

3-27-2006

New senators voted in.

Open forum

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Dr. Gates

-Questions

- In light of increasing enrollment of first generation and low income students, are going to also increase marketing to them? We aren't necessarily going to be doing that any more than any other students.
- Does the university officially have a position on the Bryan housing situation? We do not have an official statement. However, I think that the solution to the problem is first of all more courtesy on the part of students and also asking the neighbors to inform them if they are being too loud. My concern is that as our costs go up at Texas A&M, room and board is a bigger percentage than tuition and fees. I would rather not see an ordinance, because it will be cheaper for lower income students to find cheaper housing in collective groups.
- Can you speak about the effect that increasing enrollment will have on faculty? We have gone from 22 to 1 to 18 to 1 for the average class size. We have about another 200 faculty members to hire with the faculty increase-ment program. We will keep the 18 to 1 ratio for about a year, but as we hire about 30 faculty members a year, that ratio will start to decrease. There are two reasons for expanding enrollment: 1. To increase the access of higher education to high school graduates. 2. The bulk of the funds in the state of Texas is apportioned by a formula. The schools that get the most state funds have growing enrollment. Thus, A&M will get a larger percentage of the formula by increasing enrollment.
- Is there any more progress on the undergraduate Arabic program? I've made a pitch to two major companies to support the program, but I have not heard back from them yet.
- A question on International Students: I think that there is greater interest in international culture and I think that I-Week had a great impact on cultural acceptance. All Aggies need to look at for *all* Aggies. I really think that I Week achieved its purpose.
- A question on differential tuition and the business school: Different colleges are taking different approaches. For example, Engineering decided against it, Architecture was for it but also for eliminating all the course fees, business has not totally decided. I've been waiting to find out what impact that the faculty reinvestment program for Business will have on funds for the business program.
- I thank you for the email updating us on the progress and state of the university. TPAC recommended having a \$99 Energy Fee. By going for a fee, the cost is lower for the students than by putting it in tuition. 20% of tuition goes to under income scholarships, but fees don't have that. Also, students know exactly how much they are paying for energy. We would have to have a \$150 increase if we were to increase tuition. It is also easier to revoke a fee than a tuition increase. If the price of gas goes up a dime, it costs \$500,000. Yet, we are trying really hard

to keep energy done. Students and staff and their conservation measures extremely helped this year.

- There was a recommendation to have all colleges have a program where you can design a degree plan of your own and you can get in with a 2.0 and get out with a 2.0. There are a couple of undergraduate programs that can't do this, but most of them can. I have strong feelings to implement this. If a student is able to design a degree program that aligns them with what they want to do, than to have them suffer through a major that they do not want to go through. This might be implemented in fall of 2006.
- What is this about a two percent tax? I heard a little bit about it, but I would never approve it.
- How would the self designed degree program affect being hired for jobs? Students will be listed as a University Studies Degree. When you decide to do this program, you will have to sit down with an advisor. The advisor will not sign you off to start the degree, unless you have some upper level courses.
- Would there be advisors that are specific for this degree plan? One of the additional resource demands for this program will require hiring more academic advisors. Your advisor will still be of your study focus, yet the advisor will also be familiar with the University Studies Degree program.

#### SBP Candidates

Jennifer Faulkner – One thing that I have a passion for, is to enhance the senate. My heart is here, and I want to see senate take a bigger role. Connection is another big thing. I want to take SGA outside of Koldus. Instead of expecting students come to a website or a senator, I want to go out and find input. Jennfaulkner.com is my website.

- Blake Adami – I've had the honor of serving as the LASC president. My main goal is to increase student representation. I want to make a house of representatives. Every organization will be able to elect one member for the House. I think this will ensure true representation of the student body. blake4sbp.com is his website
- Speaker Hailey – what I am running for is a lot fo what we have been trying to do as senators. I want to make sure that information gets out to the students and that we are actually seeking input. I want to make sure that we respond more to students. My website talks about the specifics of my platform.
- Nic Taunton – I have served on the executive council in the past two years. Go to picknic.com and give me some feedback. I am here to run for this because I love this, I love this stuff.

