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Grade Point Average amendment fails in SGA

Dustin Skipworth Feb 8, 2016

The Student Government Association failed to pass part of an amendment on Tuesday that would have lowered its GPA requirement from 2.5 to 2.0.

“I knew it was going to be a hard sell,” President Jay Todd Richey said after the vote was held.

Richey removed the GPA section of the amendment after some debate among senators made him question whether or not it would pass.

WKU requires a 2.0 GPA to remain in good standing. Some student groups — academic groups like the Honors College and community groups like Greek organizations — require members to have better grades to remain a part of the group.

SGA does not promote itself as a group focused on academic achievement for its members. The SGA’s Web page states, “The Student Government Association of Western Kentucky University is the premier organization founded to both represent and advocate for the entire WKU student body.”

Freshman Anthony Graham believes basing senatorial membership off GPA is unfair to those who don’t have the best academic records.

“You could have a wonderful thinker that isn’t getting that opportunity,” Graham said. “It alienates the student body.”

Some of the members of SGA sympathize with this position.

“If a 2.0 is good enough for the university, then it’s good enough for me,” Cole McDowell, secretary of the student senate, said after the meeting on Tuesday.

Some students believe there is a benefit to keeping the required 2.5 GPA.

“I think they should be held to a pretty good standard,” sophomore Michael Wetzel said. “I wouldn’t want anyone in the senate who wasn’t an excellent student.”

“It’s college and it’s hard, but if you work towards it, then it’s possible,” freshman Mary Mercurio said, speaking about extracurricular activities on campus.

Students who feel the GPA should stay the same often stated that a 2.5 GPA isn’t out of reach for most students.

“It’s something that’s achievable,” freshman Megan Kernan said.

If senators’ GPAs fall below the 2.5 mark, they can no longer represent the student body from which they were elected. Richey calls the process of losing senators in this fashion undemocratic.

“There are a number of factors that could influence a student’s GPA,” Richey said. “Those factors include circumstances beyond a student’s control.”

Right now the GPA requirement for SGA remains 2.5, but Richey said he would like to bring the issue up again when he feels it could pass.

“What’s good enough for WKU should be good enough for SGA,” he said.