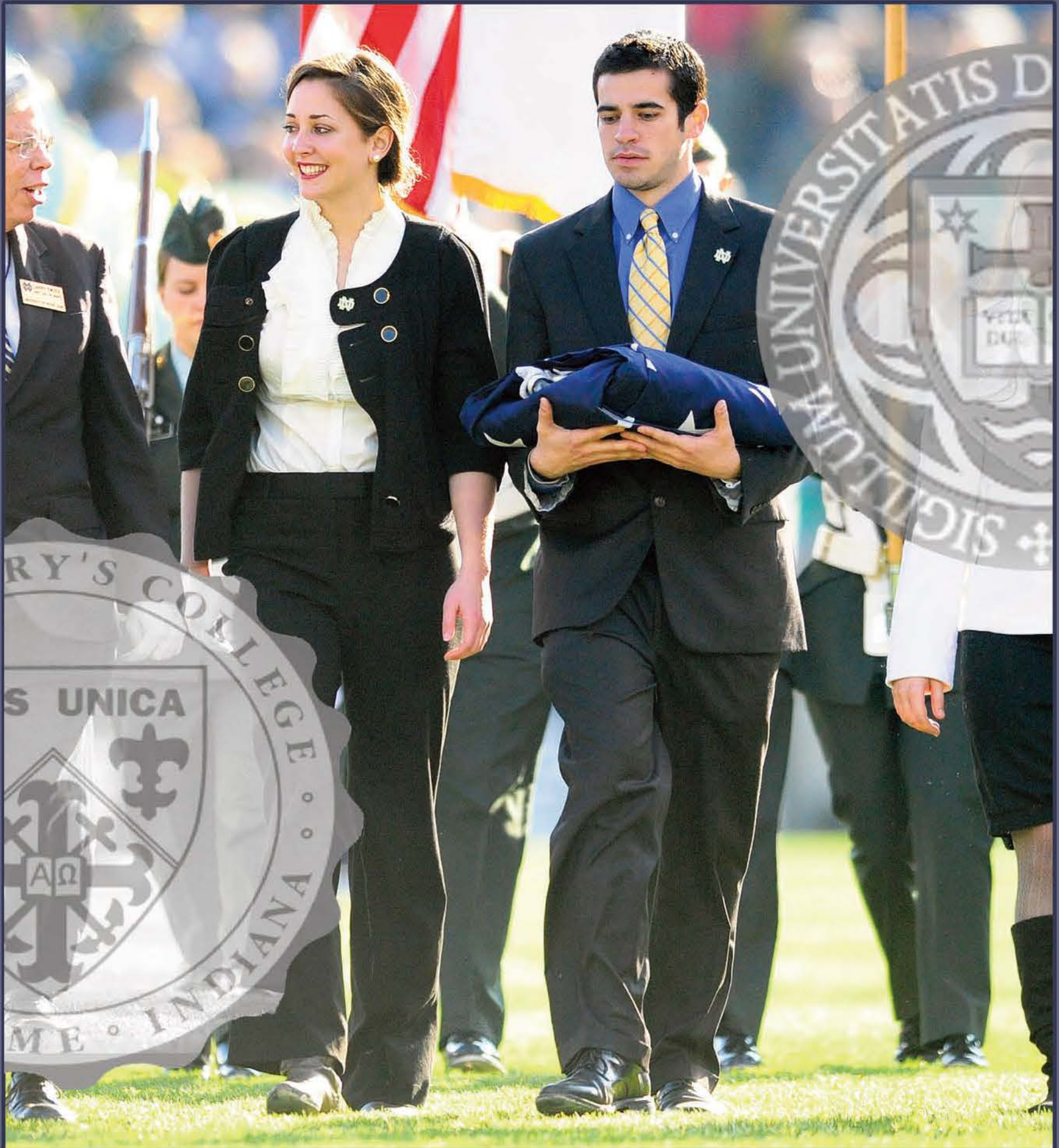


THE OBSERVER

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★★★★ in focus ★★★★★

STUDENT GOVERNMENT



NOTRE DAME AND SAINT MARY'S STUDENT GOVERNMENT 2009-2010

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Leaders look beyond campus bubble

Schmidt, Weber launch yearlong Global Water Initiative to bring clean water to African village



TOM LA/The Observer

Student vice body president Cynthia Weber and student body president Grant Schmidt don matching Global Water Initiative T-shirts at a Student Senate meeting in September. The Initiative is a yearlong student government project to fund the building of a well in Africa.

By MADELINE BUCKLEY
In Focus Writer

Student government aims to look at the “small things and the big things,” student body president Grant Schmidt said of his administration so far this year.

Schmidt and student body vice president Cynthia Weber have put in place some of the smaller things, like benches at Main Circle and mints in the dining halls.

But the duo is also looking to reach beyond the Notre Dame bubble.

This year, Schmidt and Weber launched the Global Water Initiative, a project where student government is raising money to build a well in an impoverished town in Africa to offer clean water to the residents.

The Initiative was part of their campaign platform from the beginning, and Weber said she was told that students wouldn't care about it. The role of student government is to address the needs of the students themselves.

“If that complaint was present from students, typically they would say that's not what student government should be doing,” Schmidt said. “We have the small things and the big

things. We have two different spectrums and two different focuses and that's how it should be in our opinion.”

In the past, Weber said student government has raised money for smaller and more short-term events and issues, but this is the first time student government has undertaken a yearlong project focused on one social problem.

“I was interested in doing something kind of monumental for student government,” she said. “The idea was to find a non-controversial issue and provide consistent education and fundraising on that same issue all year.”

And for Weber, the answer was simple: Water.

“Communities have unclean drinking water and people are getting sick,” Weber said. “The issue is cornerstone to so many other social problems.”

Student government is working with The Water Project, a non-profit organization that builds wells in poor areas of

Africa and India where people commonly die of water-borne diseases. The wells offer a clean source of water and cost about \$5,000 to build.

Schmidt and Weber said they are able to balance dealing with campus-related issues and the Global Water Initiative by delegating the work. Junior Roseberry and sophomore Justin Pham are co-directors of the project.

“We really wanted to find a long-range social issue for student government to focus

on,” Roseberry said. “A yearlong project is more unique.”

The goal of the project is to raise at least \$5,000 this year to build one well, most likely in a village in western Kenya, Roseberry said.

So far, student government has sold T-shirts to raise money and awareness and has encouraged dorms to hold events to raise money. Howard Hall's Totter for Water event earlier this year raised funds for the project.

The Office of Sustainability also pledged to donate the proceeds from the dorm

energy competition, which ran through the month of November.

Next semester, student government plans to put “wishing wells” in the dorms for students to donate spare change and release a benefit CD featuring campus musicians, Weber said.

“I was worried when campaigning that this would be one of those things that fell by the wayside, but the student response has been overwhelming,” Weber said.

But Schmidt and Weber said people have asked why they are focusing on Africa when there is poverty in South Bend.

