

Active Governance:

The Allegheny Student Government Strategic Plan February 2012

The Allegheny Student Government will strive to maintain the quality of, and whenever feasible, improve upon the education, cultural, and social areas of the Allegheny Community.

The Allegheny Student Government will also endeavor to crystallize, reflect, and represent undergraduate opinion; to organize and coordinate programs of co-curricular and extra-curricular nature; and to cooperate effectively with the faculty and the administration in the areas common to all as a college community.

Believing in the true worth and merit of an active and influential student governing body, Allegheny Student Government will dedicate the next three years to the implementation of the following goals and initiatives. Our charge as members of Allegheny Student Government is to cultivate the best possible environment for student success; through the successful application of these ideals, Allegheny Student Government will exercise its full potential as an organization and fulfill its obligation to the students of Allegheny College. By 2015, the charges set forth in the very first Allegheny Student Government Strategic Plan will be realized.

The Allegheny College Strategic Plan Development Committee

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Working with the Campus Community

ASG is a community within itself but also is a part of the Allegheny community. We must not only work with in our own little community, but also collaborate with the Allegheny as a whole; this is not only achieved through Image and Advocacy but through cooperation and partnerships. Through this, ASG will strive for unity and awareness within itself as well as among clubs, organizations, the faculty and administration.

Better campuswide understanding of ASG's capacity and role on campus

ASG will establish itself as the preeminent student resource on campus for all student concerns. Particular attention will be paid to providing learning opportunities for all students about ASG's functions, responsibilities and capabilities. All students by 2015 will be able to correctly identify ASG's role on campus in some way, be it through an activity ASG sponsored or legislation ASG passed. This can be achieved in many ways; an ASG representative can make a presentation about ASG and its role on campus to every FS101, or ASG at least two educational webinars or pamphlets a semester for students and organizations. By 2015, ASG's open information sessions for students and organizations will increase in attendance by 10%.

More efficient collaboration with clubs and organizations

ASG is currently one of the most important but underused resources for clubs on Allegheny's campus. ASG's utility to clubs does not start and end with mere financial resources; there are opportunities for education, public relations support, event coordination, and connection with other clubs and offices on campus that remain largely untapped. By 2015, ASG will have established a much closer relationship with all clubs and organizations. Each club will have an ASG liaison that attends at least one club meeting per semester and advocates within ASG on behalf of that club's needs when necessary. This will promote more interaction with ASG, as well as more positive relationships between clubs and ASG.

Fostering stronger relationships within the campus community

As the student governing body, ASG has a responsibility to serve every member of the student body. Since Allegheny is a living and learning community, it seems appropriate that ASG would be the venue through which students could connect and interact. ASG will strive to consistently represent all members of the student body, but will also make it a priority to consistently engage students with ASG and with each other. Each semester, ASG will sponsor at least one educational or social event that brings together students, faculty, staff and administrators from all walks of campus life. ASG will likely rely on the support of its ex officio members for bringing in members of the community from sports teams, Greek life, and diversity organizations.

Accountability and Advocacy

Allegheny Student Government exists in large part to advocate for student needs and opinions. ASG values this responsibility, and seeks to better address the needs of the entire student body. In order to best serve the Allegheny students and to adhere to ASG's mission statement. ASG will strive to act as delegates for the student body, and will actively report on its activity. Within ASG, members will be held accountable for their actions in their specific roles as well as in serving ASG as a whole. ASG will be a well-respected institution on campus, ensuring work of high quality and members of upstanding behavior indicative of high caliber leaders on campus.

Improve communication between ASG and the student body

By 2015, 75% of clubs should proactively seek out ASG as their primary source for advice and help. Both students and clubs will be able to provide feedback to ASG relating to the effectiveness and usefulness of ASG. Senators and their classmates will also seek each other out to address issues and find solutions for them. Communication between the student body and ASG will further improve to the extent where at least 50% of each class will be able to identify at least 5 of its senators.

ASG hopes that each class will convey at least one constituent concern once a month at ASG meetings. ASG will, in turn, host meetings at least once a semester in which students are invited to attend and voice their opinions and concerns with senators and cabinet members.

