

Notre Dame Student Senate  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

February 7, 2001  
Notre Dame Room, LaFortune

**I. OPENING BUSINESS**

- A. Call to Order  
Chairperson Brooke Norton called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.
- B. Invocation  
Dave Halm led the invocation.
- C. Roll Call  
Clay Cosse was absent.
- D. Approval of the January 24, 2001 Executive Summary  
The January 24, 2001 Executive Summary was approved unanimously.

**II. REPORTS**

A. Officer Reports

- 1) Mr. Brian O'Donoghue, Student Body President  
President O'Donoghue reported that his office was co-sponsoring a lecture tonight on "The Living Wage from a Neoclassical Perspective" at 7 pm. At 8 pm there will also be a speech in connection with the Blessing Unto Others Program, as well as concerts on both Friday and Saturday nights in the Library Auditorium at 8.
- 2) Ms. Brooke Norton, Student Body Vice-President  
Chairperson Brooke Norton announced that Jeff Stuffings would be resigning due to a conflict with class. Brooke also encouraged senators to attend their committee meetings.
- 3) Mr. Trip Foley, Student Union Secretary  
Mr. Trip Foley is currently compiling an attendance list for the Ethics Committee.
- 4) Mr. Jay Smith, Chief of Staff, Office of the President  
Brian O'Donoghue recognized Brooke Norton, Nick Fonte, Jessie Flores and the many others who hosted 180 8<sup>th</sup> graders on campus today.
- 5) Mr. Chris Andersen, HPC Liaison  
Mr. Chris Andersen was not in attendance.
- 6) Ms. Veronica Kessenich, St. Mary's Representative  
Ms. Veronica Kessenich was not in attendance.

B. Committee Reports

- 1) Committee on Academic Affairs  
The Academic Affairs Committee will present a letter under New Business. Additionally, they are meeting with Dean Koleman regarding advisors for sophomores and with the managers of the bookstore to discuss prices.
- 2) Committee on Diversity  
The Diversity Committee will meet at 5:30 on Thursday.
- 3) Committee on Ethics  
The Ethics Committee distributed a survey regarding Senators' views on split terms.
- 4) Committee on Gender Issues  
The Gender Issues Committee has been conducting parietals research and is providing a questionnaire for each Senator to bring back to his or her rector. It is the Committee's hope to extend parietals to 12:30 on Sunday nights and push them back to 9 AM each morning. Additionally, the Committee met this week with St. Mary's women's issues chairs and will continue this dialogue.
- 5) Committee on Oversight

In response to the Ethics Committee's survey, Audra Hagan reminded the Senate that Senate candidates cannot run on split tickets. Rather, a second election must be held for the spring semester.

- 6) Committee on Residence Life  
The Committee on Residence Life will meet with Food Services next week. There is also a committee meeting on Monday at 7:30.
- 7) Committee on University Affairs  
The University Affairs Committee is currently working on their student center proposal and hopes to finish that within the next few weeks.
- 8) Financial Management Board  
The FMB met and approved a few expenditures on Tuesday.

### III. PODIUM

#### A. Luciana Reali

Re: Results of Freshman Orientation Weekend Research

Luciana summarized results of focus groups the Gender Issues Committee had conducted regarding Freshman Orientation Weekend. The purpose of the interviews was to gather student input and this information will be passed on to the Student Activities Office. After highlighting a few of the questions, Luciana noted that there had been many mixed opinions regarding the Dommer Fest. However, many suggestions were offered and the Committee is currently considering the formation of a subcommittee to discuss this aspect of Freshman Orientation.

