

Board of Student Communications Report 2018-2019

Jeff Inman, BSC Faculty Co-Chair

Voting Members for 2017-2018: Jessica Spangler (Student Senate, Co-Chair), Kollin Compton (Student Senator), Aileen Acosta (Student Senate appointee), Anna Jensen (Student Representative selected by Editors-in-Chief), Catherine Staub (SJMC), Bart Schmitt (A&S) and Sarah McCoy (A&S).

Ex-Officio: Denise Ganpat (SJMC)

Non-Voting Members for 2017-2018: Lorien MacEnulty (Editor in Chief, *Times-Delphic*), Morgan Noll (Editor in Chief, *Drake Magazine*), Rebecca Perl (Editor in Chief, *DUIIN*), Graham Johnson (Editor in Chief, *Periphery*), Haley Hodges (*Drake Political Review*), and Noah Manderfeld (President, Drake Broadcasting System).

Confirmed Non-Voting Members for 2018-2019: Lorien MacEnulty (Editor in Chief, *Times-Delphic*), Morgan Noll (Editor in Chief, *Drake Magazine*), Rebecca Perl (Editor in Chief, *DUIIN*), Graham Johnson (Editor in Chief, *Periphery*), Haley Hodges (*Drake Political Review*), and Noah Manderfeld (President, Drake Broadcasting System). Procedures specified in the BSC Rules and Regulations were followed.

Meetings: September 26, October 24, November 28, February 7, February 27, March 13, April 17, May 8.

Summary of Activities:

Fall 2018

Similar to the previous year, the first issue the Board of Student Communications had to tackle was the solidification of the budget as a whole, as well as for each individual publication, based on available student fees. It was originally believed that publications would have to reduce their budgets based on projected lower-than-predicted enrollment, though after the 10-day count was approved and the BSC's overall budget was solidified, final organizational budgets were approved at levels in line with the previous year, though with little to spare.

The fall also the launch of the BSC Budget Ad Hoc committee. According to our policy document, funding for the BSC must be reviewed by a committee, who then must make recommendations to the BSC itself, faculty senate and student senate. Two of the three entities must approve the proposal for the new level of funding to go into effect for a term of five years.

In September of 2018 I met with Faculty Senate Exec to inform it of the policy document's requirements, including Faculty Senate's duty to appoint a member to the ad hoc committee. Prof. Beth Younger was drafted to serve. Journalism senator and BSC co-chair Jessie Spangler informed Student Senate of the issue as well and they appointed treasurer Nick Johnson to the

ad hoc committee. The four-member panel was fleshed out by Spangler and myself, the two BSC co-chairs.

We met in November to discuss the BSC's student activities fee allocation (\$37.75). I argued that, despite the potential loss of a publication (more on that later), the fee should remain the same due to a continued potential downturn in enrollment. The committee agreed. Our findings were approved by the BSC at our December meeting. It was approved by Faculty Senate in early March and Student Senate in late March, thus locking in the BSC's funding from the student activities fee at \$37.75 per student for the next five years.

Organizational leaders were also tasked to create a list of all paid staff positions and prioritize those positions. The object was to inform future leaders about the necessity of each position, which jobs were essential and which could be eliminated.

Leaders were also tasked with tracking the distribution of their product across campus to better understand where issues were being picked up, where they weren't, and how many issues were left at the end of the semester. The results showed that most student publications are printing an appropriate amount of copies per semester—or in the case of the magazines, perhaps less than necessary.

Spring 2019

While normal business, including updates on how Christian Printing was fulfilling on its contract, updates on events, and hiring of new organizational leaders dominated much of the semester, four issues overshadowed everything: the removal of the *Times-Delphic* (TD) editor, the changing of several bylaws after that ordeal to help make the process less arduous, the closing of *The Annual*, the BSC's once-a-year news magazine, and issues with the radio tower.

The TD editor matter had been brewing for some time. There were issues with management style, interaction with sources, and the treatment of readers. The staff asked that the EIC step down. After negotiations, the editor agreed, with the managing editor being elevated to the EIC position.

The ordeal brought attention to the bylaws' instructions on how to remove an editor. It was a process that included a protracted fact-finding process and what amounted to a trial, both the accused and the accuser allowed representation and a law school professor serving as judge. The board thought this process cumbersome, time-consuming, and potentially too demanding on those both in and outside the BSC. Bylaw changes included the removal of the "trial", a time-frame on investigating the issue, and multiple points where the BSC could opt to dismiss the complaint.

We did, however, stick to our bylaw guidance regarding *The Annual*. Last year, *The Annual* never received an application for its Editor-In-Chief position. As a result, it “rested” during the 2018-19 school year. According to BSC bylaws, if no one applied to be editor of the magazine during this school year, the BSC may begin removing the publication from its roster, effectively closing down the brand. We did not receive any applications for the position. We voted in our April meeting to remove *The Annual* from the BSC. In the fall the co-chairs must go before Faculty and Student Senate and explain our action. A publication can only be removed when all three entities agree. If they don’t then the BSC will again open applications for *The Annual*’s EIC position in the spring of 2020.

Finally, as temperatures warmed, it became evident that during the winter the radio tower for 94.1 The Dog, the radio station supported by Drake Broadcast Systems, had been damaged. It was not operating at its required power, in violation of our FCC license. Ray Fredregill, DBS’s advisor, briefed both the SJMC faculty and the BSC on the damage and the cost of repairs. He estimated that to bring the tower and the terrestrial radio signal back into compliance with the FCC the BSC would have to spend roughly \$10,000. After spending \$12,000 remodeling the radio station space last year, it was decided that this was too much for the BSC to spend particular organization.

Instead, Fredregill proposed that 94.1 The Dog embrace its online streaming signal. He suggested that the BSC end terrestrial radio, invest a small amount of money in a new streaming service that includes a branded app that could be placed on students’ phones, and become a fully online radio station. The BSC agreed with this proposal. While the BSC is only one of several entities that has a stake in the station—Facilities, the university and the SJMC faculty also claim part of the station—we are on record recommending this move.

Suggestions for 2019-20

- Finishing the removal process for *The Annual*
- Continued close monitoring of budgets
- The continued use of BSC meetings as a vehicle to foster increased cooperation among the BSC organizations
- Possibility of a unified sales force to increase ads across organizations, particularly now if 94.1 The Dog becomes a streaming service, which removed the FCC’s non-profit requirement from the station.