Increase the responsibility and accountability of the members of ASG

In addition to their oaths of office, cabinet members and senators will adhere to a code of conduct and expectations. Each class will create and fully adhere to unified class rules, guidelines and expectations at the start of every term, which will be presented to the ASG president. Each class will update their class website once a month at a minimum with updates about class activity and upcoming endeavors.

Utilize new technologies and social media

New technologies and social media are the future of disseminating information across large spans of interested persons. ASG should embrace advancements in the ways in which information is spread across campus, and ensure that these new forms of relaying information are utilized in a way that further backs our commitment to proactive, transparent governance.

Allegheny Student Government's Image

In order to better serve the Allegheny College student community, ASG must endeavor to create and maintain a positive, community-wide image of student representatives working for the betterment of the entire community. Any action taken by Senate, Cabinet, or Individuals under the authority of ASG should be clear in its purpose and fulfillment, and should aid ASG as a whole in improving its image as the legitimate representative body for student issues.

Be the primary student authority on campus

Allegheny Student Government is in a unique position to provide financial, instructional and volunteer assistance to clubs, organizations or individuals who wish to host events on campus. Thus ASG should strive to include itself in the majority of events that take place throughout the scholastic year. Involvement can manifest itself in many ways, from organizing a volunteer corps that assists less populated clubs and organizations with running a successful event to simply funding and advertising our logo, no matter the scope of involvement, ASG should strive to be involved in these events. By taking an active role in all events on campus ASG can focus on its goal of student assistance, whatever shape that assistance may take.

Create and advertise clear policies and regulations in our working relationships

Working relationships are the backbone of any strong organization, and ASG will endeavor to be the shining example of this basic truth that friends work together better than acquaintances. ASG senators and cabinet members will create positive working relationships with not only the presidents and treasurers of ASG sanctioned clubs, but will also strive to become more closely tied with key administrators, faculty and staff of Allegheny College in order to better complete our mission of better representing student opinion. ASG will also ensure that our policies are not only known, but understood. Constitutes should not only know what particular policies say, but also why they are necessary or desirable. All policies should be written clearly and are easily accessible to the entire student body. Policies that are not clear, or that are not written down should either be done away with or explained fully in an easily accessible and easy to understand format in order to ensure transparency and to foster trust between ASG and the Student Body.

Represent the under represented

While large, school-wide initiatives are important to the continuation of ASG's positive image, ASG realizes that the greatest impact it can make on its electorate is in a personal, one-on-one setting. ASG will not shy away from opportunities to represent the minority opinions of the Student Body when they represent a worthy cause. Problems do not need to be school-wide to warrant the assistance of ASG. ASG will be a more proactive representative body if it is able to react to the problems of small portions of the student body before they become a problem for the greater Whole.

Ensure that Students' concerns come first

If Allegheny Student Government is to create a positive image for itself, it must first and foremost be constantly reminded of its highest purpose: to represent Students. We are a government of the Students, by the Students, for the Students. While the opinions of administrators, faculty, staff, and trustees should always be taken seriously, ASG must not forget that it exists because of and for Student opinion. When the opinion of the student body differs with that of administration or the trustees, ASG should and will be be a biased mediator.

Accommodation and Incorporation of the Allegheny College Strategic Plan

As a student representative organization, it is Allegheny Student Government's responsibility to utilize its unique place within the larger governance structure of Allegheny College, linking students and administrations, to perpetuate Combinations 2020's strategic goals.

Enhance communication between ASG and "strategic plan" committees

If our student government is to be active in the strategic plan process, then it is imperative that on top of everything else we stay informed. Specifically, it is necessary for ASG to stay in contact with the college committees that our peers serve on since fundamentally, strategic plan implementation happens at the college committee level.

Develop new ways to keep the student body as a whole informed

As Combinations 2020 continues to be implemented, it is important to keep the student body informed on the changes that are going to be made. This needs to be done not only so student input can be heard but also so no one is felt like they are caught off guard when changes are ultimately made. Regardless of how positive change can be, if it is sudden and misunderstood then confusion will arise.

Evaluate how the student voice can be better heard

More than anything Allegheny College is a great institution because of the mutual respect that exists between the students and the administration. However, it is easy to forget that our voices can be heard and ASG can do a better job articulating the opinions we have in a more efficient, all encompassing, and productive manner. By 2015, the implementation of the Strategic Plan will have a clear and present student voice due to ASG's efforts to better include all opinions.