

OPINION

This column represents the views of the Old Gold and Black Editorial Board.

SBAC allocations raise questions about priorities

The Student Budget Advisory Committee released its preliminary recommendations for the 1998-99 budget Nov. 6, and, as is the case every year, the budget pleased some groups and angered others. SBAC did a good job overall, devoting long hours to making decisions about the budget that they felt were fair. But there were some problems. One characteristic that seems to stand out in the preliminary budget is that the ratio of funds allocated to funds requested was lower for minority and religious groups than for other groups. Among the bottom ten were Asian Student Interest Association, Gay and Lesbian Bisexual Awareness, Alliance for Racial and Cultural Harmony, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, InterVarsity and both the Episcopal and Presbyterian Student Fellowships.

Was SBAC intentionally slighting minorities and religious folks? Were the low percentages even a slighting at all, or did they represent fair decisions? Well, also among the bottom ten allocation percentages are the Euzelian Society, Temporary Reprieve and Habitat for Humanity, which obviously do not follow under the categories of minority or religious organizations.

The concentration of these groups at the bottom of the list could very well be a coincidence. These groups may just have all had insufficient plans that did not warrant the amount of money that they asked for. Let's hope that SBAC did not deny any organization money based on judgments of the worth of the group on campus, but rather on the concrete plans and needs of the group.

Perhaps some organizations did not get much money because they are new or have few members. While it is fair to give a new organization a limited amount of money in order for it to prove that it can use the funding wisely and efficiently, SBAC must remember that it is hard for an organization to get off the ground without enough funds. And if an organization does not have enough money to accomplish much, it will not attract many members, and will keep

getting small amounts of SBAC money every year, remaining in an unbreakable cycle.

But organizations like GALBA, ASIA and the Episcopal and Presbyterian Student Fellowships have been around a while now and have indeed grown. Why are they still getting small percentages of their requested allocations? It may be that SBAC figures that organizations that have similar goals, like the numerous groups that promote racial harmony or minority rights and awareness (ARCH, Black Student Alliance, NAACP, ASIA, among others), will get together and pool their funds to accomplish mutual goals.

But if this is the reasoning behind SBAC's allocations, then it should tell these organizations. Or even if this was not its intention, maybe SBAC or Student Government should go ahead anyway and set up some sort of forum or mediating body to encourage similar organizations to get together financially. It would not only help their pocketbooks, but it would promote unity on campus as well.

The disgruntled groups still unhappy with the preliminary budget always have the appeals process and Financial Package decisions to look forward to. This year SBAC has plenty of money left to give away through these outlets.

Speaking of plenty of money, the preliminary budget allocates SG 99.5 percent of its requested funds, while groups like NAACP and ASIA got 9.8 percent and 11.5 percent, respectively. (Only three groups, Chi Rho, the Howler and PREPAR, received more than SG, each getting 100 percent of their requested funds.) SBAC is composed of the SG president and treasurer as well as members appointed by SG (other members are elected). As we have said for years, the fact that SG members help decide how much money SG gets from SBAC is a conflict of interest, whether or not they really make the decisions fairly.

The funding for SG should come directly from the university, as does Student Union's budget, or through some other organization, like Resident Student Association's budget, which comes from Residence Life and Housing.

Students should give input about curriculum review

As the Curriculum Review committee works on new curriculum plans, its members and the student body should keep several things in mind.

The committee has presented the idea of changing four-credit classes to three credits, while maintaining the 144 credits needed to graduate. Professors would be expected to cut down the workload of their classes to make them worth three credits instead of four.

Many students are concerned that professors would not actually cut down

their required work, thus making a much heavier workload with the extra classes.

But the committee is sponsoring open forums to gather student input on this issue. Students should take advantage of this opportunity to speak their minds, a chance they did not have when the decision of the plus/minus grading system was made.

If they do not attend these forums or schedule a time to speak to the committee (as they are invited to do), then they have no room to complain if a system they oppose is implemented.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GALBA does indeed foster dialogue

I have two main reactions to Matthew Smith-Kennedy's Oct. 30 editorial, "Campus must foster homosexuality dialogue."

First, I wish to congratulate Smith-Kennedy for bringing an important issue to the forefront and for recognizing the difficulty of successful dialogue on this campus. Many people on campus have a knee-jerk response to the very mention of the word "homosexuality," so tensions often run high. Some people would rather not discuss it at all. Others have a full arsenal of opinions they're ready to share at the drop of a hat. True dialogue — listening and responding thoughtfully to one another — is extremely difficult to manage on this subject.

