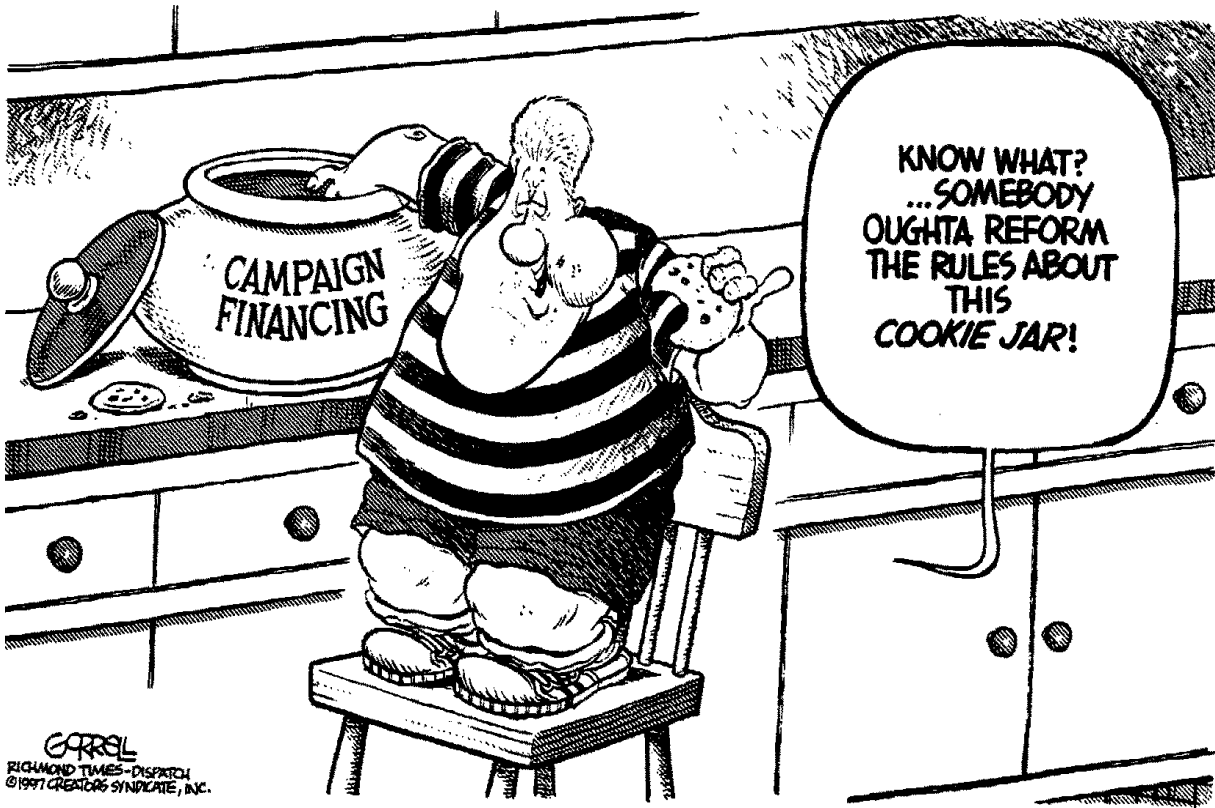


MIKE LUCKOVICH ATLANTA CONSTITUTION



Fall has brought more changes than just the cooler temperatures

Focusing inside ourselves has led to increased campus participation.

There is something refreshing about the fall season — the cooler temperatures, layering our clothing, moving our clocks back an hour and watching the leaves on the trees change into brilliant hues of reds, oranges and yellows. It is also a season wherein we find ourselves immersed in a flurry of activities at the

Joanna Iwata

GUEST COLUMNIST

university which began with orientation, convocation and Family Weekend, our fall athletic events leading us then into Homecoming, Project Pumpkin, Lovefeast and then winter break.

This fall, I also recently celebrated a once in a lifetime "season of change" as I turned 40. Two weeks ago my staff and students surprised me by decorating my office with black streamers and balloons. And for anyone who ever dreads turning 40, there it was: the official "over the hill" cake which was quickly consumed by everyone.

