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FEATURED

SGA campaigns spend more than \$3,000

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Casey Sykes

The Commit ticket, comprised of Jacob Fucetola, Sehar Ali, and Houston Gaines, celebrate together after winning the 2016 UGA SGA election in Athens, Georgia, on Wednesday, March 30, 2016. The three will preside over the student body in the 2016-2017 school year. (Sykes, www.caseysykes.com)

Campaigning for anything — whether it be the United States presidential race or the University of Georgia Student Government Association elections — does not come without a price. The tickets in the SGA election collectively spent upwards of \$3,600 on campaign expenditures, according to reports from the candidates themselves.

UGA SGA campaign spending is strictly capped at \$1,500 per executive ticket and \$200 per individual Senate campaign, according to item 705.2 in the SGA Constitution and Statutes-Bylaws.

The same item says that Senate parties may also spend a maximum amount of \$100 for every candidate seeking a seat.

SGA does not allocate any funds to candidates. Each ticket from last week's election said its fundraising was supplemented entirely by the donations of family and friends.

At the beginning of campaign season, Louis York, head of the SGA Elections Committee, told The Red & Black that each candidate's financial records would be available for public inspection so that those interested in the finances would be able to observe where exactly campaign money goes.

However, the Elections Committee later said it would not release financial disclosure forms as of press time. The candidates themselves, however, agreed to provide some information on their expenses.

According to the candidates, the thousands of dollars they raised were mostly spent on promotional items such as stickers and pizza.

The Commit ticket said it spent money on these types of items, with the most money going toward stickers and T-shirts.

“Stickers may seem silly, but they are worth the cost when you have really respected people wearing them,” said SGA President-Elect Houston Gaines.

The Commit ticket, which won the election, raised more money than the other tickets during the campaign period, as they reached the cap of \$1,500.

The All In ticket raised approximately \$1400 and the Dare ticket raised \$747. Dare treasurer candidate Hamilton Way said the amount was “honestly more than they needed.”

The Dare campaign has \$230 that it is using to reimburse extraneous costs spent on events they put on during the campaign, such as UNITE night and Safety Walk.

The All In campaign said it had no money leftover.

Although these campaigns raise money to reach out to students, many students expressed their belief that the amount of money spent during elections seems extreme.

“I feel like [\$3600] is a lot for a college, SGA campaign. Those campaigns don’t do a lot to change the preconceived notions students have of who they are voting for,” said freshman Hannah Cromey.



SGA senators can't commit