#### Yell Leaders

- Buck – This is something that I have always wanted to do. I want to be in charge of spreading the passion of Texas A&M. visit me at [www.thefacebuck.com](http://www.thefacebuck.com). I will be running a 24 hour yell practice on Academic Plaza on Tuesday!
- Tyler, I've served in the past year as your junior yell leader. Yell leading at the football games in only a small percentage of what we do.
- James has been the mascot corporal. I've cherished the opportunity to serve in this capacity. Vote James and Eric for Junior Yell.

- Eric has been a silver taps host.
- Ryan for Senior Yell.
- Greg and Tyler have been serving the past year. We would appreciate you all voting for use again. The three guys that we brought tonight have a great sense of honor, service, and integrity. They were voted on by their peers in the Corps to represent them.

S.B. 06(S)9 – Tabled the bill.

#### Officer Reports

- Jim Carlson – Graduate Student Council is having Research Week coming up, and they need some volunteers. Many undergraduate and graduate students are presenting their research over the week. April 17<sup>th</sup> is the start of the Asian heritage Week. April 3-8 is Honors Week. Relay for Life is a start of a new tradition, and we are the biggest Relay for Life ever. The national organization wants to use us as an example. It is on March 31<sup>st</sup>. Executive Council is going to have a fundraiser and we are going to throw pies at my face for it. We passed on to Dr. Gates to show that we support Differential Tuition. We are spending a lot of time determining this, and we are continuing to interact with business students. Big Event is March 25<sup>th</sup>. We are going to establish a year in review. We will take a look at the university as a whole, and it will help the new leaders next year. It will show both the good and the bad of this past year. April 22<sup>nd</sup> is the deadline for information. We've had lots of problems with Neo. We want to implement a program like Microsoft Outlook. CIS is committing to do this, but they are going to provide this for a small fee next year. We will have accounts given out for student government leaders to help with communication. This is just a start to the improvements to our email.
- Will Hailey – TPAC is coming up Friday, and I want senators to come and be apart of this, especially architecture and liberal arts. Start to gather information on student services. Send that information to SSFAB.
- Chair Murray – we have an EA meeting on Sunday at 5 PM.
- Chair Nichols this upcoming Sunday at 6 PM is our next meeting.
- Chair Barat – the board of regents will be having an open forum tomorrow morning on designated tuition.

#### Open Session

- SB06(S)10 – Senator Lutz - This bill is to help keep campus beautiful bill. This enacts that April 20<sup>th</sup> and November 17<sup>th</sup> will be a clean up day, especially for Aggie Muster Day and Bonfire Memorial. Question: Don't we already have a custodial staff? Yes, but this will certainly help. Shouldn't we take care of marijuana 420 signs on campus? Good point.
  - Senator Stevens: have you talked to the custodial staff about this? I'm sure we can just tell them to make sure everything is cleaned up!
  - Senator Mayfield: I am confused. My understanding of this bill is that it will start to ensure that the campus is clean. But, why is it *keep* campus beautiful if it's only for two days.

- Senator Haines: How effective will this be if it falls on a Saturday or Sunday? I assume that the custodial staff will have cleaned up almost everything over the weekend.
- How do you want to inform the students? Traditions council will be mostly in charge of this.
- Do you plan to expand it? Not necessarily.

#### Announcements

- Ten students are coming to Qatar. We would like students to come help out, especially for the students to shadow you. It will be both cultural exchange and a chance to share our aggie traditions. Let David Clayton know if you want to help.
- Class of 2007 will be participating in Shack. This Tuesday they will be going through the legislation for the first time for the unrelated rule in the Bryan city council. It is important that people come to this. I believe it is 7:30 this Tuesday.
- Around the World is coming up April 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Class of 2006, ring dance is coming up. It is April 29<sup>th</sup> and the price is \$75.
- ON April 5<sup>th</sup>, the Aggie Investment will be putting on a presentation at the Kopenhower Center. They will have Starbucks and Jason's Deli.
- We have a three game series coming up. You guys have nothing better to do than to go to this.