

SENATE BILL #1941

Title: Composition Change of Student Activities Council

Date: February 25, 2000

**Authors: SAL Busacker, Vice President Keizer, Senators Plemmons, Kristen
Reed, and West**

Sponsors: Senators Plemmons, Kristen Reed, and West

1. WHEREAS, the current organizational structure of the Student Activities Council
2. decreases programming efficiency and has lead to leadership conflicts in the past;
3. and
4. WHEREAS, ASUW senators typically lack the programming experience
5. necessary for effective membership on the Student Activities Council; and
6. WHEREAS, the requirements and time commitments inherent to a Student
7. Activities Council representative are excessive in light of the other obligations a
8. Senator must fulfill; and
9. WHEREAS, the elimination of the current dual chair position will provide for
10. more effective and efficient programming; and
11. WHEREAS, reduced bureaucracy will result in optimal utilization of student fees;
12. and
13. WHEREAS, it is essential that the Student Activities Council be adequately
14. represented on Senate by a member with programming knowledge to provide
15. information to members of both Senate and the Student Activities Council; and
16. WHEREAS, the Student Activities Council meets all the requirements for an ex-
17. officio position (By-laws: Article II, Section 6-C).
18. THEREFORE, be it enacted by the Associated Students of the University of

19. Wyoming that the current Article VI, Section 6-I,3 of the ASUW Constitution be
20. amended to read as follows:

21. "Composition. The ASUW Student Activities Council shall consist of a
22. Lead Student Programmer elected by the Council and approved by the
23. Associated Students of the University of Wyoming Senate, a Union
24. programming member, Commissioners chosen by the Council, the Chair
25. of the Concert and Convocation Committee, and a minimum of five (5)
26. students-at-large including one Freshman Senator appointed by Freshman
27. Senate, subject to the approval of the ASUW Vice President, and one
28. ASUW Senator. The following shall act as ex-officio members: a
29. Residence Hall Association member, the Assistant Director of Programs
30. and Activities, the ASUW Business Manager, and one member of the
31. United Multicultural Council."

32. THEREFORE, be it further enacted by the Associated Students of the University
33. of Wyoming that an ex-officio position be created for the Student Activities
34. Council, and add to ASUW By-Laws Article II, Section 6-D "Student Activities
35. Council."

Referred to: Constitution Committee

Date of Passage: March 7, 2000

Signed:

Crystal D. Damon
(ASUW Chairperson)

"Being enacted on 3/10/2000, I do hereby sign my name hereto and
approve this Senate action."

Nathaniel Hamner
ASUW President

Findings and Recommendations of the ASUW Activities Task force.

Members: Vice President Keizer, Senators Lupton, Plemmons, Kristen Reed, West, SALs Busacker, and Sherlock.

◆INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

A higher than normal amount of friction exists between the Student Activities Council (SAC) and the legislative body of ASUW. This friction has been an issue for some time. ASUW was founded to serve the students' need for programming but over time ASUW changed its focus and developed into a well-respected legislative body on campus. In the mid to late 60's, a separate body was formed to handle the programming, which allowed ASUW to focus on non-programming issues. SAC in its early form began at the University of Wyoming. This organizational alignment was efficient; the senate was able to focus on legislative issues, while SAC handled the programming. This relationship hadn't existed for more than six or seven years before there was a call for change. As early as 1973, SAC began to want more autonomy from the legislative branch of ASUW. An effort was made to break away but failed. Since that initial push for independence, the issue has arisen every five years or so. This task force was assembled and charged with finding a resolution to the problem. The task force uncovered the following as contributors to the current situation:

◆Findings:

1. ASUW senators' lack of time needed for active participation in SAC.
2. ASUW senators' lack of experience and focus in dealing with programming.
3. The dual leadership that exists because of SAC's current structure under the ASUW constitution.

