



New York University
A private university in the public service

Student Senators Council
University Committee on Student Life
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MEMORANDUM

TO: President John Sexton
Members of the Senate Financial Affairs Committee

FROM: The Student Senators Council (SSC)

RE: Recommendations for the University Budget
A/Y 2009-2010

Each year, the Student Senators Council, along with the Faculty Senators Council and Administrative Management Council submits budget recommendations to the University Senate's Financial Affairs Committee. The Student Senators Council takes this duty very seriously and has, in the past, been appreciative of the high level of responsiveness from University Administration. The Council was grateful that last year students were provided with more resources to support club development and university-wide programming. The Student Senators Council is aware that NYU, along with other universities around the country, will be faced with hard economic times and cost-cutting measures in the coming years. Students are at the core of the University, and are often able to identify trends and needs from an important and valuable perspective. This year, we are particularly sensitive to the financial restraints the University will be facing and have prioritized our budgetary items accordingly. Our recommendations for next year's budget are considerably abbreviated in recognition of anticipated budget cuts and in order to focus on the most critical student needs.

The Student Senators Council recommends that the university continue and expand the practice of seeking appropriate student representation from the SSC/UCSL for all decisions impacting students.

In considering how to respond to the economic challenges of the coming year(s), the Administration will face hard choices. The Student Senators Council requests that students be involved in these discussions so that their interests are well represented. The Student Senators Council and its University Committee on Student Life (UCSL) should serve as the bedrock for this input. The SSC and its UCSL include student leaders from all schools that are ready, willing and able to contribute to any planning efforts, both long and short term.

We would like to be included from the beginning of conversations, rather than toward the end or after decisions have already been made. By waiting for student input after decisions have been made, the administration is not allowing students to have a real voice in university matters. We feel that student input should always take place in matters that affect students on some level, and that the SSC and UCSL are appropriate places to seek such input.

The Student Senators Council recommends that the University devote substantial resources to ensuring increased financial aid as well as strengthening financial aid counseling services.

As the economy goes through rough times, students are increasingly sensitive to the financial burden that higher education imposes upon them and members of their families. While we recognize NYU is tuition-reliant and limited in its ability to offer assistance at levels comparable to some peer institutions, the Student Senators Council recommends that the University direct as much money as possible into financial aid. The troubles of the economy will undoubtedly cause many students currently receiving financial aid to need more assistance, as well as those who have not, in the past, received financial aid. We would like to see the emphasis on increased aid given to those students currently enrolled at the university, in attempts to maintain our student population. We hope that incoming students will be offered more generous financial aid packages than previous incoming classes, however, the focus should be on currently enrolled students.

The University will likely see a substantial increase in the amount of students who apply for and receive financial aid in the coming years. The Student Senators Council recommends that additional funding be made available to support increased usage of counseling services through the Office of Financial Aid. We believe that the current resources (i.e. number of counselors) offered in the Office of Financial Aid are not adequate to satisfy the demand for financial aid counseling. The Student Senator Council would be glad to offer the services of its Student Financial Aid and Compensation committee to be an integral part of any discussion of expansion.

The Student Senators Council recommends that the University hold any tuition increase to at or below the rate of inflation.

The Student Senators Council recommends that the university make every effort to keep any tuition increase to a minimum, not exceeding the rate of inflation. The average rate of inflation for 2008 was 3.85%, thus we recommend that tuition does not increase beyond this amount for the 2009-2010 academic year. Giving additional financial aid in these difficult times is only part of the solution to an uphill battle for struggling students and families: ensuring that tuition does not rise beyond inflation will offer another part of this solution.

In order to respond to increasing demand, the Student Senators Council recommends that the University strengthen and expand both mental health and career services counseling.

The Student Senators Council recommends that the University allocate more resources to help students cope with troubled times – personal, familial and financial. The Student Senators Council recommends that the University increase allocations to support counseling in two additional areas – mental health and career services. The Student Senators Council believes that it is likely that more students will utilize these services and is concerned that current resources may not be sufficient to maintain the quality of services that the University strives to offer.

- In terms of health services, the Student Senators Council recommends that the University consider increasing the amount of mental health counseling available to students. The Student Senators Council believes this support system will become more invaluable and more commonly utilized by students as ongoing and increased stress levels continue to affect them.
- Students who are graduating and students looking for work during the academic year will face an increasingly daunting job market. The Student Senators Council recommends that the University devote substantial resources to making sure that such students have access to career advisement. Additionally, to the extent possible, NYU should continue to offer career counseling to recent alumni who likely will need this service more than they have in the past.

The Student Senators Council recommends retaining the \$100,000 increase in funding that the All-Square Student Budget Allocation Committee received for the 2008-2009 academic year, and a continued annual increase equivalent to the rising percentage of tuition, to support highly successful programming activities of All-Square student groups and organizations.

One of NYU's most successful programs for bringing its diverse students together is its very strong club network. The Student Senators Council requests that the University maintain its regular commitment to provide an annual increase in resources to the All Square Budget Allocation Committee (ASSBAC) in order to make sure that this pillar of NYU life stays strong and vibrant. With its current budget, the ASSBAC has been enabled to provide the necessary funding for expanding tournament clubs with increasing expenses, fund publication clubs with increasing printing costs, provide funding for approximately thirty new clubs, and to give more generous contingencies for clubs that exhibit a great need. With the increase in budget, ASSBAC has had the opportunity to allow clubs to begin reaching out into the NYC community by hosting local, off-campus events and community service projects for students, which the student organizations greatly appreciate and enjoy doing. Many clubs have reported this year that their student bases have increased, and as such the ASSBAC has been able to provide

contingencies for increased expenses for general meetings and activities for larger numbers of students.

Additionally, the Student Senators Council recommends that the University continue its efforts to maximize usage of space not only in Kimmel, but around the University. To that end, the Student Senators Council also recommends that the University engage in a review of propriety space policies, with student input in the very beginning of discussions.

The Student Senators Council recommends that the University regard graduate student housing as a higher priority than it has in the past by fully utilizing existing space and resources.

While it would be ideal to offer housing to all graduate students, including foreign students, the Student Senators Council recognizes that there are large financial constraints, both current and anticipated, in increasing the amount of graduate student housing available. We, therefore, request that the University continue to grant all graduate students who *request* housing, or at least provide appropriate information/counseling for housing opportunities off-campus. In addition, we would encourage the University to promote any vacancies (i.e. by lowering rates) to graduate students so that all NYU housing is completely utilized, rather than leaving rooms empty. These recommendations seem more reasonable in the light that many landlords have been forced to make concessions in the troubled housing market.

The Student Senators Council recommends that the University review current services provided in residence halls and decrease the disparity between them.

Currently, some residence halls offer free toilet paper and garbage bags while others don't, and laundry facilities are priced differently per halls despite the contract being with the same company. We recommend that the same services be offered at all residence halls and for the same price. To cut costs, perhaps using money from one service to standardize another would be beneficial.

The Student Senators Council recommends that the University continue to expand dining services to provide students with healthy and organic options.

The successful implementation of the Hayden Dining Hall suggests that students crave dining options that are organic and environmentally friendly. We recommend that the University continue its efforts to expand this initiative.