

Duke University

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MEMORANDUM

TO: DSG Senators, Cabinet Members and Executives

FROM: Elliott Wolf

DATE: December 8, 2006

RE: Updates on Duke Student Government's activities over the fall 2006 semester

It has been a very busy and productive semester for DSG as we have worked to reform our organization and better advocate on behalf of student interests. Following up on my December 6 presentation to the DSG General Body, this memo is meant to provide you with a detailed accounting of all of our major organizational accomplishments from the fall semester and major initiatives that are currently underway. We are still formulating our complete agenda for the spring, which will be sent out shortly after the beginning of the spring semester. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me:

Accomplishments

- After extensive lobbying by DSG, in partnership with members of the community and Durham City officials, the North Carolina Department of Transportation approved the construction of a stoplight at the intersection of Broad and Perry streets off of East Campus. The stoplight was constructed by the Durham government and should be operational before Christmas. A graduate student was seriously injured there over the summer, and several students and community members have been nearly killed crossing the street over the past several years. In addition, the speed limit was lowered from 35mph to 25mph to further improve pedestrian safety [see attached memo and articles from The Chronicle and The Herald-Sun].
- Only days before the first home game of the 2006-2007 basketball season, DSG executives and Line Monitors were informed by Duke Fire Safety that, due to fire safety regulations, students would no longer be allowed to stand in the front row of the student section in Cameron Indoor Stadium—a change that would have had a significant visible impact on the student section and that would have limited the number of students who could be accommodated in Cameron. DSG lobbied forcefully against this change and, thanks to the support of the Executive Vice President, we later received a notification from the Durham Fire Marshall that what was permissible in Cameron last year is permissible this year. This change only affected students during the first two home games and was luckily overruled before the start of the regular season [see attached email and Chronicle article].

- After the implementation of the new C-4 (“West-Central”) bus route over the summer, 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 DSG and the cooperation of the Greek community, tailgating was able to take place in the Blue Zone prior to home football games. DSG conveyed administrative expectations to student groups and helped ensure that student tailgating was both safe and not disruptive to parking zones established by Duke Parking & Transportation. Although tailgating was able to continue in a recognized manner, there were significant declines in the number of calls to Emergency Medical Services, violent altercations and other problems commonly associated with student tailgating. If this cooperation and coordination can be sustained, tailgating should continue next year [see attached Towerview article].
- The Head Line Monitor and the DSG Executive, with the approval of the DSG Senate, made several important changes to the Krzyzewskiville tenting policy for the 2006-2007 season. In direct response to a disruptive incident last year perpetrated by students visiting from the University of North Carolina, DSG is declining to register students who attended UNC full-time in the fall 2006 semester as tenters. In addition, due to the specifics of the 2006-2007 basketball schedule, tenting was limited to only the UNC game; the tenting season will last from January 7 to February 7, roughly half as long as the 2005-2006 season [see attached articles from The Daily Tar Heel, The Chronicle, and the Herald-Sun].
- COMPASS Group arrived at Duke over the summer as our new primary food service provider, replacing ARAMARK Corporation. Although the East Campus Marketplace has seen the biggest improvement, several issues are still lingering with the Great Hall on West Campus. Throughout the course of the semester, the Duke University Student Dining Advisory Committee and DSG have worked with officials to make improvements to both the Marketplace and the Great Hall. Improvements made to the Great Hall include the return of Sitar Indian Palace and a self-serve salad bar, the introduction of hot and cold wraps, the reconfiguration of several food stations and the extension of hours for lunch. Improvements to the Marketplace include changed music selection, adjustments in staffing at certain popular stations and increased variety [see attached memo from the DUSDAC co-chairs].

- Throughout the course of the year, Duke has undertaken several important efforts designed to examine itself in the wake of last spring's "Lacrosse Incident." The Campus Culture Initiative, due to report in the spring, is charged with examining our on-campus culture and suggesting changes to Duke's institutional structure, policies and practices. DSG has played an important role in advising the CCI, by inviting members of the CCI to several meetings, soliciting input from individual students and student organizations, and by directly representing students through membership on the committee. One major step involved the writing of a 7,000-word report on alcohol culture that represented the views of the students on the CCI's alcohol subcommittee. The report was written originally by the DSG President, revised by the DSG President and DSG Chief of Staff and vetted by the students on the CCI subcommittee [see attached report and email to undergraduates].
- 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 several changes to the process that were approved unanimously by ICC during the last meeting of the semester. 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. If the plan is approved by the DSG Senate, DSG will no longer have an overwhelming majority in the joint session that picks the young trustee, but will play a more significant role in vetting the applicants. This ensures that neither DSG nor ICC will have the final say in the selection process [see attached Chronicle article].
- Through the Community Interaction Committee and the newly created Community Liaison position, DSG has coordinated several initiatives and events designed to facilitate interactions between students at Duke and North Carolina Central University. Early in the semester, DSG sponsored a dinner with student leaders from NCCU in order to facilitate collaboration between student groups at Duke and NCCU. On October 15, DSG co-sponsored the Unity Fest, an event at the American Tobacco Campus that was attended by several hundred students from Duke and NCCU. On November 4, DSG invited 25 students from NCCU to sit in the student section during the Duke v. NCCU basketball game in Cameron Indoor Stadium. We continue to interact regularly with SGA and University officials at NCCU and are actively working with them on additional projects [see attached articles from the News & Observer, The Chronicle and The Daily Tar Heel].

