

opinion

Elect Hotchkiss

As anyone who has ever eaten airline food can attest, the culinary choices are usually rather limited. Do you prefer the creamed chicken over rice, or perhaps the steamed chicken in mushroom sauce?

The answer is usually neither, you'd prefer something from the Excelsior Cafe's menu. But you know you have to choose, so you begin reluctantly weighing the pros and cons.

The Emerald is faced with a similar situation in this year's ASUO presidential election.

The "primary" this Wednesday and Thursday will decide who will be next year's student body president.

The candidates are Mary Hotchkiss, supported by Students for a Progressive Agenda and David Gibson, endorsed by the Interfraternity Council and Panhellenic.

The ASUO presidency is a prestigious office. Student presidents get to hobnob with the University brass. They sit on hiring committees for University positions. When the media calls, wanting "the student voice," it's the president who speaks it.

But the bulk of the job is wrapped in the responsibility of listening to the political and social opinions of students, administering the various student programs, and making budget recommendations for the following year.

The Emerald feels this is best done by an administrator who stresses finding solid evidence on student needs and who is willing to administer them with an idea to encourage participation in civic involvement.

And this is why the Emerald endorses Mary Hotchkiss.

We wish we could be enthusiastic, but we realize neither candidate has a particularly strong record in administering programs or understanding the diversity of the student body at the University.

The Emerald has not witnessed particularly strong management skills from either candidate as they served in government this year.

As a member of Balfe's administration, Gibson lists as his high points holding Program Directors meetings and directing this year's poorly considered Executive Budget in which he recommended slicing such programs as the Drug Information Center without consideration.

Hotchkiss did not always run a tight ship as chair of the EMU Budget Committee. While an earnest member of SPA, Hotchkiss was unable to implement many ideas of SPA this year and it remains to be seen whether she would be able to as president.

Needless to say, one of the two members will be elected in the next three days.

The Emerald endorses Hotchkiss because her platform stresses researching the opinion of various groups on campus and using that information to make the student government an active and forceful voice at the University and in Salem.

Hotchkiss sees the need for the ASUO Executive to become more organized and able to discuss issues with students. She is willing to establish a task force to reorganize the office and their procedures in dealing with the IFC and the EMU.

Hotchkiss has taken a realistic look at the drabness of student government and is willing to work to improve the political discussion here. To support that she advocates supporting ASUO program involvement in political issues "so long as such action is consistent with the programs's goals and represents a legitimate expression of the opinions and attitudes of at least a portion of the student community," and sponsoring panels, debates and conferences to deal with political issues of current interest to large portions of the students.

Gibson suggested conferences on careers and economics in his discussion with the Emerald editorial board. It is our belief that his administration would be a continuation of last year's administration.

It is very regretful that so few student leaders have come forward this year to run. To put it rather crudely, there is a shortage of talent and new blood in government here.

Mary Hotchkiss advocates trying to change this predicament in Suite Four and it is for this reason that we support her candidacy.



letters

Guidelines

As the co-director of an ASUO program, I find it unthinkable that the student body president is not made to follow the same guidelines in hiring and firing that I am. It is my assumption that the guidelines were implemented so that everyone be treated fairly and justly, and that those in "power" could not indiscriminately do as they please. It is scary that the one with the most power is not subject to the same scrutiny.

In the case of Kevin Kouns, I find it extremely interesting that he was fired the same day he applied to run for ASUO vice-president on the "Students for a Progressive Agenda" ticket.

In a case like this, it seems even more important for the ASUO president to follow the guidelines for all program leaders.

I am not aware of how regularly Kouns kept his office hours. I do know that he has been a great help and support to our program and women's issues in general, and I have found him to be a dedicated and dependable comptroller. It is my hope that he will be treated fairly and justly by our student government.

Terri Dismuke
co-director
Women's Referral & Resource

Representative

I strongly support Mary Hot-

chkiss and Kevin Kouns. Students for a Progressive Agenda's presidential and vice-presidential candidates in the upcoming ASUO elections.

Student's concerns are not being defended at even a minimal level by the current ASUO president and company, a well-meaning but whimsical collection of yes-men and women who are extremely efficient bureaucratic and extremely ineffectual student representatives.

For just one example, recently the faculty recommended the elimination of our quarter system in favor of semesters, despite the fact that student comments received by SUAB were running overwhelmingly against semesters.

Needless to say, such a change will have profound effects on the education which costs students so much. Responsible student representatives would have insisted that students at least have the opportunity to voice our opinions in hearings or campus-wide referendum.

Yet the faculty eliminated our quarter system without a whimper of protest at their methods from our student "leaders."

Students for a Progressive Agenda agrees with Pres. Paul Olum: Today's students are not critical enough of authority (Emerald, Feb. 24). Students leaders should not burn down Johnson Hall, but neither should they let Johnson Hall or the Faculty Assembly trample their concerns into dust.

We students need assertive leaders who have new ideas and the determination to defend student concerns when they conflict with those of faculty or administration.

Please don't be one of the 14,000 students who don't vote every year. Vote for a change — Students for a Progressive Agenda — on April 13 and 14. You'll be glad you did.

Sherri Schultz
sophomore, political science,
French

Efficient

The rite of spring here at the University includes not only robins chirping but also ASUO candidates hawking. The most important hawkers are those aspiring to be ASUO president. After listening to both presidential candidates, David Gibson and Mary Hotchkiss, speak and after analyzing their platforms, I find that Gibson is overwhelmingly more qualified for the presidency.

Gibson's platform reveals efficient planning as he intends to streamline the ASUO office, innovative strategy as he is designing an investment plan to save student's money, and experience as he has been actively involved in several different areas of student government.

Unfortunately, Gibson has been labeled the Greek/law candidate and is expected to be the traditional male Greek/law president.

I believe Gibson's strong support of childcare, women's studies and minorities proves him to be outside of the Greek stereotype. Furthermore, past experience with Gibson has shown him to be not only well-organized, well-informed and professional, but also refreshingly honest and genuinely concerned with what is right for all students.

Being a former sympathizer of the Students for a Progressive Agenda, I have found their performance this past year disappointing. They were uninformed on many issues not organized in offices, and uncohesive as a group. Mary Hotchkiss on the SPA ticket unfortunately has provided little reason to believe she will be an improvement. She is vague on critical issues and her platform offers little more than cosmetic changes.

I urge all students to become involved and to vote knowledgeably. I believe that the informed voter will choose David Gibson. He would most certainly be a credit to the students and to the University as ASUO president.

Lisa Sandau
senior, International Studies
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