“Notre Dame does play a big role in the community and we have been doing things in South Bend, but we

wanted to do something bigger,” Schmidt said.

Although student government primarily serves the student body of Notre Dame, Weber said the group is in a position to do more.

“We can really put on a united front and push one cause,” she said. “Honestly, we may not be able to give an apple to everybody but if we have one apple, we can still give it to somebody.”

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student body president

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Cynthia Weber
student body vice president

Editor's note: The Observer is publishing a comprehensive review of the Notre Dame and Saint Mary's student governments. This issue is intended to illustrate for students what elected officials are doing in their name, so they can enter the election season fully informed. Its intent is to provide an illuminating, unbiased assessment of the state of the Student Union.

OFFICE OF THE STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT

Schmidt, Weber address campus conveniences

Transpo, other administration initiatives help raise quality of life at Notre Dame while keeping students safe



TOM LA/The Observer

Student body president Grant Schmidt speaks to other student leaders at a COR meeting in November. Schmidt spent a lot of time focusing on keeping Notre Dame students safe off-cam-



TOM LA/The Observer

Student body vice president Cynthia Weber says the pledge of allegiance during a football game at Notre Dame Stadium.

By JOSEPH McMAHON
In Focus Writer

When former student body president Bob Reish and then-vice president Grant Schmidt took office, their administration marked a changing of the guard, as it was the first time in three years members of former student body president Dave Barron's administration had not controlled student government's top office.

Last year, Schmidt and current student body vice president Cynthia Weber handily defeated the opposing tickets to extend the group's legacy and maintain control of the student body presidency.

In their campaign platform, Schmidt and Weber promised to continue many of the previous administration's programs while also implementing several ideas of their own.

"We've taken a common sense approach, and we've addressed the issues that are of most concern to students," Schmidt said.

Focusing on the little things

Since taking office, Schmidt and Weber have made it a top concern of theirs to enhance student living on campus by increasing the number of small conveniences available.

Schmidt said many students often have a difficult time conceptualizing what student government does.

"I really do think that we've addressed campus conveniences in a different way," he said. "I've been in student government for four years, and sometimes people say, 'Hey I have no idea what you do?'"

While discussions about the intellectual life on campus may be stimulating for some, Schmidt said a primary complaint of many students was student government focused myopically on large initiatives while ignoring easy to implement ideas.

"My roommates [usually] don't care about what I do," Schmidt said of his work in student government. "But there recently have been several things that we've done that are relevant to them."

Among the small conveniences student government has achieved or planned this year are the lowering of prices in the Huddle, the renovation of the LaFortune arcade room, benches at main circle, mints in the dining hall and hot Grab 'n Go options.

"We joke about mints in the dining hall and we joke about the benches at main circle," Schmidt said.

Weber said although some of

those initiatives may sound insignificant, implementing smaller ideas helps build credibility and has helped paved the way for larger plans.

"Focusing on little things is really important and something student government should do because those conveniences are really important, but it also gives your organization a bit of credibility," she said. "If you're doing the things that everyone cares about, it gives our organization the credibility to focus on things like the Global Water Initiative."

The administration has also focused on responding to student complaints about large events. For example, Schmidt and Weber spearheaded the idea to move the Commencement ceremony into Notre Dame Stadium after hearing numerous complaints from students that they did not receive enough tickets for family and friends.

The idea of utilizing small programs to curb the average student's apathy towards student government is something of a holdover from the Reish administration, which used ideas such as the installation of printers in every dorm, the DVD rental service or the Last Lecture series (which has not been continued this year under Schmidt) to get students more involved with and interested in student government.

Schmidt said while he enjoys working of big-picture issues, adding small conveniences to everyday student life has been the most "relevant" effect of his administration.

"The Global Water Initiative is a big thing that I think is one of the key things that we've done, but I think as a whole the ability to address the things that people actually care about so we're not just up in our little student government office and patting each other on the back — that is the most relevant thing that we've done," he said.

Off-campus transportation

Coming into office last April, Schmidt and Weber immediately began working on their signature platform issue — off-campus transportation.

"Obviously this year we've highlighted off-campus living and off-campus safety because that was the thing that really rose to the top," Schmidt said.

Schmidt said students would routinely complain about unpleasant experiences in South Bend cabs.

"The main concerns we had were the rates fluctuating, them not having correct change, some being kind

of creepy and the general behavior of drivers," he said.

Schmidt said he attended meetings with the owners of several cab companies and many of the drivers that service Notre Dame themselves to help work out solutions. Among the many ideas the duo tried to push were pre-paid tickets for cabs and a \$2 flat rate to prevent cab drivers from taking advantage of students.

However, after several meetings with cab drivers produced few results, Schmidt and Weber turned their attention to creating Transpo route 7A — a new service using South Bend's Transpo system that runs late at night near many popular student destinations.

"Transpo was our huge transportation initiative and that's what we put our time into. It solved the problems I was worried about with cabs," Schmidt said. "It creates kind of the easy transportation solution."

Weber said Transpo's reliability — the fact that it runs on a schedule and is free for students — made it an easy solution to solve the seemingly complex problems with cabs.

"The idea with Transpo too is that it's reliable," she said. "So the idea with Transpo is that you know you have someone to rely on instead of hitchhiking or walking back."

Schmidt said the new Transpo route will also help improve community relations by keeping loud, intoxicated students out of the streets late at night — a selling point he used to help convince local South Bend leaders at the Community/Campus Action Coalition (CCAC).

"In my opinion it is a community relations effort because if people are walking home late you can hear [them] talking in the streets," he said. "It's keeping people in a group, keeping people on a bus and avoiding student complaints about safety issues, avoiding intoxicated people possibly walking."

Schmidt said his position as a member of CCAC was crucial in finding common ground with community leaders.

"If I wasn't present at CCAC I think the Transpo thing would have been received in a completely different way by the city," he said.

It is important to note that while Schmidt and Weber deserve a fair amount of credit for the project, the Office of Business Operations actually negotiated the contract and finalized the plans with Transpo.

In addition, Transpo route 7A is still very young — it was only first used this past weekend — and still in the testing phase. The project has a number of serious potential pit-

falls, including destructive behavior on the bus or students being too loud while waiting at the stops, which could undermine the entire project.

Ultimately, the success of the Schmidt-Weber administration is tied to the success of Transpo route 7A, and if the project is denied funding next year by the South Bend City Council or shut down because of students' behavior, the administration will have failed to address what Schmidt and Weber have identified as one of their signature issues.

'The 10,000 foot level'

While campus conveniences and improving local late-night transportation have been focal points of this administration, Schmidt said he and Weber have also been focusing on large issues "at the 10,000 foot level."

These issues include the Global Water Initiative, improving rector relationships, conducting a serious discussion on the intellectual life at Notre Dame and, most pressingly, off-campus safety and police relations.

"If there was one big issue that Cynthia and I have had to deal with it was off-campus safety," he said.

Schmidt made his presentation to the Board of Trustees on off-campus relations and has met several times with local police.

