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Representation & Academic Advocacy Bill

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Representation & Academic Advocacy Bill

Authors: Senator A. Blomso and Vice President S. Duenas

WHEREAS, in 2015 the Student Academic Affairs and Involvement Bill was passed by the Senate and created a new position on the Senate;

WHEREAS, the Student Academic Affairs and Involvement Bill created a new governing body entitled the Academic Affairs Council;

WHEREAS, the Frequently Asked Questions Sheet written about the Student Involvement Bill states "Not all Departments currently have active Student Councils..." ;

WHEREAS, only one democratically elected Student Council existed on campus when the Student Academic Affairs and Involvement Bill was passed;

WHEREAS, the Senate created a governing body based on one student organization that has never been officially recognized by LEAP and is run through the Department;

WHEREAS, in the two years the position has existed, no more than five Councils have ever existed, all of which have since gone inactive or do not involve the Academic Affairs Council in their autonomous elections and business;

WHEREAS, in the majority of elections for Departmental Student Councils candidates ran unopposed;

WHEREAS, only one event or opportunity has ever come out of any of the Departmental Student Councils;

WHEREAS, given the structure of Departmental Student Councils, academic clubs did not want to become them because within a DSC elected officers had to be strongly affiliated with the Department;

WHEREAS, many academic clubs felt the conversion to a Departmental Student Council would make their members not as closely affiliated with the Department feel ostracized, unwelcome and left out;

WHEREAS, Departmental Student Councils were never recognized as student organizations under LEAP;

WHEREAS, the Academic Affairs Council is allocated \$750 a semester, despite the fact that it has not a single active organization underneath it;

WHEREAS, flyers, student-L emails, targeted department emails, targeted student emails, classroom appearances, faculty member announcements, countless meetings and genuine effort has been put into attempting to make the Academic Affairs Council successful;

WHEREAS, the other most recently created governing body took organizations which already existed with similar goals, and housed them together to create continuity and unity, allowing the Senate and the College to better address their needs;

WHEREAS, the Student Academic Affairs and Involvement Bill mandated the creation of a governing body and position based on one organization created by the student body, the remaining of which were to be created through the efforts of the Senate and faculty to encourage students to join, which is in stark contrast to the majority of student organizations which are student led, student created and student organized and for which the majority of recruitment comes directly from the students;

WHEREAS, Departmental Student Councils have not gained traction among the student body;

WHEREAS, Academic concerns, similar to Residence Hall concerns, are frequent and an area in which advocacy within Senate is vital;

WHEREAS, the Senate has received frequent criticism for appearing unaccountable to the student body, and for the ratio of directly elected Senators to Senators elected by governing bodies;

WHEREAS, the demand for Departmental Student Councils is unclear;

WHEREAS, the demand for advocacy in regards to academic concerns is clear;

LET IT BE RESOLVED, that beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, the Academic Affairs Council is dissolved, as is the chair and thus the position on Senate.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, all mention of the Academic Affairs Council chair or Academic Affairs Council be removed from the By-Laws, Constitution and all other governing documents of the ASWC Senate, effective at the end of the Spring 2017;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, the funds within the Academic Affairs Council account be returned to the general fund for active student organizations to use;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that Article VIII Section B Subsection 1 Item h be amended to read:

h. Three Student Body Representatives

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that Article VIII Section B Subsection 1 item k be amended to read:

k. Two Academic Representatives

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that Article VIII Section B Subsection 9 item a be amended to read:

- a. Be three people elected in a general election of the ASWC or appointed by the president or appointment committee.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that a new position, to be elected directly by the student body be added entitled the "Academic Representatives" and be added to the Constitution as item 12 to read the following:

1. The Academic Representatives shall:
 - a. Be two persons elected in a general election of the ASWC;
 - b. Be responsible for advocating on behalf of students academic concerns;
 - c. Be voting members of the Senate;
 - d. Be a liaison between the Senate and academic interests of the student body;
 - e. Be responsible for organizing and advertising mechanisms to express concerns regarding academics;
 - f. Hold a minimum of at least 2 office hours each in the library in accordance with Article VI Section B of the ASWC Senate Bylaws;
 - g. Investigate the diverse needs across academic disciplines and be available to advocate for any student belong to any field of academic interest
 - h. Give constituent reports as proof of their continued investigation of various academic issues across the college
 - i. Increase the communication lines between the student body and the Senate by posting any publicity that does not include election materials or personal propaganda;
 - j. Work collaboratively and cooperatively with each other and other Senators to address the academic needs of the student body;
 - k. Perform any other duties as outlined in this Constitution;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, for the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years, this representative will sit on the Academic Committee, to help organize and see if Departmental Student Councils gain traction within the student body to warrant the recreation of the Academic Affairs Council;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that as active Departmental Student Councils form, they will be temporarily placed under the Inter Club Council which currently houses the Biology Club, Kinesiology Club and a variety of academically affiliated clubs;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that beginning the Elections for the 2017-2018 school year (in the Spring of 2017), Academic Representative be added to the ballot;

THEREFORE, LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED, that there a copy of this initiative sent to the following:

Joshua Hartman, ASWC Administrative Advisor

Dr. Paul Kjellberg, Professor of Philosophy and Faculty Advisor to the ASWC Senate

Dr. Darrin Good, Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty

Dr. Joyce Kauffman, Professor of Political Science and President of the Faculty