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Dear President Fenton:

For some months the Student Government has been carefully and intensively studying the entire student body. Our purpose has been to determine what the main problems, desires and needs of the students are so that we might better fulfill our responsibility of representing student opinion. Many of our findings were included in a recent letter addressed to you. However, the most singularly important overriding concern of the students was not included in the previous letter. This was done because we feel that this matter deserves separate consideration.

Our concern is the genuine lack of facilities for students and student organizations at Suffolk. Our student body is rapidly changing in many ways. The most obvious and significant of these changes has been in the size of the student body and also a gradual but significant lowering of the average student's age. Associated with these changes are the more subtle but just as important changes in the attitudes, desires and needs of the students. The students today desire a much wider variety of activities than students in the past have and they are much more eager to attend and participate in these activities. For example, various student organizations including Student Government have suggestions and proposals for activities ranging from concerts to classical films, lectures, seminar programs, repertory productions, student publications such as a Literary Magazine, orchestral productions and a host of others.

In order to effectively organize and carry out such an energetic program, the primary essential factor is a single centralized location to house all of the student organizations. In this way student organizations could be brought into constant and effective communication and cooperation to avoid the reduplication of efforts and occasional confusion which is inevitable under the present system.

Another strong reason for our belief rests in various Student Government surveys both formal and informal of the student body. We have found that many of our students have a great deal of time on their hands due to gaps in their daily academic schedule. For example, a poll of the Freshman class alone revealed that nearly 70% of the class had between 5 and 15 hours of free time between classes each week. It is ideal to assume that the students spend such time in the Library studying. However, the ideal does not always equate with the practical and it was discovered that most spend the majority of their time either in the cafeteria or away from the school. When this situation is considered in conjunction with the already mentioned lower age level the logical result is that we are dealing with a different type of student much more in need of guidance and direction.

By this term guidance and direction we are speaking specifically of recreational facilities for students and office facilities for student organizations. A quick survey of the various institutions found on Beacon Hill easily points out that there are no proper places for students to congregate. Also, the school's presently limited physical facilities do not solve the problem. However, these factors do not diminish the need for such facilities. We have already shown how much free time those students have, now we must seriously consider providing the proper type of facilities in which this time could be spent.

Considering all of these factors we have come to the conclusion that it is time to give serious consideration of the establishment of a student union. Rather than try to explain our conclusions and all of our research into this problem into one general letter, we have broken the entire subject into various specific areas. These areas are explained in the following pages.

Student Union Plans

When we speak of a Student Union we do not mean to imply simply recreational or lounge facilities. Rather we are speaking of a single centralized location such as is found in the vast majority of colleges and universities throughout the United States. Specifically, we would want space allocated for the following facilities:

1) One large conference room capable of seating the full student government with gallery space for students who wish to attend the meetings. Needless to say, this area could also be used by other student organizations when available,

2) One central office for the Student Government members and one separate office for the President complete with space for secretarial assistance,

3) Separate office space for the Suffolk Journal with:
   a) Facilities for its own printing press, (This press could also be used by other organizations subject to the approval of the Journal)
   b) A photographic darkroom to avoid both the expense and delay of sending negatives out to be developed. This space to be shared by the Yearbook and other organizations.
   c) Adequate space to preserve files and back copies of the Journal as well as space for its staff.

4) Office facilities for the Yearbook, complete with a layout table for their copy and file space,

5) Separate office space for each one of the various student organizations,

6) An exhibition hall or gallery room to display awards and trophies won by the school. This room would also be used for the art exhibits which are sponsored each year.

7) Seminar and meeting rooms for the various student organizations or even for classes.

8) A game room with facilities for chess, checkers, billiards and card tables (with of course, strict prohibition of gambling).

9) A lounge area with a television.

10) A snack bar with vending machines, tables and chairs and a juke-box or record player.

11) A small library for books which would be of specific interest and use to students. For example, school catalogues, outline books and study guides, publications by national student organizations, current periodicals, etc.

12) Separate men's and women's lounges,

13) A small music room for classical and semi-classical music.

14) A rehearsal room complete with a piano for the Drama Club and the Glee Club.

15) One large hall capable of serving a wide variety of activities such as lectures, films, small dances or parties, large seminar discussions, catered banquets or receptions.

16) Adequate office space for the Director of Student Activities and a staff sufficient to maintain proper control of the facilities. Since this would involve a great deal of responsibility, we would suggest the appointment of a full-time Student Union Director or Director of Student Activities.

17) Space for lockers and mailboxes for all students.