"In the meetings that we've had with South Bend Police, we've said we would like safety addressed, we like the presence of [SBPD] and we know there are areas of the city that deserve the same amount of attention," he said. "We want to make sure students aren't targeted."

Schmidt said it is difficult to ask for more cops to improve student safety in the wake of incidents such as the

abduction of two Holy Cross students on Notre Dame Ave. earlier this semester while requesting more leniency for party-throwers.

"You can't say you want more cops and then be worried about [parties being broken up]," he said.

However, Schmidt said while local police have been receptive to talks, he has been unable to meet with the Indiana State Police, whose excise force is most often responsible for breaking up parties with what many students consider excessive force.

"Excise can show up whenever they want, so in order to be political we can sit down and talk with SPBD, but ... to be honest with you, I don't know how much the student body president can tell the excise police. I wish I could say something like, 'Slow your roll,'" he said. "There's only so much I can do."

Schmidt said some of his talks with law enforcement have been very productive, and cited statistics showing game-day arrests were down this year as proof.

Campaign Promises

Implemented

- ◆ Off-campus transportation
- ◆ Continuing relations with the South Bend Common Council

Pending

- ◆ The development of an off-campus housing Web site

Abandoned

- ◆ Community summit
- ◆ Taxi reform (replaced by Transpo)
- ◆ Tax exemptions for text books
- ◆ Last Lecture series

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Grade: B+

Schmidt and Weber have proved themselves effective at providing students with small conveniences such as the benches at Main Circle while also implementing big picture ideas such as the Global Water Initiative and the Transpo Route 7A. However, they have not excelled at the programming side of student government — a side which former student body president Bob Reish stressed in his administration. Also, it is still too early to determine the success of the new Transpo route — this administration's major project.

STUDENT SENATE

Senate relies less on resolutions than past years

By SARAH MERVOSH

In Focus Writer

Student Senate participated in productive discussions at their meetings this year, and its committees tackled large issues while paying attention to small details — no easy feat.

Student body vice president Cynthia Weber, who leads Senate, said she used meeting time during the semester to keep senators informed about what each committee is working on, and to have discussions as a whole.

“Sometimes it’s really just about having a discussion because these people were elected in their dorm so they should have a pulse on dorm life,” she said.

Senate engaged in several notable discussions during their meetings this year, including a one about the intellectual environment on campus.

Most senators agreed that there was a

lack of intellectual debate both inside and outside of the classroom compared to Ivy League schools. But senators also said Notre Dame had qualities that make the school better than Ivies, and that this balance is what makes Notre Dame unique.

Weber said she is working with committee chairs to create a University-wide task force to address the lack of intellectual debate at Notre Dame.

Senators also discussed the role of the dorm rector and made suggestions regarding how to foster relationships between rectors and students. Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs Sr. Sue Dunn also came to a Senate meeting to clarify what the University looks for in a rector.

In response to these discussions, student body president Grant Schmidt said he plans to meet with each hall president

and senator to discuss individual dorm-rector relationships.

These discussions helped Schmidt and Weber accomplish a goal of their administration, which was to have a pulse on the student body’s opinions on a certain topic and then form an educated stance on the subject to represent them.

The individual committees succeeded in paying attention to the small details of student life while tackling larger, global issues, which were two other of the Schmidt-Weber administration.

The Social Concerns Committee worked on the Global Water Initiative, which raises money to build wells in Africa.

The Howard Hall Totter for Water raised nearly \$2,000 for the cause and the savings from the Dorm Energy Competition were donated to the Global Water Initiative.

Senate also paid attention to smaller details of student life. For example, the Residence Life

committee worked to extend hours in South Dining Hall on the weekend and to display prices on items in The Huddle.

While Senate as a whole as engaged in important debate during meetings, and the individual committees have been productive, the group did not generally use meeting time to pass resolutions.

Prior to their last meeting of the semester, Senate passed two resolutions.

The first resolution honored late lacrosse coach Rich O’Leary and the second clarified Council of Representative’s role in allocating funds to campus groups.

At Senate’s final meeting of the semester, two more resolutions were passed.

A resolution was passed thanking Notre Dame security gate guards for their increased willingness to allow students onto campus and asking them

to continue to recognize legitimate reasons students need access to campus.

Senate also passed a resolution recommending the creation of a health services advisory board. Students who sit on the board will provide feedback and input to the health services.

Weber said she and Schmidt established relationships with administrators, which decreased the need for resolutions this year.

“Grant and I spent the summer here meeting with every administrator we could,” she said. “We already had these existing relationships so the tool of the resolution is often times not necessary.”

Schmidt said committees were able to accomplish many goals without resolutions for this reason.

“We could sit down with all these people and talk instead of having to vote on these issues officially,” he said. “Every project that you’ll see and every committee has pretty much been done without resolutions because they’ve been able to sit down with these administrators.”

Though Senate could accomplish many goals without relying on resolutions, Weber and Schmidt should use resolutions to make a meaningful impact on the student body and increase student government’s visibility.

The recommendation to create a health services advisory board was a good use of a resolution because it has the potential to influence the student body in the future.

Using resolutions as a means to thank others or clarify the role of a committee are positive contributions, but will not impact the student body in the way the health services resolution will.

Student Senate should work to pass more results-oriented resolutions in the coming semester. Not only will this increase Senate’s ability to make a difference, but it will also make Senate’s work more tangible and visible to the student body.

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Grade: A-

The Student Senate as a whole engaged in productive discussions about issues that are important to the student body, and were able to gain a feeling for what the student body thought. Senate rarely used resolutions this year, which makes their work invisible to the student body. In the coming semester, Senate should work to increase their visibility and approachability so the student body can see what they accomplish.

Academic Affairs: B+

This committee, chaired by Austin Holler, has the potential to make an impact on the student body if it follows through on plans that are in the works. For example, initiatives related to improving the intellectual environment at Notre Dame and a plan to allow excused absences for a student with an imminent death in the family would be very laudable, if they are achieved. This committee has great ideas, but should look to create concrete results in the second semester.

Campus Technology: A

Committee chair Walker Anderson worked to make technology run as smoothly as possible for students. He conducted usability tests for the course registration system and held the Notre Dame Tech Week where students could get their technology questions answered in the convenience of their dorms. The LaFortune Student Center computer cluster will be remodeled over winter break, and several projects are due to be completed in the spring semester. The committee has followed through on their plans and produced tangible results.

Community Relations: B+

The committee’s most notable contribution this year was the new Transpo route, 7a. Committee chair Denise Baron also worked on off-campus safety concerns and held monthly events in the South Bend community. The committee introduced freshmen to the area with the freshman bus tour of South Bend and an off-campus safety meeting. With her success so far, Baron should challenge her committee to move beyond simply venturing into the community for these types of programs and create meaningful relationships with those who live there.