Whew ... I realized then that I had passed an important rite of passage. I face the question, as one of my colleagues so eloquently put it, "Now what do I intend to do for the next two-thirds of my life?" Thank you, "dear one," for this reminder!

As I reflect more on being 40, certain themes seem to emerge for me associated with the seasons of change, or rites of passage, all of which I believe affects us in different ways as we begin focusing more on our quality-of-life issues (no matter how old or young we are), whether that be at our home, at our work or at our university. And lately too what I've begun to notice is that there is something distinctively different about this fall season in comparison to last year or even three years ago — milestones we have reached in our rites of passage as a university community.

This fall, I have noticed something different in the air. Whether it be attending convocation, the Year of Religion in American Life programs, stand-up comedy, lectures, concerts or athletic games, there has been either standing room only crowds or sold-out events. Has anyone else noticed this too? Is this just a figment of my imagination, a result of my turning 40?

I have also been amazed by the student response to get tickets for Student Union events, such as

weekend movies, the Adam Sandler show and the Indigo Girls concert. For the first time in many years, there were students amassed in lines waiting to purchase their tickets, lines which literally ran out of the Benson Center to the Pit (and it wasn't even associated with basketball ticket pick-ups). Also, doesn't it seem to you that there is a larger mix of our students, faculty, staff and administrators in attendance at these and other events as well?

Three years ago (when I first arrived here), what I experienced about community life at the university was very different. Campus-wide events such as Convocation or those mentioned above did not seem to capture the same kind of attention or "spirit" of very many of our students, faculty and staff. If anything, these types of events were sparsely attended. So what's different now? What "seasons of change" have affected us at the university?

Perhaps we are finally more comfortable in focusing our creative energies and talents inward which in turn creates something dynamic within our community. Maybe for once, we are less preoccupied by where we rank in college surveys or in keeping up with our Ivy League neighbors. As a result, our focus then shifts to those things which do make us unique, through our Class of 2000 initiatives, theme years, freshmen retreats, creation of a new teaching center, curriculum review, hiring new faculty and more.

Also as we continue to focus inward, we experience new and exciting things sprouting all over campus! Grassroots initiatives such as the City of Joy, Hope Scholars, Shorty's, SG's Super Council, the revival of our literary societies, Women's Issues Network and events such as the Discovery Series, Festival of Lights and Arun Gandhi's standing room only visit to campus (spearheaded by ASIA but made possible through the financial sponsorships of over a dozen student groups and academic departments) can actually surface and survive.

So what does this all mean? I guess whether we consider ourselves ready or not, inevitably the "seasons of change" are upon us (just like our birthdays). And so it is up to us to continue to work towards improving upon our quality of life, especially at the university. These changes will require us to examine ourselves even more closely and face up to the issues which still create a chilly climate for some here. Are we ready? I think so. And to me, if there is anything significant as I enter into the next two-thirds of my life and as the university enters into the new millennium, perhaps it's recognizing that we only have one life to live ... so isn't it time to start living it? Happy fall!

Joanna Iwata is the director of the Benson University Center.

SG legislature recommends changes to judicial reform

Committee members hope that student voice will be heard.

Late in the spring semester of 1997, the Judicial Council released a Judicial Reform Proposal. To offer a student perspective on this proposal, an *ad hoc* committee was formed consisting

SG Executive Officers

GUEST COLUMNISTS

of junior Matt Jamison, Chair of the Honor Council; seniors Matt Lane and Kurt Shotzberger, Chairs of the Judicial Board; senior Bryan Denton, Head of the Student Counselors; juniors Ryan and Dave Ramsay, Chairs of the Student Government Judiciary Committee; senior Scott Plumridge, Student Government President; and Tina Carlucci, Student Government Speaker of the House.

This committee met on a weekly basis for about a month and carefully reviewed the proposal. We critiqued each section and responded with our own recommendations. While we agree with the general premise of the proposal, we feel that there are several issues which need to be addressed in the best interests of all students.

