March 16, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jon Sticklen, Chairperson
    Executive Committee of Academic Council

FROM: Jeremy Hernandez, UCSA Chairperson

SUBJECT: Timing of future UCSA Chairperson elections

At the request of Dr. Wright, Secretary of Academic Governance, the University Committee on Student Affairs (UCSA) discussed the possibility of moving the timing of the UCSA’s chairperson selection from the beginning of the Fall term to the end of the Spring at their March 3 meeting.

The membership of UCSA unanimously concluded that this change would not be in the best interest of the Committee. The main reason for our reluctance is that the student makeup of the UCSA is not always known before the end of the Spring semester.

Although ASMSU and COGS both strongly encourage students to fill all standing committee seats and hold annual elections for student representatives to serve on the standing committees (including UCSA) at the end of the Spring, it is not uncommon for some student seats to remain entirely vacant until the beginning of the Fall semester and others to be vacated during the summer. While outside the scope of this memo, we speculate that there are a variety of reasons for this phenomenon (e.g. interested students’ not knowing their future Fall schedules at election time, apathy, student government leadership turnover issues, student fear of time commitments, etc.).

This is relevant to the UCSA’s chairperson selection as the majority of our voting membership consists of students (7 students vs. 4 faculty). Given this structural majority and UCSA’s strong commitment to addressing student issues, our committee typically prefers to elect a student to serve as chair. Maintaining this desired preference could become problematic if the chairperson selection process were to occur during the Spring as there is the possibility that a large percentage of the membership for the following year may be unknown until the start of the Fall semester.

If you have any questions or concerns about these comments please feel free to contact me.