Gender Issues: A-

Co-chairs Robyn Grant and Patrick Tighe successfully stimulated debate on campus. The ‘Love Thee Notre Dame, Love Thyself’ campaign was personalized by photographing body parts of Notre Dame students, and the slogans hit home for students by using the alma mater. Grant and Tighe also held guided tours of the Thin exhibit and showed a documentary about it, which provoked students to think. Grant and Tighe should continue to stimulate debate, and do so by choosing publicized, widespread campaigns like the two mentioned that attract attention from the student body as a whole.

Multicultural Affairs: B-

Committee chair Nika Giger succeeded in planning and conducting multicultural commissioner training, and the committee has discussed many productive topics like ideas for Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Black History Month. However, the committee has not produced significant results at this point in the year. Much of this committee’s success hinges on the International Showcase and their ability to follow through on finishing the Diversity Certificate proposal. The committee should work hard in the coming semester to accomplish these two initiatives.

Oversight: B

Two resolutions passed in Student Senate this year came from this committee. Oversight, chaired by Kevin Kimberly, has several projects in the works regarding revising the constitution and organizing archives. The committee has plans to create an introduction to student government video for freshmen and a strategic plan for student government. Oversight has been productive so far, and Kimberly and his committee need to move forward on the projects they have in the works and adhere to their completion dates for next semester to produce results.

Residence Life: A-

Committee chair Nick Ruof accomplished several projects this semester. This committee was responsible for extending the hours at South Dining Hall on the weekends and for putting prices in The Huddle. Essential phone numbers will also be put on the back of ID cards in 2012, when the University will run out of the ID cards that they bought in bulk. Though these projects may be small, they make an impact on student life. Now, Ruof and his committee should focus on translating their success to larger projects, like Medical Amnesty, during the spring semester.

Social Concerns: A-

Committee chair Rachel Roseberry took on the Global Water Initiative, a ambitious project that was successful so far this year. The committee also brought a farmers’ market to campus and raised awareness about AIDS. In the second semester, the committee can make an even larger difference by continuing the Global Water Initiative, and following through on their plans to rid the dining halls of Styrofoam and work on off-campus recycling.

University Affairs: B

This committee, chaired by Jeff Lakusta, worked on advertising for Transpo and was responsive to problems with vending machines in DeBartolo Hall. Lakusta’s committee has discussed the intellectual environment at Notre Dame and the role of the rector. This committee has a lot of potential to make a difference and should turn discussion into action in the coming semester.

FACULTY SENATE

Group addresses Library, football scheduling issues

By LAURA McCRYSTAL

In Focus Writer

The Faculty Senate passed four resolutions this semester, making recommendations about the Hesburgh Library, football scheduling and academic honesty, as well as recognizing the contributions of military veterans and ROTC students, according to Senate chair and economics professor Thomas Gresik.

“Perhaps the biggest issue we dealt with was a report on the Library,” he said of their work this year.

Gresik said the academic affairs committee of the Faculty Senate conducted an extensive study of the Library, including interviews of more than 150 people in all departments and colleges.

The recommendations passed in

a library resolution included an emphasis on the need for more subject librarians to build library collections and assist faculty members in finding materials for their research, Gresik said.

The resolution also states that each department should conduct a review of library resources and report its findings to the dean of its college or the provost.

Gresik said the final recommendation of the resolution involves an external review of the University Library System.

“The Faculty Senate recommends that the Office of the Provost in conjunction with the Office of Strategic Planning arrange for an external review of the entire Library system,” the resolutions states. “This should include the production of a library self study document. We further recommend that after this review, the Library system

undergo an internal review every five years and an external review every 10 years.”

The Office of the Provost agreed that an external review would be appropriate for the Library at this time, Gresik said.

The football scheduling resolution, completed by the Faculty Senate’s administrative affairs committee, was a result of the delayed release of the 2010 football schedule, Gresik said.

“Delays in getting out the 2010 schedule were causing some complications with faculty who wanted to schedule conferences next fall,” he said. “We just wanted to ask the administration to keep in mind that there are these additional consequences of getting a delayed schedule out.”

Gresik said the University administration was understanding of the resolution, and he does not think

there will be similar delays in the future.

The Faculty Senate also passed a resolution related to academic honesty, Gresik said.

“The main concern is that there seems to be a gap in perception between what faculty consider to be academic honesty practices and what students feel is acceptable,” he said.

The resolution recommends that incoming students receive a more detailed explanation of academic honesty as well as a second orientation when they declare their major. It also suggests that faculty members receive annual reports with the number of each type of honor code violations as well as more frequent reminders of their own obligations under the honor code.

A fourth resolution by the Faculty Senate this semester recognized the contributions that students, faculty,

staff and alumni make to the United States Armed Forces, Gresik said.

Next semester, Gresik said the Faculty Senate plans to address the issue of parking. Faculty members have expressed concern about the current availability of parking spots on campus, and the issue will become a greater concern as the University looks to construct new buildings on or near existing parking lots, he said.

“The University has started thinking more about parking garages and parking fees for dedicated spots,” he said.

Gresik said the Faculty Senate chooses which issues to address based on the concerns of fellow faculty members, but Senate representatives also constantly look for potential areas of improvement.

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COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES

Leaders focus on off-campus safety, collaboration

Schmidt, Weber aim to increase communication, improve relationship between administration and student body

By ANN-MARIE WOODS
In Focus Writer

The Council of Representatives (COR), an advisory board to student body president Grant Schmidt, has effectively and productively contributed to student government discussions and policies, especially in their advisory role for off campus issues this semester.

COR is made up of leaders from various student organizations, and these representatives allow for increased communication and collaboration between the student body president and the student body as a whole.

"The approach I really wanted to take [with COR] is that I always have something that I wanted your opinions on, all on topics of relevance," Schmidt said.

During the first semester of the Schmidt and Weber administration, University and student body relationships with the South Bend community have been central to their focus and achievements thus far.

Concerns regarding off campus safety, living and transportation have been priorities for the current administration because of their imperative nature, and COR has facilitated the development and implementation of specific initiatives to address these community affairs.

In preparation for the first meeting of the year with the University Board of Trustees, Schmidt utilized COR to decide on and develop a topic of relevance to the student body to be addressed with student affairs committee of the Board.

Schmidt and COR members agreed that off-campus safety was the most important student concern, and recommended that it is the role of the University to protect and keep students safe off campus.

COR members were instrumental in the various stages of planning for the Transpo initiative.

In addition, the Off-Campus Evaluation Web site, known as RentND, and the Off-Campus Incident Report Web site are

two important initiatives the administration has been working on to improve the safety and well being of students living or going off campus. However, these sites have not yet been launched.

Schmidt has effectively utilized COR members as consultants and advisors to these student government projects, asking for assistance in the writing and effectiveness of these sites.

Improvements to student life and campus conveniences have been central to this administration's initiatives, and Schmidt has drawn on COR as a means to gain an accurate pulse on the needs of the student body.

COR has also discussed renovations to the former arcade room in the LaFortune Student Center, potential changes to the access and timing of student-wide e-mails through IrishLink and the implementation of a student-run advisory board for Health Services.

