

Board of Student Communications Report 2015-2016

Jeff Inman, BSC Faculty Co-Chair

Voting Members for 2014-2015: Linley Sanders (Student Senate, Co-Chair), Richie Serrano (Organization Council Senator), Courtney Fishman (Student Senate appointee), Austin Cannon (Student Representative selected by Editors-in-Chief), Jennifer Glover-Konfrst (JMC), Bart Schmidt (A&S) and Geoffrey Bartlett (CBPA).

Ex-Officio: Meghan Blancas (Director of Student Leadership)

Non-Voting Members for 2015-2016: Tim Webber (Editor in Chief, *Times-Delphic*), Melissa Studach (Editor in Chief, *Drake Magazine*), Megan Ellis (Editor in Chief, *DUiN*), Hannah Howard (Editor in Chief, *Periphery*), Emily Gregor (Editor in Chief, *The Annual*), and Mariah Lewis (President, Drake Broadcasting System).

Elected Officers for 2015-2016: Jessica Lynk (Editor in Chief, *Times-Delphic*), Katie Bandurski (Editor in Chief, *Drake Magazine*), Megan Ellis (Editor in Chief, *DUiN*), Jacob Leiberton (Editor in Chief, *Periphery*), Jennifer Krane (Editor in Chief, *The Annual*), and Grace Rogers (President, Drake Broadcasting System). Procedures specified in the BSC Rules and Regulations were followed.

Meetings: September 18, October 9, November 6, January 29, February 26, March 25 and April 29.

Summary of Activities:

Fall 2015

During the first Fall 2015, BSC had to deal with multiple issues. The first was the hack of several of the publications websites (*Drake Magazine* and DBS in particular). It was decided to migrate the websites from current host Fatcow to Reclaim Hosting, which is reported to be more secure and cost less. EICs were told to work in conjunction with Prof. Chris Snider and Meghan Blancas move their website to the new host.

The BSC also began to work on establishing an equitable pay system for editors. Several BSC editors were paid proportionally more than their counterparts. Sen. Sanders and Co-Chair Inman wanted to come with a way to make pay fair across all organizations. EICs and presidents were asked to track their hours for the year to build up a data set from which a new pay structure could be implemented. Data collection was halted in March, though, when new federal rules governing the payment of student employees (including editors) were implemented, forcing the BSC to build a new model based on hourly pay.

began to address issues regarding the payment of student writers. After the departure of Jan Wise, many things The HR department.

Finally a new system for travel requests for student editors was implemented. For years several organizations had travel built into their annual budget. Newer publications (*The Annual* and *Drake Political Review*) did not have the ability to add travel funds to their budgets because of their later admission to the BSC. All travel funds were removed from individual organizational budgets and placed into a BSC travel fund. All organizations could then apply for one-time travel funds, which were then voted on by the BSC board.

Spring 2016

There were significant changes to the BSC in two particular areas during the spring: student pay and the bylaws.

Student pay was restructured at the request of Meghan Blancas and Associate Dean of Students Jerry Parker. Over the past several years the payment of writers on a per-story basis had become untenable for accounting, Student Life and HR departments. The volume of students needing to be paid had ballooned, as well as the number who refused to pick up their checks, resulting in Blancas often having to track down students to pick up their checks. It was a burden on her and took away from her assigned duties.

Prof. Konfst (BSC) created a survey to test the motivation of students. Out of 14 categories, the majority of student ranked receiving payment is either their last or second-to-last reason for writing for BSC publications. While many on the BSC board believe that writers should be paid for their work, it was decided to eliminate the one-off payment of writers and instead implement a staff-writing model, where publications could factor in a paid position into their budget. It was agreed to monitor this new system during the 2016-17 school year to see what impact it had on participation.

The BSC bylaws and policy document also received a revamping. Sen. Sanders rewrote several sections of the bylaws to clarify the addition and removal of an organization from the BSC, clarified the requirements to serve as an organizational head, specified the student and faculty make-up of the board, and the transfer of funds from one section of a publications budget to another.

Elections for 2016-2017 Editors in Chief and Presidents took place at the March 2015 meeting. Budget determinations for 2016-2017 took place at the April 2016 meeting. A one-time funding request to help modernize the DBS radio station was approved as well.

Suggestions for 2016-17

- Monitor the impact of changes in the payment structure on participation
- The close monitoring of budgets due to decreased enrollment.
- Use BSC meetings as a vehicle to foster increased cooperation among the BSC organizations.
- Look for solutions with Student Life to help reduce access to funds, payment and purchases.
- Possibility of a unified sales force to increase ads across organizations