The *ad hoc* committee compiled a document explaining its recommendations and distributed it to the Student Government legislature which had already been presented with the Judicial Council's proposal.

After reviewing the *ad hoc* committee's suggestions and debating each separate bill for a total of two hours, the recommendation were adopted by majority vote by the Legislature. We would like to take this opportunity to share Student Government's recommendations with the student body.

Cultural Change: The creation

of a more honorable culture should be the first priority of any reform, rather than the concentration on the structural format of the judicial system.

We feel that the Judicial Council should concentrate on more than just treating the symptoms of the real problem — the climate and context in which the honor code exists.

Our recommendation would be to attack the "disease" itself by first addressing the attitude toward honor. Specifically, education and increased visibility of the code would be beneficial.

A brief, written statement on all academic work and a community-wide oath taken at Convocation would create a much more visible and permanent impression on the minds of community members.

Four Chairman Model: The new system contains a provision that only one chairman will be present at each hearing. This chairman will appoint one of the students to chair deliberations. Having both chairmen at every hearing would make the case load too heavy, and concurrent hearing ability would be lost.

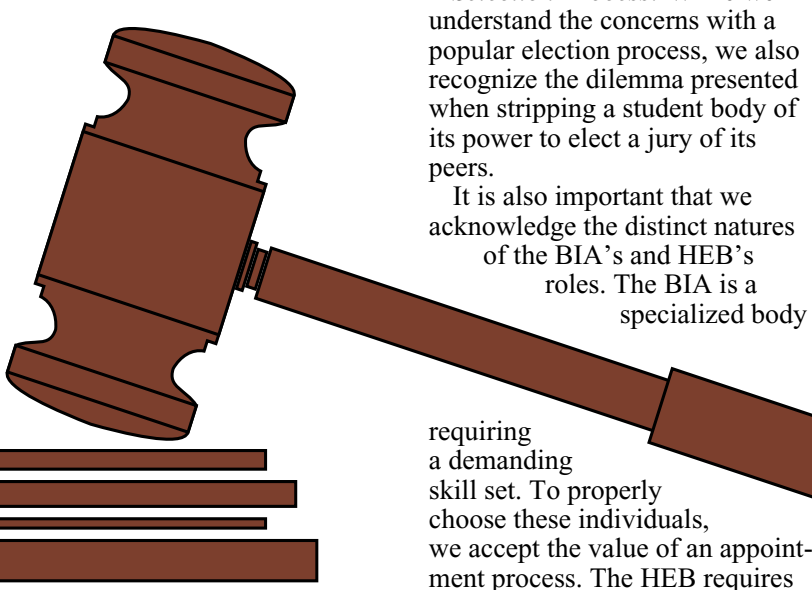
To address these problems, we suggest adding two chairmen to the Board of Investigators and Advisors. The chairmen of the Honor and Ethics Board will be responsible for assembling the hearing panel and chairing deliberations. The BIA chairmen will go to the judicial conference, decide which cases the board will hear, appoint investigators and advisors and run each hearing.

This sets up a system similar to the U.S. Justice system; there will be a set of judges and lawyers: the HEB chairs will essentially serve as jury foreman and the HEB will be like the jury. The strength of this system lies in matching chair skill sets to chair responsibilities. The BIA chairmen will be selected by the BIA to conduct the hearings and oversee investigations. The HEB chairman will be elected by the HEB for his

These recommendations have been drawn from the experiences of over 90 student leaders, and we are confident that they are in the best interests of the student body. We are optimistic that the proposals adopted by the Student Government Legislature, which represents all undergraduate students, will be truly heard and addressed within the Judicial Reform process.

ability to deliberate and effectively sort through presented facts.

Voting Ratio: In determining guilt or innocence and sanctions, we recommend five of seven votes to convict in order to maintain student power in ensuring at least half of the students would have to be in favor of the decision. Also, previous Judicial Board cases have shown



that a body of 11 people has had a difficult time getting 9 of 11 votes. It will be even harder to achieve 6 of 7.

