and review detailed course evaluations and communicate with the authors of those evaluations. [See attached Chronicle article]
- Following a significant growth in printing volume on E-Print, a system that offers free, unlimited printing to students and faculty, DSG worked with OIT and the Duke University Libraries on a system designed to decrease usage without restricting students' academic needs. The new system, to be implemented in the fall, will save paper by automatically printing on both sides of a page and incorporate a "soft quota" system that will inform students of their print volume and require them to request increases in quota as needed. This system was implemented both to encourage environmentally conscious printing and to reduce the financial resources required to sustain E-Print. [See attached Chronicle article and policy]
- At the request of the Honor Council, representatives of the Undergraduate Judicial Board, and the Vice Provost for Academic & Administrative Services, DSG agreed to hold a referendum on proposed changes to Duke Community Standard during our spring elections. The new version clarifies certain components of the current version and more directly ties the community standard to undergraduate policy. After several changes were made at the request of the DSG Executive Committee, the DSG Senate endorsed the new Community Standard unanimously and it was passed by 74% of students who voted in the spring DSG elections. This is the first time that any version of the Community Standard was approved by popular vote. [See attached version of the Community Standard referendum]
- In conjunction with members of the Senior Class Council and administrators in the Division of Student Affairs, DSG placed a referendum on our spring election ballot to shift funding for class councils from residential fees to the Student Activity Fee. Class councils are currently funded through residential fees, which are only paid by students living on-campus. Since the majority of the senior class lives off-campus, the Senior Class Council has faced significant

financial problems over the past several years. Beginning in the 2008-2009 school year, it will receive as much funding as the other class councils and will no longer have to seek external sources of funding. [See attached referendum]

- After hearing that former women's basketball coach Gail Goestenkors was considering accepting the head coaching position at the University of Texas, DSG worked with Student Affairs, Women's Basketball, Dining Services and the Pratt School of Engineering to organize a rally to show student and community support for Coach G. The Rally featured performances by the marching band, custom-printed Coach G water bottles and free pizza. Several hundred people attended the rally, including members of the men's and women's basketball teams and the women's basketball coaching staff. Although we were ultimately unsuccessful, the rally served a significant show of support for the women's team. [See attached blast email from Elliott Wolf]
- Thanks to the assistance of the Executive Vice President, DSG successfully petitioned the University to seek a bonfire permit from the Durham Fire Marshal following the home women's basketball game against the University of North Carolina. That bonfire was the first held since 2005 and the first ever held in honor of the women's basketball team. [See attached Chronicle article]