4. The different time tables that ASUW senate and SAC operate on.
5. Budgetary issues.

1⇒ Senators are required to sit on two ASUW standing committees, sit on a number of University committees, do extensive work outside of committee, and attend various functions. These duties fill up a day very quickly. The senators who sit on SAC as one of their ASUW committee assignments, are expected to participate as active members, which places additional demands on their already busy schedules. SAC requires more time, per average member, year round, than most other standing committees. There are multiple programs a week that require at minimum five hours of planning and administering. Since senators have so many other time commitments, recent trends have often shown that SAC attendance decreases as commitments pile up. This hurts SAC in that they can not rely on part of the membership to attend regularly

2⇒ Senators have limited experience with programming. Most SAC members participate in SAC for most of their college careers, while senators' SAC involvement is limited to their term in office. Gaining the experience necessary for effective programming requires more than one senatorial term. As a result of serving more time on SAC, most SAC members receive specialized training. This luxury is not afforded to the senators because of the lack of time, both in the senator's time (see finding 1) and in their short term on SAC. This puts senators at a further disadvantage and contributes to the lack of motivation towards SAC. Furthermore, the duties and responsibilities of programming require a different mindset than that needed for the legislative side of ASUW. This is compounded by the lack of time discussed in Finding 1, and by the fact that a senator's term on SAC is limited to one year.

3⇒ A dual leadership exists because of the ASUW constitution and the SAC by-laws.

The ASUW constitution states that the chair of SAC will be a senator and the SAC by-laws dictate that a Lead Student Programmer be in charge of programming. The senator is supposed to run the meetings, and the LSP is supposed to carry out the actions associated with programming. Because of time and experience the senator is not always as effective of a leader as they could be. Out of necessity the LSP is forced to take more control than the working documents allow. This leads to conflict and a power struggle.

4⇒ SAC and ASUW senate run on different timetables. ASUW elections are held in the beginning of April and ASUW has “down” weeks while the new senators become acquainted with the workings of ASUW. SAC runs year round. The LSP trains the following year’s LSP while still in office. SAC cannot afford to take time off and still meet the programming needs of the students. Programs need to be booked weeks, and sometimes months, in advance and taking weeks off would result in missed opportunities. SAC currently has to take a few weeks off because the ASUW vice-president currently has to appoint senators to SAC, with one acting as chair. The outgoing VP cannot make appointments for the following term and bind the new administration to personnel.

5⇒ The last reason is money. With the exception of ASTEC, SAC’s budget by far receives the largest allocation from fees. In the current budget SAC was allocated \$36,000 and ASTEC received \$34,074, C&C received \$31,000 from the reserve fund. The largest RSO budget went to MECHA, which received \$6,250. The entire legislative branch of ASUW was allocated \$16,424, less than half of SAC’s allocation. This difference in budget size necessitates that different budget processes be applied when

dealing with SAC than with other ASUW funded programs and services. Because the SAC budget is too complex to be submitted with other committee budget requests, SAC is treated like an RSO instead of a standing committee. In order to address these issues, the task force examined the possibility of setting a certain portion of student fees aside for SAC, or even creating a new activity fee. No budget changes are included in the legislation, however that is one of the task force's recommendations.

◆ Recommendations:

The task force examined the possibility of making SAC an ASUW service. This would give SAC the ability to govern itself and generate their own funds. The task force decided that it was better to ease in the ASUW service format and evaluate each step, rather than to make the jump from standing committee to service in one leap. Further recommendations:

1. The UPC member on SAC be the chair of UPC.
2. The ASUW senator on SAC be a member of the Budget and Planning Committee.
3. We recommend that this committee be reconvened during the 2000-2001 academic year. The committee would be charged with evaluating the decisions made during the 1999-2000 academic year and to follow through with the following recommendations:
4. Pursuant to constitutional changes that would create ASUW student services, examine the practicality of making the Student's Activity Council (SAC) a student service instead of an ASUW committee.

5. Establishing a set amount of student fees to go directly to SAC, and establishing a SAC reserve, similar to the ASUW reserve.
6. Look into ways to streamline the SAC budgeting process.
7. Determine the feasibility of paying the Lead Student Programmer (LSP).
8. Take steps to institute a SAC advisory board that would operate similar to the Union advisory board.
9. Look into the feasibility of joining SAC, Concerts and Convocation (C&C), and Union Programming Committee (UPC).

An explanation of representation as a result of the proposed changes.

