

2023 – 2024 Student Government Strategic Plan

Priority 1: Advocating for the Student Experience

- Making External Funding More User Friendly
 - Comptrollers: Each organization will be assigned one comptroller. These comptrollers are extremely knowledgeable about the funding process and will be quick to answer. The treasurer's email will be monitored closely by the Treasurer, her chief of staff, and the head comptroller. All questions should be answered within 24 hours. Comptrollers will be accessible before and after Finance Committee dialogs to answer questions or concerns.
 - Treasurer's Workshops: We will have at least 3 Treasurer's Workshops planned for the semester, including one virtual option. Organization leaders can also request special workshops later in the semester. We will collaborate with the Communications team to publish reminders for the workshops a week in advance, 2 days in advance, and day of.
 - Online Resources: We will publish a short video giving a synopsis on the funding process and have an online checklist for internal student government requests in addition to the current external one. We will also include semester reports about how much funding has been used/is left.
- Enhancing Gameday Safety & Experience
 - Phone Chargers in the Student Section: We will install phone chargers underneath the student section of the stadium so that no students face safety-related issues due to a dead cellphone. We are working with athletics to have a portable charger machine put underneath the student section to serve this purpose. We will also provide a machine in Russell House where the chargers can be returned.
 - Uber Vouchers: To promote safety for students on gameday, we will offer uber discount vouchers on an application basis for students to have rides to and from the stadium on home gamedays.
 - Proportionate Student Ticket Allocation: As our student numbers increase, so should our student tickets. We will advocate to Athletics and administration to keep student ticketing proportionate with our number of students.
 - Student Government Tailgates for Non-Football Sports: To encourage students to get points for football games and to attend other sports, we will continue to host Student Government tailgates at Basketball games, softball games, soccer games, etc.
- Carolina Core Curriculum Revitalization
 - As the Faculty Senate and the Provost's office work on the process of Carolina Core revitalization, student input is imperative. We will advocate for Carolina Core classes that better reflect life skills students often leave college without knowing through open dialogue, passage of relevant legislation, and implementation of initiatives. Examples of these courses would include personal finance, mental and physical wellness, and home economics. Many students have

expressed that they do not feel adequately prepared in areas of financial literacy and holistic wellbeing, and these courses could help mitigate these concerns. We would work with the provost's office and faculty to create the curriculum for these courses.

- Improving Professor & Staff Accountability

- Professor Accountability: We will create a portal/form for students to submit concerns about classes and professors for Student Government to then address with those that oversee them. As Executive leaders, we will establish strong relationships with the Deans of the Academic Colleges so that when an issue arises, we are able to effectively communicate that with them. Students can submit concerns to us knowing that we will work to the best of our ability to find a solution for them. A follow-up meeting after their initial submission will likely be held to find the best path forward.
- University Committee Chair Accountability: University committees play a crucial role in having the student voice represented in university matters. We will ensure that all students who are appointed to university committees are subsequently reached out to by their staff coordinate, included in committee meetings, and given the ability to offer valuable input. Caroline Hulett will be the administrative contact for this.
- Course Grades Submission Deadline: We will work to pass a requirement that all professors have all student grades listed in Blackboard prior to the last day of classes or reading day so that students know where they stand before exam weeks. This will alleviate the stress of the unknown many students feel during and leading up to final exam time.
- External Governing Bodies and Individuals: Student Government will work to foster collaborative, synergistic, and productive relationships with the major governing bodies and individuals on campus such as Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Board of Trustees, College Deans, and Key Stakeholders. This relationship may take many forms whether that be through open dialogues or official reports but ultimately center around creating effective relationships that will positively affect the student experience on campus.

- Discounted Parking Passes for Students In-Need

- Using the Student Government Initiative Fund, we will offer discounted parking passes to students in need. \$150-\$800 is extremely expensive to park on campus for a year. Students who demonstrate financial need will be able to apply on a rolling application basis for a limited number of half-off garage or lot passes. We will market this program through the ComUnity shop and other campus communication means.