#### B. Dan Barabas

Re: Farewell to a Grateful Nation

Dan Barabas regretfully announced that he would be stepping down as Fisher Hall Senator. He gave a very spontaneous speech, praising the Senate, student government, and especially the Ethics Committee and his special home, Fisher Hall. Dan reminded the Senate that there will always be a new beginning and ended by saying, "They're not going to have Barabas to kick around anymore." Finally, in a very Nixonian image, he gave a farewell wave to the Senate. (There was also widespread speculation that the new Fisher Hall Senator might pardon Mr. Barabas)

### IV. OLD BUSINESS

### V. NEW BUSINESS

SS0001-25: Letter Regarding the Fall 2001 Final Exam Schedule

Bill Ferreira introduced a letter intended to follow up on the resolution passed last semester asking the Undergraduate Committee of the Academic Council to reinstate 4 study days for next fall's exam period. Bill explained that the letter requests that the Council consider student opinion and ensure a consistent amount of 4 study days when they make up the 2007 calendar. During discussion, friendly amendments were made by Audra Hagan, Kate McCarthy, Brian O'Donoghue, and Kaitlyn Dudley. The new amendment reads:

Mr. Mark Roche  
Chairperson, Undergraduate Committee of  
The Academic Council  
Dean, College of Arts and Letters  
137 O'Shaughnessy

Dear Mr. Roche:

Thank you for allowing our committee to attend the Undergraduate Studies Committee meeting on December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2000, and to present our proposals regarding the academic calendar for the Fall 2001 semester. We appreciate your willingness to listen and consider our scenarios. Although the results are not what we hoped, we respect the committee's decision.

We received the impression that the Undergraduate Studies Committee did not oppose our position, but felt the proposals arrived too late and did not warrant a third debate in the Academic Council. We want to reiterate that we came to you with the backing of the student body as shown by the unanimous approval of our resolution by Student Senate. We hope that the opinion of the student body will hold strong consideration when this decision arises again in the creation of the Fall 2007 Academic Calendar.

While we do not wish to debate the issues again, the following are a few points that we hope your committee will gain from our presentation and consider in the future:

1. Students treat final exams as a very serious matter and value their study days highly. We depend on adequate time to read, synthesize, and absorb the material taught throughout the semester.
2. It is in the best interest of the students to have a consistent exam schedule from year to year. The academic calendar should always allow four study days at the end of each semester.

Academic delegate Susan Roberts summed up our concerns when she posited that the current Fall 2001 schedule puts the "crunch" primarily on the students. We offered compromising scenarios in which the faculty, administration, and students would each make sacrifices. Unfortunately, time constraints prevented these scenarios from being feasible. We would like to quote a statement that hangs in the Office of the Registrar that brings the situation into perspective. It reads:

"The student is the most important person on campus. Without students, there is no reason for this university to exist."

We hope that student concerns will always be taken seriously. Thank you for holding our comments, suggestions, and assertions in the deepest respect, and we hope to be involved in any future decisions on this issue.

In Notre Dame,

Katie Bufalino, Chair  
Senate Committee on  
Academic Affairs

Bill Ferreira  
Senate Committee on  
Academic Affairs

Following a pq from Michael Pfaff, the Senate unanimously voted to approve Resolution SS0001-25.

## VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Jeff Stuffings announced that due to an LSTAT class he would be resigning as Alumni Senator. Jeff noted that he really enjoyed his time on the Senate and only has good things to say about student government.
- B. Michael Pfaff said that Knott Hall was sponsoring a basketball tournament on February 18 to benefit Habitat for Humanity. Each dorm is encouraged to sponsor two or three teams.
- C. Brian O'Donoghue opened the floor for any questions regarding the BOT presentation.
- D. Kristen Caponi announced that Cavanaugh Hall was sponsoring Women's Concerns Month. A schedule of events will be given to each Senator.
- E. Kelly Bush asked the Ethics Committee members to email her with free time when they could attend a meeting.

## VII. ADJOURNMENT

Nikki McCord moved for adjournment at 6:42 and this was approved unanimously. The next meeting of the Student Senate will take place on February 14 at 6:00 in the Notre Dame Room, LaFortune.

Respectfully Submitted,

Trip Foley  
Student Union Secretary  
2/7/01