(Continued on page 2)
SPECIAL ISSUE -- Student Union
(Continued from page 1)

Student Union Advantages

The advantages of a location such as this are many and varied. Some of these advantages are readily apparent while others take deeper thought and deserve more serious consideration. The largest single advantage would be the accessibility of the facilities involved in one location. This would eliminate much of the confusion and reduplication of efforts which presently occurs. It would also end the rather serious lack of communication between students within the University.

Added to this would be the advantage that all of the sorely-needed space presently being utilized within the school by student activities would be available for classrooms. This would free the entire Room 20 complex, Rooms 29 and 30, Room 46 and Room 28 which is presently a locker room. If all of these present rooms were placed together they would comprise over three quarters of a floor within the "Old Building."

Another important advantage would be the incentive that student organizations would receive from such facilities. At the present time many of these clubs are seriously considering a wide variety of worthwhile activities which would be of incalculable benefit to the school. These range from concerts to plays, theatre workshops, lectures, seminars on controversial and timely topics and social hours. However, in many cases these plans are hampered or even completely frustrated by the lack of communication which results in insufficient responses to further proposed projects.

Cost

When this subject was first studied it was intended to merely request that the Board of Trustees purchase suitable property and build a Union or renovate an existing building in the local area. However, it was further felt that such a building would specifically be for student use and that the students would be an active part in its realization. Thus, the subject was discussed at class meetings with the students. The final result was that each of the four classes presently involved in student activities felt that the University should construct or purchase a building which would give their usual class pledge solely to a student union. Thus the gift they leave to the school as classes will be left entirely for the benefit of the students. This has been designated by the students for use and that the students may wish to take an active part in its realization. Thus over a four-year period it would be feasible to raise the following amounts:

1) A $10.00 increase in the Student Activities Fee, Based upon the present size of the student body this would amount to $125,000 per year. Over a four-year period this would be $500,000.

2) Fund-raising activities by the various student organizations. This method was dismissed as insufficient in view of the costs expected.

3) A request to the Board of Trustees for assistance. We would like to request that the Board of Trustees match our donations with funds from other sources and that the proceeds from these activities be specifically requested that $25,000 from every student's tuition be set aside for this purpose. Again, based upon the present size of the student body this would amount to $525,000 per year, thus $2,100,000 over four years.

In summation, the students of Suffolk University, through their elected representatives, the Student Government, feel that the proposal program presented in the preceding pages is one of extreme importance. As students we applauded and stood resolutely behind the Board of Trustees decision to expand on Beacon Hill these few years ago when the present addition was announced. We now feel that it is vital to the future of the University and to our own needs as students to energetically continue this expansion. We feel that the Board of Trustees should begin with the student union and have we proposed, in view of this we have designated our class pledges for the four years as a contribution to the student union and that the Board of Trustees feel that the position has been fully explained and our reasons justified, in view of this we respectfully request that our proposal be considered and adopted because the Board require more specific information or clarification of our position, we are fully prepared to discuss the subject at the Board's pleasure at any time.

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IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN A STUDENT UNION...

FILL IN THE BLANK-

- Return to Room 13

ATTEND THE ALL-COLLEGE MEETING. THURS. 115

EDITORIAL:

Evening Side, I Love You.
Journal Interview with Student Government President

INTERVIEW  
WILLIAM D. MURRAY 
April 11, 1967

Q. What has been happening with regard to a Student Union?

A. Since August, the Student Government has officially investigated the need for a Student Union. The student body, it was discovered, is in a state of change (the mean age being younger than ever before). It was further found that the greatest lack among the students was the inadequacy of recreational and lounge facilities and also a need to have some centralized location to hold extra-curricular activities.

Space is currently being wasted; offices of clubs are too far separated and this has caused a breakdown in communication between clubs and the students. What is needed is a lounge area for students to relax, seminar rooms (which leave more available space for classes than is presently found under this system) and some place for students to exercise their recreational needs.

Since September the Student Government has appointed a committee to investigate the student body. This committee was made up of three divisions: 1. to investigate student needs; 2. to evaluate similar problems in other schools and learn how they approached it; and 3. to combine both these findings into a program adequate to answer Suffolk's needs.

Q. How has the idea of a need for a Student Union been received by students themselves?

A. Three polls were taken. Two were designed specifically for freshman. The first showed that 75% of the Freshmen had 10-15 hours of free time. The second showed that 58% of these students spent their time in the cafeteria. Constantly the theme was consistent - a Student Union is in demand.

We then confronted the administration with our findings. The Board of Trustees took the proposal under advisement and appointed a College Committee to meet with student Government within the next two weeks.