- Alleviating Student Parking Congestion & Concerns

- Parking Dispersion Guidance: We will direct first-year students to the parking guide on the Parking website so that they can find the most convenient and cost-efficient places to park. We will also create a campus parking guide that shows off-campus students the most logical place for them to park based on their academic college. We will advocate for academic colleges to also send this

information out to students and encourage them to park in certain locations. This should help alleviate the congestion in heavily trafficked garages such as Bull Street and Pendleton.

- Bull Street Garage Improvements: We will work to have the lines on Bull Street repainted and markers put up so that students who are turning at certain entrances cannot block other students from other entrances.
- Shuttle Routes: We will ensure that shuttles are actually following the routes posted on their app and on the website so that students whose cars are parked far away and students without cars are able to have transportation.
- Creating a 24/5 Campus Study Space for Students
 - Students have expressed a desire to have a space that is open for studying 24 hours of the day. A location that is open at all hours of the day would need to have access restrictions so that only students with their Carolina Card can use this space. The difficulty is that there is currently no space on campus with access to the required resources that can also be shut off from the rest of the building space so we will advocate for this to be incorporated as new campus development projects arise.
 - We will work with the library for a temporary solution so that during Final Exam week the library can stay open for 24 hours.
- Representing Student Needs on Long Term University Projects & Board of Trustees' Matters
 - Board of Trustees Preparation & Advocacy: The Student Body President will thoroughly prepare for meetings through doing diligent examination of the Board portal material and meeting Cameron Howell (Secretary of the Board) and Rex Tolliver prior to each meeting. Lunches and dinners (that are paid for out of pocket) will be held outside of Board meetings to establish relationships with Trustees and to discuss crucial student issues. We will also prepare presentations for the Board on key student experience concerns, with steps forward.
 - Russell House Expansion Project: Student Government will continue to advocate for the new Russell House project and convey the needs of students for this new structure.
 - Continuation of Advising Improvements: As we shift to a centric four-year advising structure, we will continue the work of President Newton to improve advising. Through collecting data and feedback on the new structure's success after the Fall semester, we can figure out its functionality for students and how to best proceed so that students can gain a more holistic advising experience.
- Improving the Sense of Belonging for All Students on Campus
 - We will establish relationships with a diverse array of student groups on campus, specifically those with multicultural interests. By doing this, we will listen to the concerns students have to ensure that Student Government is taking tangible steps to make campus feel like home for everyone. This may be done through partnering with groups to plan events, advocating for gender neutral bathrooms (this would be in addition to designated gender bathrooms) in heavily trafficked areas.

Priority 2: Increasing Student Engagement & Outreach

- **Spread Awareness on Campus with Effective Programming Events**
 - Programming is a large way that Student Government members can fulfill the purpose of this organization, which is to serve the student body. Through volunteering and attending these events we are able to have a hands-on approach to serving. While increasing internal engagement is focused on staffing events, external engagement is focused on the service part of programming. This will involve the new position of Director of Outreach, making sure that we are effectively communicating with other organizations.
 - Installing and utilizing the Director of Outreach and Assistant Director of Outreach to reach out to student-led organizations to collaborate on events to bring in a larger audience. Doing this will increase internal help as well as marketing materials (i.e. collaborating with some of the many student orgs focused on mental health for stigma free week)
 - Having a concrete programming plan, majority of event spaces booked, and materials being collected by the end of summer
 - Having a programming team to assist in the staffing, setting up, and some planning of events
 - Heavily communicating programming events and information related to them across social media, in advance and with ample details
 - We will do research as to what has worked in the past to reach students and what has not been efficient in engaging the student body, and take that into consideration when planning
- **Increase Social Media Engagement**
 - Our main way of sharing information, as is the most effective today, is through social media platforms. Our student body, undergraduate and graduate students, is made up of nearly 35,000 students. While it is nearly impossible and completely okay not to expect even the majority of students to follow the Student Government social media accounts, it is important that we at least are engaging a large number of them through this.
 - Communicating the roles of each position of the Communications Team clearly, leading to efficient and effective work
 - Creating a content calendar before the start of each semester with known content that will need to be posted, allowing our Communications Team to create graphics/content in advance
 - Posting on the Instagram at least 3 times a week (at least 1-2 feed posts with additional story posts). The content posted will showcase and highlight all three branches of Student Government equally.
 - Include content on platforms outside of Instagram, consistently – TikTok and Facebook
 - Communicating to rest of Student Government the importance of submitting social media requests in a timely manner (2 weeks prior to post date) to keep on track with the pre-planned content calendar