- Thanks to the efforts of the Community Liaison and the Community Interaction, DSG has continued to build relationships with our neighbors immediately off-campus and elsewhere in Durham. At the beginning of the semester, DSG distributed guides to students living off-campus that highlighted complaints commonly voiced by neighbors and suggested ways that students can build relationships with other members of the community. DSG provided financial and logistical support for Trinity Park's annual "FallFest" block party, which was also attended by students after it was advertised on-campus. The Community Liaison is also meeting weekly with the Durham Human Relations Commission, and others in DSG continue to meet regularly with members of the community and Durham city officials in order to further develop relations between students and the community.
- In preparation for the 2006 Midterm elections, the Community Interaction Committee coordinated a voter registration drive and placed voter registration applications in prominent places on-campus. The voter registration drive was in the context of our wider efforts to better integrate Duke students with the Durham community, as we sought to establish that Duke students have a civic responsibility to vote as citizens of Durham. The DSG Programming Fund provided funding for shuttles from both the East and West Campus bus stops on Election Day that allowed students easy access to polling places.
- Thanks to the efforts of the Director of Student Services, DSG revived a popular program that was previously undertaken with the Duke University Libraries to lend new, popular movies to students. The program (Devil DVD) was expanded to West Campus and will feature 10 new movies every week in both Lilly Library and Perkins Library. It is currently supported financially by the DSG Surplus Account, Campus Council and the Duke University Libraries [see attached proposal from the Director of Student Services].
- With financial and logistical support from the Pratt School of Engineering and Duke Women's Basketball, DSG coordinated two "pre-parties" designed to turn students out for women's basketball games. The first event was held prior to the USA v. Australia game, a replay of the 2004 world championship game, and featured several players, free food and drinks and music. The second event was billed as a "study break" and held on Sunday December 10, right before the start of final exams, and featured free Q-Shack Barbecue, pizza, drinks and entertainment [see attached blast emails to undergraduates].
- DSG has gained a better understand important issues and served to educate the student body by inviting key administrators to DSG General Body meetings. To date, we have heard presentations from the Provost, the Vice President for Student Affairs, the Associate University Librarian, the Director of Dining Services, the Director of Parking & Transportation Services, the Dean of Students, and the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education & Dean of Trinity College, among others, and are looking forward to a full schedule in the spring [see link to meeting minutes and agendas].

Major Initiatives Currently Underway

- In order to positively influence the Duke social scene and make on-campus events safer and more inclusive, we are currently seeking to augment several existing dining and social spaces with controlled alcohol distribution and other features that would allow them to host

registered events. Such spaces would allow groups without housing sections to host on-campus events and also bring some of the events that currently occur off-campus at various bars and clubs back on campus. To that end, we are currently examining the possibility of building a bar and adding other features to Alpine Bagel, among other spaces on-campus. The space currently occupied by Alpine used to house the Cambridge Inn, a popular social space that was converted to its current form in the 1990s.

- 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 is leading 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 will be released in the spring with several recommendations on how the current model could be changed to allow Auxiliary Services to better align its activities with the goals of the University.
- In partnership with Parking and Transportation Services, the Athletics and Campus Services is currently trying to reduce various parking fines for students. They are working to define “pick up/drop off” zones in fire lanes where students can park temporarily without receiving a \$200 parking ticket. The Vice President for Campus Services has supported the idea and students should (hopefully) see lower/fewer parking fines in the spring [see attached memo from the DSG Vice President for Athletics and Campus Services to the Vice President for Campus Services.
- The Athletics and Campus Services Committee is currently undertaking a number of independent projects designed to make life easier for students. This projects include an ATM and an ice machine in the McClendon Tower in the West Edens Link, electrical outlets in Krzyzewskiville, cars and bicycles that can be rented or borrowed for student use, and an online service that will allow groups to send text messages to their members.
- Under the leadership of the DSG Executive Vice President, DSG is currently undertaking an initiative entitled the “Duke Story Project.” The project is designed to collect stories of days in the lives of individual Duke students and from them infer certain themes about what students like about our campus culture and what students would like to change about our campus culture. A final report will be written in the spring and will include all of the stories submitted to DSG. Although the report is meant primarily to provide input to the Campus Culture Initiative, it will also be released publicly and sent to administrators [see attached Chronicle article].
- The Director of Student Life arrived over the summer as the new director of the Office of Student Activities and Facilities, and he has already made several significant changes to OSAF that were fully supported by DSG. As the governor of student groups, however, we want to provide OSAF with as much feedback as possible as further changes are made in the upcoming months. To that end, we are surveying all student organizations on their experiences with OSAF, in order to evaluate both the services that OSAF provides and the individuals who currently work in OSAF. The Student Affairs Committee has already

written the survey and it will be distributed shortly to the leaders of all registered student organizations. The data will be made public and a report will be written suggesting possible changes based on student feedback [see attached survey from the Student Affairs Committee].

- Since its opening, the Nasher Museum of Art has hosted several extremely successful parties that have drawn over 1,000 students. These events, which often feature music, food and controlled alcohol distribution, have become a model of the “ideal” Duke social scene, and naturally groups want to emulate them. The currently exclusive catering contract that governs the Nasher often prevents student organizations from hosting events there, however, and thus DSG is pushing for an affordable catering option. We are closely watching developments as the current contract expires in July of 2007 [see attached Chronicle article].

CC:

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