"My goal with COR is to get true, raw advice [on current student issues]," Schmidt said.

Finally, as a way of emphasizing their commitment to communication and collaboration with the University, Schmidt and student body vice president Cynthia Weber have invited several representatives from the University to speak to COR members in order to allow interaction between representatives of the student body and the administrators of the University.

Joseph Russo, director of Student Financial Strategies from the Office of Financial Services, spoke to COR about the financial aid process at the University and opened the discussion up to questions from members about student misunderstandings and confusion with the financial aid process.

This exemplifies the importance of Schmidt's implementation of COR as a channel for conversation and advising, as COR serves as an intermediary between not only the student body and student government but also between the student body and the University as a whole.

Contact Ann-Marie Woods at awoods4@nd.edu

Grade: A-

COR has examined topics of interest and importance to the student body, such as off-campus safety and financial aid. The group has also contributed to discussions about the recent Transpo initiative. While these discussions have yielded results, several of the Council's initiatives this semester, including the renovations to the LaFortune arcade room and the off-campus housing and incident reports Web site, have yet to be accomplished.



Top, COR members discuss student issues at a November meeting. Bottom, student body vice president Cynthia Weber and student body president Grant Schmidt lead a COR meeting. This year, the Council has looked at off-campus safety and financial aid services.

STUDENT UNION BOARD

Group revitalizes old traditions, changes advertising methods

By LAURA McCRYSTAL
In Focus Writer

The Student Union Board (SUB) set out to improve and increase the popularity of traditional campus events this year, SUB manager Kat Burke said.

"It's a lot of tradition with a lot of new and I hope that's what we'll continue to bring next semester," Burke said. "I think we are continually pushing the envelope and challenging our events to go bigger."

Burke said SUB coordinates many events that have been traditions on campus for years, such as the Notre Dame Literary Festival and Acousticafé, and she wants to renew student enthusiasm and generate new ideas.

SUB should "demonstrate how important it is to give back to our

roots by taking what's classic and making it new and exciting and full of life again," she said.

The Notre Dame Literary Festival has existed for more than 40 years, but this year was the first time that it took place over the course of three days in true festival style, Burke said.

"Last year it was very limited attendance to all of the events and this year the attendance was just amazing," Burke said "In the 40-plus years of the event it's great to see new life brought into it."

One strategy SUB used to generate student participation in the festival was the Notre Dame short story in the Viewpoint section of The Observer, which allowed students to submit parts of a story and see their own writing in the newspaper.

Burke said SUB's approach to the Literary Festival represented the group's overall goal to incorporate

new ideas into traditional events.

"I think that's the approach that we're taking," she said. "I think a lot of that is trying to tap into what students want."

Burke said the most exciting new event this fall was a visit from an actor and director of "Boondock Saints 2," as well as an extended showing of the film.

The event was a free but ticketed event for students, and Burke said the line for tickets reached capacity 30 minutes before the box office opened.

"More than just the number and the audience, it's the presence that Notre Dame students bring with how excited they get about different events," she said. "And that's really what we strive for."

Burke said SUB will host more events during the spring semester because football season is over. Last

weekend, musician Joshua Radin came to Legends. Next semester's events will include a larger concert in Stepan Center, two comedy shows, the 52nd annual Collegiate Jazz Festival, the comedy group Second City and the spring Antostal festival.

SUB has also changed its method of advertising its events this year, Burke said.

"We've moved away from bombarding students with e-mails," she said.

Instead, she said SUB has placed greater emphasis on its creative posters and other forms of communication, such as a commercial the group recently filmed with NDTV and giveaways to students such as water bottles and sunglasses.

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Grade:
A-

SUB has made positive progress toward its goal to revitalize traditional events and increase student turnout as well as bring new events to campus that will generate enthusiasm among the student body.

CAMPUS LIFE COUNCIL

Task forces fall short of goals

Group passes only one resolution; task force forced to reorganize



TOM LA/The Observer

The Campus Life Council, led by student body president Grant Schmidt and vice president Cynthia Weber, meets in a Nov. 16 meeting in LaFortune Student Center.

By LIZ O'DONNELL
In Focus Writer

The Campus Life Council (CLC) has made strides on several projects this semester, but failed to produce results tantamount to the success of last year's administration.

As in years past, the Council divided into task forces that met on a bi-weekly (or sometimes weekly) basis to discuss a specific issue pertinent to campus life. This year, the Council had three task forces: Student Disciplinary Records, Student Legal Services and Alumni-Student Relations.

This semester, the Council passed one resolution, is in the process of discussing the second and has not yet introduced the third.

While the members of the Council should be credited for this progress, they faced a number of roadblocks along the semester that set back their success.

The Task Force on Alumni-Student Relations was the only committee able to pass a resolution this semester, a surprise because the task force was only created toward the end of the semester.

The resolution, which CLC members passed at Monday's meeting, is a proposal to add a member of the Alumni Association to sit as a member on the Council.

However, some of the Council members questioned whether it is a good idea to extend voting privileges to the new member.

Student body president Grant Schmidt said the inclusion of a member of the Alumni Association will be beneficial for students

because they will have alumni opinions on certain issues.

Originally, the task force was assigned to investigate communication (in terms of advertising) on campus. They chose to delay the topic, however, until after the new agenda.nd.edu Web site debuts next semester.

The Task Force on Student Legal Services undertook a project more in depth than the other two committees when they looked into creating a system students could use for legal advice.

Chairman John DeLacio and the rest of the committee did extensive work on the topic. They looked at over 20 benchmark universities with legal services programs in order to decide what type of resource would be best suited for Notre Dame.

DeLacio and the rest of the task force proposed an online database that would carry names of area attorneys approved by the university.

The task force submitted a resolution to the larger council that would seek approval from the Office of Student Affairs to continue on with the database. While it is still in discussion, it appears it will be passed within the first few weeks of the spring semester.

The Task Force on Student Disciplinary Records, chaired by student body vice president Cynthia Weber had to change the direction of their task force half-way through the semester in order to make their end result more feasible.

Initially the task force investigated the removal of a "minor infraction" from a person's disciplinary record if it was a student's sole offense

Grade: B-

The task forces have failed to yield any tangible results. The resolution passed by the Task Force on Alumni-Student Relations is good for the Council itself, but has little effect on the daily lives of students.

and if it was committed during the student's freshman year.

In investigating this topic, however, the group ran into several problems, which resulted in their decision to switch to issues pertaining to the handling of situations by outside agencies.

As it stands currently, the task force is looking to create a procedure where Residence Life staff would notify a student's rector of the situation and ask if the rector would like to handle the situation in dorm rather than have it sent straight to the Office of Residence Life and Housing, as the policy stands now.

While the committee hasn't produced a resolution yet, their aim is in focus and Weber said the task force has a draft. They hope to produce a resolution at the beginning of next semester.

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Government in brief...

