

ASUO's Job: Represent Students

SU Director A. L. "Si" Ellingson is fond of saying, "The main function of student government is to represent student opinion to the other 'publics' (faculty, administration, alumni, etc.) in the University."

"But the problem is that when it does that job right it doesn't always make headlines."

Which is to say that when student leaders represent their constituents properly, student government runs smoothly, there's no controversy and few headlines.

Thus are student politicians at the University often criticized for "playing politics" too much—to keep student government in the headlines.

Yet finding the best way to represent student opinion has been the main activity of student government here for the past three years. And during that same period student criticism of that government has risen to a new high, with many students wondering, "What good does student government do me?"

New Constitution

Two years ago—after a long campaign and several defeats—student leaders got passed a new ASUO Constitution which they thought would better allow them to represent the students.

Last year, at the instigation of ASUO President John Luvaa and primarily through the efforts of Parliamentarian Bob Bollay, the operations of student government were further refined with a new set of bylaws and a set of rules for the operation of the ASUO Senate.

What they came up with is a system of committees, patterned to some extent after the structure of Congress.

Briefly here's the way the Senate will operate under the system devised by Bollay and approved by the Senate last year:

Bills may be presented by "any interested party"—senator, non-senator, or a group—to ASUO Vice President Tom Clark, the Senate presiding officer. Clark then sends the bill to one of five committee chairmen—campus planning, academic and cultural, governing, public affairs, budgetary.

Committee Hearings

That chairman then calls a committee hearing on the bill, notifies its sponsors of the time and place of the hearing.

The committee reports its action on the bill at the next Senate meeting. Then there are three things that can happen.

1. If it's passed by the committee it goes on the agenda for Senate action.

2. If it fails in committee it can still be called up by a vote of one-third of the Senate.

3. If the bill fails in committee or the committee fails to report on the bill within 14 days, Vice-President Clark may discharge the committee and present the bill to the Senate anyway.

The Senate can also completely bypass the committees, put bills directly on the Senate floor with a two-thirds vote.

After the Senate passes a bill it goes to ASUO President Steve Goldschmidt. Goldschmidt may veto the bill and return it to the Senate. (Legislation vetoed by the president may be passed over his veto by a two-thirds vote of the Senate.)

President's Powers

Goldschmidt also has a number of other powers under that two-year-old constitution. He nominates student members of student-faculty committees, appoints members of ASUO committees, prepares the ASUO budget that last year reached about \$7,100, and is usually a major author of much Senate legislation.

Vice President Clark presides over the Senate, runs the ASUO elections, and is the president's right hand man.

Among some of the major issues the Senate will probably consider this year:

• Faculty evaluation forms. A Senate-sponsored form distributed in some classes winter term attempted to obtain a student evaluation of professors. But the com-

mittee in charge of the form decided it wasn't a good one after all, junked it and started over.

Steve Smith, who's not a senator, and Sociology Professor Roy H. Rodgers started experiments on a new evaluation plan last spring. They'll be the main ones in charge of getting a form in operation here—with Senate backing.

• The National Student Association. NSA barely survived an attempt to cut its budget last

year and virtually remove its effectiveness. The Senate voted to cut the budget but the Student Union and Educational Activities Budget Board, which controls all budgets that come out of student fees, restored NSA's money.

But that Senate vote indicated NSA will probably be watched closely this year to make sure it performs a service to University students. In his campaign last spring, President Goldschmidt put heavy emphasis on NSA's im-

portance to the campus.

• Further revisions in the constitution and by laws. Bollay hasn't completed his bylaw-writing project yet and there was some criticism of "slopping wording" in the constitution last spring.

• Goldschmidt's programs. The ASUO president called for half-a-dozen new ASUO programs in his campaign, will probably have plenty of bills ready for the Senate.

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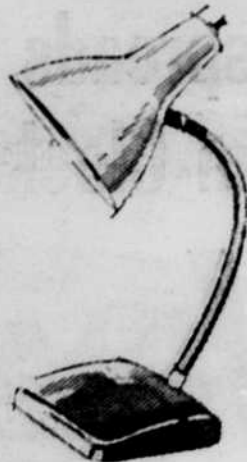
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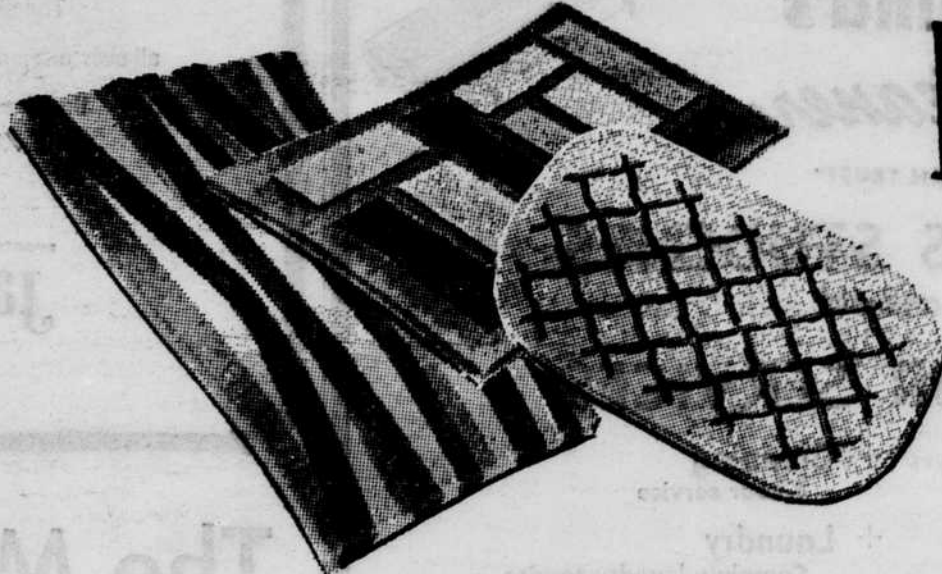
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