However, I must disagree with Smith-Kennedy's implication that Gay and Lesbian Bisexual Awareness is unable or unwilling to foster such dialogue. On the contrary, much of GALBA's focus this year is on working together with different organizations to promote a healthy exchange of ideas instead of antagonism.

I have personally been participating in a focus group comprised of both GALBA and InterVarsity Christian Fellowship members who are discussing ways our organizations can work toward mutual understanding without compro-

mising the values important to either group. I'm pleased to say that we've made a lot of progress and look forward to continuing these endeavors.

What Smith-Kennedy seems to have forgotten is that GALBA has another mission — to provide a "safe place" where gay, lesbian and bisexual students can find support in a non-threatening environment. While we welcome differing opinions in any public forum, the GALBA listserv is not the appropriate place for inflammatory comments and debates. If Smith-Kennedy felt wronged in any way by GALBA, he should have discussed the situation with GALBA's executive officers rather than making it a focus of his editorial.

GALBA remains committed to fostering dialogue among students with a broad variety of views on homosexuality. We have a number of ideas currently in the works, and I hope that students will take full advantage of these opportunities for discussion as they arise.

Justin Lee
GALBA Vice President

Hockey is cool, but factual mistakes aren't

In the Nov. 6 issue of the *Old Gold and Black*, senior Zach Everson, in his column "The coolest game in the world, really," tried to convince his readers of

the value of attending a hockey game. While I agree with Everson's assessment that hockey is indeed a cool sport, please, Everson, get your facts straight.

Everson writes, "You're a Detroit Red Wings fan? Throw a squid." Trust me, Mr. Everson, no Wings fan is about to launch a squid. They might throw an octopus. The eight tentacles represent the eight wins that it formerly took to win the Stanley Cup prior to league expansion.

Everson also notes, "New Jersey Devils fan? Wing a rat onto the ice." No, Mr. Everson, The Florida Panthers, not the New Jersey Devils, have the tradition of rat-throwing.

I am glad that you are promoting hockey, Mr. Everson, but before you begin marketing for the NHL please straighten out your facts.

Dave Whalen
Freshman

For more letters, see next page.

Our letters policy

We welcome letters. Send yours via e-mail to letters@ogb.wfu.edu, by campus mail to P.O. Box 7569, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27109, or deliver it to Benson 518. We reserve the right to edit all letters for length and clarity.

OLD GOLD AND BLACK

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY SINCE 1916

Danielle Deaver
Editor in Chief

Charles Starks
Managing Editor

Brad Gilmore
Business Manager

News: Zach Everson, editor; Theresa Felder and Heather Seely, assistant editors; Katherine Bradley, Anne Bramley and Jared Perry, copy editors; Shannon Bothwell, Reagan Humber, Carolyn Lay and Stacey Triplette, production assistants; Brendon Browne, WorldWide editor.

Editorials: Jennifer Gough, editor; Melissa Shields, copy editor; Poppy Durant, production assistant.

Arts and Entertainment: Jenny Blackford, editor; Elizabeth Hoyle, assistant editor; Katie Venit, copy editor.

Sports: Scott Payne, editor; Paul Gaeta, assistant editor; Greg Wilson, copy editor; Taylor Brown, production assistant.

Perspectives: Kate Cosgrove, editor; Sarah Kutner, assistant editor.

Electronic Edition: Julie Davis and David Marshburn, editors; Brent Blum, production assistant.

Chief Proofreader: Sam Newlands.

Graphics: Jamie Womack, editor; Brian Schiller, assistant editor.

Assistant Business Manager: Scott Bayzle.

Advertising: Victoria Pham and Kristin Hemric, advertising production.

Photography: Noel Fox, Carlton Ward, J. Reed Clay, Dave Friswold, Kim Robinson.

Adviser: Wayne King.

The *Old Gold and Black* is published each Thursday during the school year, except during examinations, summer and holiday periods, by Piedmont Publishing Co. of Winston-Salem, N.C. Questions or comments should be sent via e-mail to comments@ogb.wfu.edu or via mail to P.O. Box 7569, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27109. © 1997 WFU Publications Board. All rights reserved.

If you wish to submit a guest editorial, contact the editorials editor at Ext. 5280 at least two weeks in advance of the issue in which you would like it to appear.