Further interest has been shown through the students by the unanimous donation of all four classes (a total of about $100,000) toward this Student Union.

Q. Are there several things which students may do. They may respond to the Journal suggestion ballot which will be put in the next issue.

A. There are several things which students may do. They may respond to the Journal suggestion ballot which will be put in the next issue and voice their opinions; they may send letters to the Editor, expressing their opinions and urging a keen interest, or drop suggestion notes into Room 20 for tabulation. In short, demonstrate to the Board that there are students in agreement with the proposal.

At present there are two petitions circulating among the students (with approx. 50 signatures already) voting strong support for a Student Union. We are not aware of anyone that is not aware of the need which has incited it. That is one of the purposes for the meeting between the College Committee and Student Government.

We want the Board's ratification at least in spirit so that in order to set up a general fund, in this way the students themselves would be able to contribute toward this fund within the school in order to invest this money into a potential facility.

The Board is further aware of several organized groups within the Hill which are raising a wall of opposition to any plans for Suffolk's complete new piano, $7,000 in lights and electrical and technical equipment, paint and new materials--all of which has ultimately led to the formation of the Student Union (Sing-Out, etc., etc.)

Q. Insofar as this College Committee is concerned, what is the role of the Student Government?

A. The role of the Student Government has always been to represent the needs and desires of the students and to integrate these specifically with the College Committee. We will make them aware of the student support, need and willingness to aid in achieving this goal.

Q. What have been the Student Government's activities so far this year?

A. The best way to summarize the work done by the Student Government this year is as follows:

1. Improvements within the Theatre such as authorization for a new piano, $7,000 in lights and electrical and technical equipment, paint and new materials--all of which has ultimately led to the formation of the Student Union (Sing-Out, etc., etc.).

2. The realization of the activities fee has given the students more latitude and has left them unrestricted to the activities of their original fee and the fees since then.

3. Recognition of January and August graduates. Since 1959 recognition of January and August graduates has been concerned with external relations between the student Government and a lack of interest in planning programs.

4. The Board of Trustees and the Student Government realized they had no legitimate criticism. They were concerned with the need for a Student Union.

5. Consideration by the faculty to change the honor point system to a 4.0. Up until now the school has been under the generally standardized 4.0 system which has been a severe handicap to students who had to explain the system to people familiar with 4.0 systems (especially when seeking employment).

6. Notice of the establishment of a new political science club felt the Student Government was the newsletter. The lack of communication with the students and respective clubs is not the fault of the Government. To begin with, it is the same group of students who are interested in organizing activities and hence a minority does not feel that they are quite often adequately publicized. We do not know is so much to be overlooked.

7. Student Government is currently making plans to undertake action formulated in a proposal by Miss Bonnie Herman, a student at Suffolk, regarding arousing interest in incoming students for Suffolk before they actually come to the University. This would include mailing them a handbook, Journal, personal letter from the Student Government and clubs if they desire it and allowing them a big-brother or a big-sister to answer any questions they may have to make them feel welcome.

Q. What about the internal controversies that have taken place? The Student Government has faced with this year?

A. Any body working closely together is bound to have varying ideas and disagreements. For the past 5 years the Student Government has been concerned with: 1) Freshman registration, 2) financial and legislative affairs (expansion, Alumni, etc.), 3) by the election of the year. In the past within the (with the exception of the President) it has concentrated on strengthening the relations between the Student Government and the administration.

Also the Student Government has realized that there are many problems in its Constitution and only a lack of time prevented solving this completely. Minor issues have not been that serious but any controversy a Director of Public Relations who oversees the overall value of an organization to pass the word, progress and investigation was not made public to students, faculty and administration because any progress made by a body should not be discussed outside that body until answers to important questions can be adequately solved.

Despite the much too noted controversy between the Government and the Administration, nothing was done by anyone in the interest of the Student Union -- on this issue the body was completely unified. All of the members agreed to the suspension sent to the Board.

Q. Was suppression of the Political Science Club's proposal a suppression of inquiry into the Government by students?

A. The action taken by the Student Government against the Political Science Club in no way suppresses the right of students to question their government. However, there are specific channels through which these grievances must be submitted. These channels include class meetings, petitions and individual inquiry. Criticism (in the form of a petition) is always well received, but in this case there was a definite question of constitutionality. No organization, not even the Political Science Club felt the Student Government need investigated they should have presented their proposal at a meeting upon the first invitation when they did finally appear (at a second, later meeting) that the Government realized they had no legitimate critique.

(Continued on page 2)