Graduate Student Union plans Christmas party

The Graduate Student Union (GSU) organized a number of events this fall to provide social interaction and professional development for the entire graduate student community, GSU president Andrew Bramsen said.

"We see ourselves as providing constituent service to the grad students," he said.

This fall, the GSU co-sponsored a Halloween party with a student group at the Law School, Bramsen said.

In December, the GSU will host a

family Christmas party as well as a dinner and reflection for married graduate students about balancing faith, family and academia, he said.

Bramsen said a continuing challenge for the GSU is to attract students to its events and programs. He said graduate students tend to be involved in their own departments, but disconnected from a larger campus community, especially compared to undergraduate students.

- Laura McCrystal

FMB approves funds for new Transpo route

The Financial Management Board (FMB) has approved the allocation and redistribution of funds to student groups and the distribution of funds for The Shirt Charity Fund this fall, Student Union Treasurer Nick Danna said.

Danna said in early September, FMB approved the redistribution of funds to pay for the new late night Transpo route.

"We must approve any changes in the use of money allocated to student groups," he said.

Student groups looking to spend more than \$5,000 for an

event must seek approval through FMB, Danna said. The Irish dance team's trip to Ireland, the Liturgical Choir tour and the Iron Sharpens Iron fall retreat have been among the student groups events approved by FMB this fall.

Danna said FMB oversees The Shirt Charity Fund, which uses a percentage of the profit from the sale of The Shirt every year to provide financial relief to students with extraordinary circumstances, such as an illness for which they cannot pay medical expenses.

- Laura McCrystal

Club Coordination Council distributes funds

The Club Coordination Council (CCC) has allocated money to clubs for events this semester and will organize a winter reallocation of funds to student clubs for the spring semester, CCC president Cameron Shane said.

Shane said all student clubs receive money for the year at the end of the spring semester, but they can appeal for more funds for unexpected events.

CCC has \$20,000 each year to offer to clubs that appeal for more funds, Shane said.

At the start of spring semes-

ter, Shane said student clubs will be able to apply for additional funds, which are given based on merit or the success of the group during the fall semester.

"It's basically a smaller version of the spring allocation," he said. "We're looking for a group of officers who have basically already proven themselves to give a couple extra hundred dollars or a couple thousand dollars to really shine."

- Laura McCrystal

Hall Presidents' Council promotes pep rallies

Hall Presidents Council (HPC) helped plan the student-only pep rally in Stepan Center before this season's football game at Michigan and continued its normal duty of advising and overseeing dorm events and the presidents of each dorm, HPC co-chair Brendan McQueeney said.

Members of HPC met with student body president Grant Schmidt and vice president Cynthia Weber to plan the Sept. 10 Stepan Center Pep rally, McQueeney said. The hall presidents advertised the pep rally through their dorms, he said.

When pep rallies were held in

the JACC in previous years, HPC planned the dorm sponsorship and activities before the official pep rally began, McQueeney said. When the pep rallies moved to Irish Green this year, HPC played less of a role, but they did plan the all-student pep rally.

McQueeney said HPC also oversees and allocates funds for dorms' signature events.

"We're an oversight for the hall presidents and the guiding force behind them," he said of HPC's role. "Our group of people is kind of like a sounding board."

- Laura McCrystal

SENIOR CLASS COUNCIL

The Senior Class Council has been working hard this semester to organize a variety of events for the Class of 2010 during their last year at Notre Dame, class president Chris Tillett said.

The group offered Senior Weekend Kickoff Afternoon at Legends during the USC football weekend. The Council teamed up with Legends again recently to host the Senior Beer Tasting with varied drink selections, expert explanations and a guitar performance from a member of the Class of 2010.

Tillett said that events for the Class of 2010's final semester include a Press Box Dinner and plans for Senior Week in May are already being discussed.

- Megan Doyle

JUNIOR CLASS COUNCIL

The representatives of Junior Class Council have been dedicated to creating a successful semester, blending campus activities with projects for students looking to volunteer in the South Bend area.

Class president Caitlin Pulte listed the range of events hosted by the Council, including a volleyball tournament, class adoration, pumpkin carving and the creation of a human glowstick rosary. In the community, juniors baked cookies and helped kids in Sunday school in addition to writing letters to pen pals in nearby schools. The pen pals visited campus and spend time with their partners in the junior class.

"Next semester, we plan to continue with the pen pals and other service ideas," Pulte said. "We are also planning a ski trip and a poker tournament."

- Megan Doyle

SOPHOMORE CLASS COUNCIL

The Sophomore Class Council has been busy with numerous events this semester. Their goal was to create unique and interesting projects that would attract a wide variety of students, class president Catherine Soler said.

The Council hosted a dodgeball tournament to benefit the organization Right to Play and sent Thanksgiving cards to all staff workers on campus. Council members also put together a volunteer trip to the Catholic Worker location in South Bend.

Next semester, the Council has planned service events to benefit the American Cancer Society and St. Baldrick's Society to help fight children's cancer.

- Megan Doyle

FRESHMAN CLASS COUNCIL

The members of the Freshman Class Council (FCC) have been enthusiastic about their first semester as part of student government.

Building relationships and making the FCC an accessible representative for the freshmen class on campus have been the top priorities for the Council this year.

Class president Michael Thomas said a new Class of 2013 Web site has bridged the gap between the Council and the freshman class.

"We have had the opportunity to organize ourselves into committees to raise a significant amount of funds and to familiarize ourselves with the various steps involved in event planning," Thomas said.

- Megan Doyle

SAINT MARY'S STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT

Hoffman, Griffin bring transparency to administration

By ASHLEY CHARNLEY
In Focus Writer

Jenny Hoffman, student body president, and Meg Griffin, student body vice president, set the goal of transparency at the beginning of their term back in April 2009.

Their predecessors and their tumultuous term left students feeling uneasy toward their elected peers, but Hoffman and Griffin have been successful in regaining their constituents' faith.

The duo has succeeded in implementing some of their specific goals, like adding printers to

the Student Center and residence halls and extending campus facilities' operating hours, but their continued and focused efforts are geared toward making their offices more accessible and reconnecting to the student body. Though there is still a long way to go, their progress is respectable.

The Saint Mary's student body is at times reluctant in offering feedback, and Hoffman and Griffin need to work to get their constituents involved in Student Government Association (SGA) events.

The pair has planned several events — a major priority of their administration — but Griffin said

they want to be more than an "event planning service" on campus, and they are working to listen to the desires of the student body.

Griffin said they have tried to stay focused on the wants of the students and look at their requests frequently, one of their campaign promises. The SGA and the student body have trouble communicating and the administration is not ignoring the problem.

Students asked for more all-campus events, so Hoffman and Griffin reinstated the Navy Dance as well as planning a service trip to Wabash College earlier in the semester. Both of which, Hoffman said, were a great success.

The two have also started a Facebook page for SGA to provide an open forum for students.

Most of the work Hoffman and Griffin have been doing is very much behind the scenes.