- Documenting and collecting content at each event Student Government holds. This will help increase engagement as posts that include photos gain more traction.
- Communication of Student Resources & Information
 - Student Dining Nutritional Information: We will advocate and work to provide nutritional info for all on-campus dining facilities. This is important for students with allergies and dietary restrictions.
 - Press Relations: Press secretaries will regularly meet with the Student Government reporter for the Daily Gamecock to keep her informed on what we are working on for students and the progress of promised initiatives. This way the newspaper can write about what we are doing for students, rather than just about us from primarily an outside lens.
 - The establishment of Directors of Outreach on the staff of the executive officers will allow for better communication of Student Government and University resources to students. They can connect with leaders of student organizations to communicate important student resources and will make organization visits when needed.
- Holistic Wellness of Students
 - Mental Health Resources: Mental wellness on campus is of the utmost importance, so we will promote resources such as Thrive @ Carolina, the Campus Well app, and free physical wellness activities on campus to stress the importance of holistic wellness of students on campus. Both student organization leaders and professors can help in this endeavor by sharing these resources and taking notice of the quality of those they support. We will also encourage holistic wellness of students by encouraging them to take tangible steps for improving their mental health, such as spending time in nature, meeting new people and developing better relationships, and taking care of physical wellness.
- Serve within the University & Columbia Community
 - Basic Needs Support: Although the Carolina Closet and other basic needs' initiatives are moving out of Student Government and into the ComUnity Shop, we will continue to support these services and promote their success on campus through marketing and supplying volunteers. Additionally, we will work on a basic needs drive competition between Student Government and other service-based organizations on campus (likely ODK, University Ambassadors, Residence Hall Association, Gamecock Entertainment, etc.).
 - Greek Life Donation Shop: Creation of a shop where students in Greek life can donate function clothes, spirit week items, etc. when they graduate so that they can be reused by other students
 - SG Service Projects: There will be a regular Student Government Service Projects, be it a local park trash clean up, volunteering at the Food Bank, etc. Student Government members and university students will have the opportunity to serve the Columbia and/or university community through these projects.
 - Small Business Spotlights: This initiative, that was started by last year's Deputy Secretary of Community Relations, highlights a local business in Columbia and often gives students a temporary discount there. This will engage our students

with the city and help showcase businesses and restaurants that are unique to Columbia.

- Making student organization funding more equitable
 - In recent years, there have been major discrepancies in the amount of money that each student organization is allocated. In many cases, this is completely normal based on the nature of their activities, but we never want to prevent new organizations from access to funding, which is what started to happen last year.
 - Outreach: We will reach out to new organizations to ensure they know funding is an option. The director of outreach in the Treasurer's office serves to reach out to new organizations and organizations that have not been requested in the past. They will also compile a list of alternative means of funding from university departments and grants to enable student initiatives outside of the student activity fee. The Treasurer's Workshop will be advertised at the Student Organization Fair and office hours will be consistent and regular.
 - Collaboration: The Treasurer's Office will work with the Vice President's Office to publish funding information and start new student initiatives. We will encourage the finance committee to draft legislation to distribute the activity fee more evenly and incorporate direct feedback from student organization leaders throughout the term.