Training of Board Members: Under the current system there is very little training made available to members of the both the Honor Council and the Judicial Board.

To make sound decisions and effectively run the judicial body, members, and chairs in particular, need to be educated on the system as well as receive guidance from an overseeing body.

Previous Violations and Screening: Student interested in a position on the HEB or BIA must

agree, in writing, to release their judicial records to the Elections Committee. Students who do not release their records will not be eligible for a position. Any student with an honor violation will not be eligible to serve on the HEB or the BIA. All other violations will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Elections Committee.

Selection Process: While we understand the concerns with a popular election process, we also recognize the dilemma presented when stripping a student body of its power to elect a jury of its peers.

It is also important that we acknowledge the distinct natures of the BIA's and HEB's roles. The BIA is a specialized body

requiring a demanding skill set. To properly choose these individuals, we accept the value of an appointment process. The HEB requires students who have been entrusted with the confidence of the student body.

To dispel concerns regarding popular elections, the Elections Committee would employ a rigorous screening process, by which only the most qualified applicants would be appointed to the ballot.

To avoid the problems of an unwieldy ballot, no more than three candidates per position will be listed for each class as allotted under the current proposal. To allow greater scrutiny of the candidates, elections for each class should be staggered.

Faculty Selection Process: We

recommend that the process for selecting faculty members of the HEB be delegated to the faculty rather than the Dean of the College. This would mirror the student selection process in that the faculty would select from their peers to form the body which will uphold the standards of the community. It would also raise faculty consciousness of the HEB, a main goal of current judicial reform.

Justifying the Need for Administrators to Serve on HEB: The rationale for including an administrator as a voting member of the HEB is not sound. The argument has been made that an administrator, due to his or her greater institutional memory, will be able to provide more consistency in the sanctioning process.

Since each case must be considered independently from all prior cases, an administrator's knowledge of precedence has no place in initial deliberations. An administrator's presence merely echoes the student handbook, which already provides consistency by assigning the sanctions.

Right of the Accused to Choose a Representative: The right to representation is too important to be discarded. We suggest that

students be given a voice in the selection of the BIA member which will represent them. Furthermore, we feel that students should retain the right to select any undergraduate student to represent them, with the proviso that a BIA member be consulted by that representative.

Continued Inefficiency: While the new system boasts speed, many of the delays which occur in the administrative portion of the process still have not been addressed. Within the current system, there is an average delay of 20 business days before a case even reaches the chairmen of the Judicial Board or Honor Council. The Judicial Council should examine and reduce the administrative delays if speed and efficiency is a priority.

Implementation Process: It is

imperative that the constitution be amended through referendum according to Student Government's statutes. It is important that the Judicial Council upholds a contract with the student body based on good faith and allows students to feel ownership in the new system. Allowing the student body to vote in a referendum will provide an excellent opportunity to heighten awareness of the honor.

Students will feel that this is their system, which should be the ultimate goal of any reform. If the Judicial Council adopts a free-standing document, students will feel that the decisions are being handed down to them and may react negatively to the new judicial system. It would be unfortunate if positive change is not embraced as a result of the manner in which it was implemented.

We will present the legislature's recommendations to the Judicial Council subcommittee on Oct. 30. These recommendations have been drawn from the experiences of over 90 student leaders, and we are confident that they are in the best interests of the student body. We are optimistic that the proposals adopted by the Student Government Legislature, which represents all undergraduate students, will be truly heard and addressed within the judicial reform process.

It is Student Government's hope that these recommendations will foster debate and a free exchange of ideas regarding this issue.

We have an unprecedented opportunity to impact the future of the university and it is imperative that students, faculty and administrators work together to further a more honorable culture and effective judicial system, while maintaining the rights of all students guaranteed by their constitution.

This column was written by senior Scott Plumridge, SG President; junior Tina Carlucci, SG Speaker of the House; senior Ryan Marsh, SG Treasurer; and junior Jonathan Perry, SG Secretary.