Griffin said they are trying hard to work out the issues with passing resolutions and different policies to help clear the way for the next semester.

This year, Hoffman and Griffin eliminated the old Board of Governance (BOG), which served as the ruling body and renamed it the SGA in effort to make student government less confusing for students.

Another goal of the administration is to smooth the process of passing resolutions and allotments on the College campus.

Other internal issues the two have focused on include balanc-



GRACE KENESEY/The Observer

Student body president Jenny Hoffman, left, and student body vice president Meg Griffin have made positive changes to student government.

Grade: A-

Hoffman and Griffin entered their positions with the challenge of reconnecting students with student government. They have been consistent in working to smooth out the inner workings of their office, as well as creating open forums with the student body. While there is always room for improvement when it comes to involvement with the student body, the pair have gotten creative in ways to connect to students. Both are very approachable and have answered student demands in one some form since they took office in April. They deserve credit for how successfully and efficiently they have improved the image of student government while still in the middle of their term.

ing the workloads of individual commissioners and the sponsorship process, strengthening restrictions.

The pair should be applauded for its new focus on community relations, something previous administrations have neglected. They are working to make connections with the South Bend community and organize service projects that will take students off campus.

Hoffman said she believes the South Bend community has positively affected the women of Saint Mary's, and the administration would like to support the relationship. SGA has organized events with the Center for the Homeless to help improve the College's reputation in the area and bring the communities closer

together.

Hoffman and Griffin also said they have been trying to have a more active voice within the College's administration, effectively communicating students' needs. Hopefully they continue to pay attention to the desires of the student body as successfully as they have so far.

Overall, Hoffman and Griffin are a far cry from administrations past that lost students' trust. They work to listen to students and try to be as approachable as possible, refreshing changes in student leadership. They work hard and have a respectable level of follow through.

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STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

SGA works to fix problems of past boards, move toward change

Group plans all-school events, provides allotments, smooths out the inner workings of student government

By NIKKI TAYLOR
In Focus Writer

Saint Mary's Student Government Association (SGA) has set lofty goals for themselves this year and thus far they have been working hard to achieve these aims and check them off the to-do list.

This year's SGA board is implementing numerous changes in order to fix some of the problems that past boards had come under scrutiny for. SGA is trying to make their operations transparent and fair across the

board.

In the first half of their year of change, SGA has put a strong focus on the group being more transparent with the student body. They want the students to be able to see what SGA does for them. SGA is striving to have a stronger presence on campus to help earn the trust of students.

Efforts being made to enhance this include more publicity for SGA sponsored events (like the little table tents in the dining hall), a student government Facebook page and SGA members wearing SGA apparel to advertise who the board members are.

At the beginning of the year,

SGA wrote out a list of 32 goals they would like to work on by the end of the year. The last time the list was looked at four out of those 32 goals were checked off and one goal on the list, better communication with the office of special events, is currently a work in progress.

This number looks small, but SGA had their hands full this semester passing their budget, sending out and listening to appeals for allotments and making changes to sponsorship guidelines.

Thus far SGA has passed two resolutions, one about the use of the French cross and another on Saint Mary's IT department supporting student government computers. Student body president Jenny Hoffman and vice president Megan Griffin researched Saint Mary's peer institutions' IT departments before contacting the College's about servicing SGA computers.

This fall SGA has also planned successful all campus events including a trip to Wabash College, and the Navy Ball.

The organization has also discussed making the student center a more attractive place to study, and while many ideas were thrown around, nothing seems to have been decided or moved upon.

SGA did research health

care on campus and discussed the possibility of getting another gynecologist on campus, but found the logistics would not work out. This issue therefore seems to have been dropped.

The system to distribute money for club sponsorships also underwent changes this year as result of SGA's work. SGA changed the name of the process from co-sponsorships to sponsorships because SGA usually ends up paying more than the club itself. They have also put in place strict regulations as to how the process should be run, and clubs will be denied funding if they do not follow the procedure.

The board is trying very hard to enforce a policy of requesting funds with documentation of costs before they are purchased to avoid reimbursements in an effort to better utilize student resources. Clubs are also required to show receipts after purchases are made with sponsorship money in order to ensure correct spending.

In the second half of the semester, once sponsorship requests began coming in, SGA became distracted with sponsorships while other issues on their agenda seemed to have been on the back burner. However, the board is committed to ironing

out all the kinks in the new sponsorship program this year in order to leave a stronger legacy behind.

One of SGA's goals for the year is to increase their presence in the greater community. The board will be taking part in at least one service project next semester to help the community.

In the next semester, SGA will continue to review sponsorships for clubs. In the spring, they hope to have completed an SGA handbook that will go out to all of the clubs on campus and will outline new sponsorship guidelines, allotments and will also direct clubs to various campus offices, which should be used as resources.

All things considered, SGA is off to a great start this semester. If the group wants to accomplish everything on their to-do list, they will need to devote time and hard work in the spring to their priorities. Of their work this semester, their efforts to be more in contact with the student body have been successful and are appreciated.

SGA is working hard to better serve the student body and the changes they made will certainly help, but there is still always more to be done.

Contact Nikki Taylor at
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Grade: A-

SGA has been setting the bar high for themselves, and best of all, they are following through. They quickly and efficiently passed their budget, and have reorganized some of their internal policies while still keeping up with sponsorships and planning events for the College. While they have only gotten through four items on their list, they have done so while still accomplishing many other important changes for the student body. There is still some work that needs to be done when it comes to advertising what they offer on campus. Overall though, as long as they stay focused and prioritize well, they should manage to end the semester with several more of their initiatives completed.

STUDENT DIVERSITY BOARD

SDB gives students 'multi-cultural education'

Group works to educate students about diversity, holds events that 'develop community awareness' on campus

By ALICIA SMITH
In Focus Writer

Saint Mary's Student Diversity Board (SDB) has been working hard to educate students about cultural diversity.

Carissa Salvador, SDB president, said the group was created "to unite the Saint Mary's College community in celebration of the cultural diversity of every woman on campus, to help foster the Saint Mary's community by developing awareness, to provide support for students of various socio-economic backgrounds, sexual orientations, faiths, ethnicities and unique abilities, while increasing their enrollment

and graduation rate from Saint Mary's College [and] to provide an open forum for discussion regarding issues of diversity."

During the fall semester, SDB has hosted a bonfire as their kick-off event.

"The entertainment provided allows us to showcase cultures in a variety of ways," Salvador said.

Other events SDB has offered include the SDB H u n g e r Banquet, an event that gives students a better understanding of poverty in the United States and throughout the

world. Students had the chance to donate a meal to the United Nations World Food program in Zimbabwe. Salvador said that 141 meal swipes were donated to the cause.

Currently, SDB is planning the Multicultural Dessert Night. The night includes a variety of different desserts from different countries.

SDB also plans to host the Disabilities Awareness Week and Women's Appreciation Week in February.