Priority 3: Improving Student Government Culture & Community

- Increase student representation in Student Government
 - Our Directors of Outreach will enhance recruitment to Student Government by visiting a diverse group of organizations and encouraging them to join. We will establish ourselves as an organization open to anyone who wants to serve their fellow gamecocks.
- Enhance collaboration between branches
 - We will encourage branch collaboration and making tangible changes on campus that student government has the power to accomplish and/or advocate for. The Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch will work together by discussing bills in advance and creating recommendations and advocacy work that mirror one another. In this way, we will be more unified and effective in our communication to administration about students wants and needs. The establishment of the Director of Legislative Affairs on President's staff will allow the Executive Branch to stay better informed and connected with legislative matters.
- Creating a sense of belonging within the organization and improving its reputation on campus
 - We will also work to foster relationships with one another in Student Government through informal social events throughout the Fall and Spring semester where non-Student Government members can come with members. This will increase our reputation with the rest of campus and show that we are normal students who

enjoy having fun just like everyone else. These events will be funded out of pocket and will not use Student Government funds.

- Presidential “Hibachi by the Horseshoe” events where Emmie makes Hibachi and passes it out to students for free. This will be a great opportunity to showcase that Student Government exists to serve students and a chance to bring a little bit of added joy to a student’s day. This will be funded from the Student Government initiative fund.
- Adding the Director of Wellness position will create a point of contact should there be an internal conflict. This person can also be an unbiased and welcoming figure when members are stressed or dealing with something externally. They will help plan the team-building social events and regular member opportunities such as Wellness Wednesdays, where Student Government members can workout together, eat together, etc. after Senate.
- Reinforcing Student Government’s role as a non-partisan, service-based organization
 - We will focus on communicating the unified message of working together to serve student needs and not personal agendas. There will be no place for politics and selfish gain in Student Government. This is not an organization for partisan, political activity or purely to build your resume. This will be effectively communicated to the organization and implemented into the curriculum of every branch onboarding and training procedures
- Appointment of Exemplary Constitutional Council Associate Justices
 - There are currently four vacancies on the Constitutional Council that will need to be filled. Justices will need to be impartial and also understand how to interpret our governing documents. Interviews will be fair and thorough to be sure that they are prepared for such an important role.
 - It is ideal to fill the court with a diverse group of talented students that will be able to serve for multiple years, ideally from the Law School or from Student Government so that they have proper experience in the kind of matters being a Constitutional Council justice involves.
- Enhance the First Year Student Government Experience
 - Freshman Council is meant to serve as an entry level area of involvement into Student Government as well as the University as a whole. Throughout their term in Freshman Council, members are supposed to focus on developing leadership skills, getting involved in the community/on campus, as well as cultivating relationships with other members of Student Government. Freshman Council is meant to grow students into leaders that will participate inside and outside of Student Government. It is also important to instill the importance of serving the student body in them, which is the overall mission of Student Government. If our Freshman Council members hold this value as well as have relationships with the rest of the members of Student Government at the end of their first year, a majority of them should have the desire to continue their time in the organization or work in collaboration with it from another aspect of campus.
 - The first steps in creating a lasting and memorable experience for Freshman Council is heavily marketing the application to create excitement around the

process and the program. This will include using our Student Life Ambassadors to speak about the program as well as pass out flyers to incoming students. Darla Moore School of Business's Business Bash is on the first day of class, which Student Government will have a table at and will be able to talk to students that may not typically be interested in Freshman Council or Student Government in general. Speakers and/or information regarding Freshman Council will be provided in the first week of the semester in U101 classes. Bustle at the Russell and the Student Org Fair are additional events where we will have a table to market the program.

- Once the members of Freshman Council are chosen, their first activity together will be the Freshman Council Retreat. The structure of this event will be that first half of their time will be spent going over the necessary information they need and hearing from guest speakers, but the second half will be spent in a fun social environment with the other members of Student Government
- Intentionality in the mentor/mentee process, holding multiple events where potential mentors and mentees are able to foster genuine relationships in the process
- Hosting one meeting a month outside of the typical meeting setting. Whether this be a potential mentor/mentee event in the beginning of the year, an opportunity to volunteer on campus or in the community or getting involved in other organizations events. This will teach members the importance of relationships, service, and involvement. Leading to an overall improved Freshman Council process, encouraging them to continue their time.
- Members will participate in service projects throughout the first semester, where they do not necessarily have to plan it, but will be learning about this process along the way. Second semester, they will be able to create successful committee projects, being that they are equipped with the knowledge they need to plan them as well as they will be given ample time to plan and bring to life their ideas.