Their largest event, the Diverse Students' Leadership Conference (DSLCL) will be held March 17 to 19. The conference gives students the opportunity to learn about diversity. The conference offers a variety of speakers to educate each participant's perspective of adversity.

SDB is composed of about 40 board members who represent different divisions of the program.

Salvador said that there are representatives for students with disabilities, campus ministry, international students, women's issues, journalistic relations and from the multicultural clubs at Saint Mary's College including Sisters of

Nefertiti, Al Zahra, La Fuerza and Straight and Gay Alliance. There is also a faculty and student representative, as well as an entire committee, which focuses on the Diverse Students' Leadership Conference.

SDB works to help students have a better understanding of the differences throughout the College community.

"[The organization] provides SMC with a well-rounded education and provides a forum for all students from all walks of life to come together and promote the diversity within us all," Salvador said.

Contact Alicia Smith at asmith01@saintmarys.edu

"The entertainment provided allows us to showcase cultures in a variety of ways."

Carissa Salvador
SDB President

Government in brief...

Residence Hall Association plans events

The Residence Hall Association (RHA) has been busy this semester with a number of interesting activities and initiatives.

The Health and Wellness and Service committees successfully hosted an "80s Workout Night," a fitness class styled after aerobics classes of the 1980s and encouraged participants to dress accordingly. They also organized a Habitat for Humanity service project and a Santa Breakfast at the Center for the Homeless with the help of Office of Civil and Social Engagement (OCSE). RHA president Cristen Dalessandro said.

Each hall council has been extremely active, Dalessandro said.

"So far this year, all the hall councils have been extremely active and

have hosted successful events in their halls including Desserts with Doctor Mooney, Hall Mass, Notre Dame game watches, mani-pedi study breaks and ornament decorating," she said.

For the upcoming semester, RHA has begun planning for the annual Little Sibs Weekend on April 10 and the All-School Formal on Feb. 27.

Other than that, RHA is in the process of revising the College's Constitution. The revised version will be in place for next year's board.

Dalessandro said she is positive this year's RHA is fulfilling its duty to Saint Mary's students.

"Our reason for existing is basically to bring a little happiness to the lives of students," Dalessandro said.

- Megan Loney



Observer file photo

Saint Mary's student body president Jenny Hoffman

Student Activities Board prepares events

The Student Activity Board (SAB) has worked consistently throughout the year to plan a variety of events for students to participate in.

Their opening event was Jamaica Shaka, an annual event which featured a 1980s cover band as well as a hula-hoop contest and luau-style food. Another annual event, Twilight Tailgate, also took place this semester.

"This year, we showed 'The Proposal' on an outdoor screen on Library Green. We served free popcorn, caramel apples, cotton candy and slushies," Michele Peterson, SAB president, said.

SAB also offered a perform-

ance by poet Gabriela Garcia Medina. Another event SAB sponsored was a pumpkin-carving contest near Halloween.

Currently, SAB is planning a gingerbread house-decorating contest, which will be held in conjunction with the Alumnae Association of South Bend.

SAB plans to hold other events throughout the school year including a charity concert to benefit the Student Athletic Advisory Committee Belles for Africa program.

Other events SAB would like to present include additional movie nights, as well as their largest event for the spring semester, SMC Tostal.

- Alicia Smith

SAC establishes mission statement

In addition to organizing the annual "majors of the week" designed for each department to promote their majors, the Student Academic Council established a mission statement for the Women Honoring Women Award this semester.

Applications to nominate faculty and staff members for the award will go out early next semester. The awards ceremony will be in March, Megan Griffin, Student Academic Council representative and student body vice president, said.

The Student Academic Council is focusing on textbook affordability next semester, Griffin said.

"Basically, we are looking at how much students really spend on text-

books at Saint Mary's and trying to establish alternative methods to help students not have to pay so much," Griffin said. "We are also looking at how educated students are about financial aid and whether that's something that needs to be improved."

The Student Academic Council just passed a resolution on electronic transcripts, which states "that the Office of the Registrar should offer official electronic transcripts as an alternative to the traditional paper transcript."

The Student Academic Council will present the resolution to Student Government Association on Jan. 11.

- Megan Loney



Observer file photo

Saint Mary's student body vice president Meg Griffin.

Board of Trustees elects new members

The Saint Mary's College Board of Trustees elected four new members to the committee in June. The newest members of the Board are Sr. Maureen Grady, Rose Marie Lopez Jones, Almira Wilson Cann and Carmen Murphy. Each member will serve a three-year term.

Senior Kristle Hodges will serve a one-year term on the Board as a student representative.

The Board of Trustees held one of their four annual meetings in October.

The Board is responsible for major decisions that affect the entire college, including tuition.

The Board's approval of a five percent increase in tuition and a three percent increase in room and board for the 2009-2010 academic year was publicized in a press release by the College in March.

No information has been released about the Board's current activity.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held in February.

- Megan Loney

FIRST-YEAR BOARD

For their first major event, the First Year Board invited guest speaker Perry Watson to Saint Mary's. Watson, the owner of Mishawaka's Lexus dealership, spoke to students about leadership.

For Thanksgiving, the Board wrote and delivered 632 thank-you notes to the faculty and staff of Saint Mary's.

The Board is currently working on their "Give One Dorm Item" event. The items are then sent to the Saint Vincent de Paul Society of South Bend.

The Board is planning a variety show for next semester and they are developing ideas for new service projects and other plans.

- Caitlin Housley

SOPHOMORE BOARD

During the past semester, the Sophomore Class Board focused on apparel fundraising sales. Much of the Board's time this semester has been spent planning Sophomore Parent's Weekend. The weekend is scheduled for February, and the Board has already sent out invitations to sophomore parents.

The Board plans to have more events next year aimed at fostering class bonding. The Board is contemplating volunteer activities.

The Board's goals for next semester are to welcome back the students that studied abroad and to incorporate them back into class activities. In addition, they would like to plan events that will create a better union of the members of the Class of 2012.

- Caitlin Housley

JUNIOR BOARD

To kick off the year, the Saint Mary's Junior Board members had a meet and greet with their class members.

T-shirt sales began this week and are open to all students. The junior class picked the shirt design.

The Junior Board organized the Junior Class Formal. President Meghan Helmlé said, "[The Junior Formal] was the best attended dance 2011 has had."

The Board is also planning a spring community outreach event, where students can donate gently used or new formal gowns to Cinderella's Closet.

The goal of the Junior Board this year is to increase student participation.

- Caitlin Housley

SENIOR BOARD

At the beginning of this year, the Senior Board planned Senior Dad's Weekend.

According to president Nancy Mulkerriens, the event "ended up being a really fantastic time."

Also, the Board focused on raising money with their Saint Mary's windbreaker sale.

Currently, the Board members are working with the Children's Dispensary, a local group that creates learning activities for children. In addition, they are exploring the ideas of sending letters to troops and participating with Meals on Wheels.

The Board is currently planning ideas for Senior Week and Senior Formal. The formal is scheduled to take place in April.

- Caitlin Housley