

*Influential, complex organization*

# Student Government changes

by Pamela Haisler

Battalion Reporter

From eight members in 1910 to more than 450 today, Student Government has grown with Texas A&M to become one of the most influential and complex organizations on campus.

From its start in the early 1900s, Student Government has tried to be an effective voice for the students at Texas A&M, said J. Wayne Stark, special assistant to the president for cultural development.

Stark, Class of '39, said that from the early 1900s until the mid-1960s, student concerns were handled through the Corps of Cadets.

These students were concerned with the activities of the Corps and most of them were friendly and well-liked, he said. Many had been involved in the Future Farmers of America where they had gained leadership skills, Stark said.

Jeff Anthony, Student Government freshman programs adviser, said the first form of Student Government was a student council in 1910 that consisted of one representative from each class and the four class presidents. The council enforced the honor system and supervised individual conduct, but because it was outside the Corps of Cadets it had no real disciplinary or advisory powers. It was dissolved in 1916, he said.

Anthony said a new student council was formed to serve civilian students in 1945. The council advised the dean of men and the Student Life Committee on matters concerning student activities. Council members included the four class presidents, the cadet colonel and four regimental representatives, he said.

In 1948, the Student Government Constitution passed and the Student Council was transformed into a Student Senate, Anthony said. Representation in



staff photo by Bill Schulz

The Student Senate studies the contents of a few bills at its March meeting.

the senate was based on living areas, he said.

James Hannigan, Student Government adviser and dean of students from 1959-1973, said that in the late '50s and early '60s, students involved in Student Government were interested in government but focused their activities on generating funds for student organizations.

Student Government primarily allocated money from the exchange store — better known today as the bookstore — among the different student organizations, he said.

Hannigan said three different groups of students — the Corps of Cadets, dorm or civilian students and off-campus or married students — had their

These groups met during constitutional meetings and eventually evolved into one body, he said.

"Enrollment at Texas A&M at that time was around 5,000 students," Hannigan said. "Since there weren't many students, everyone had a chance to be involved in Student Government. But as enrollment increased, the number of students involved decreased proportionately."

Kent Caperton, student body president from 1970-71, said Student Government's primary goal in the early '70s was to be an effective voice for the student body.

One way the organization tried to do that was to get its 200 to 300 members involved with University committees, he said. For instance, Caperton said

that before the Student Government initiated the pass-fail program, the dean could kick a student out of school.

"After the pass-fail program was initiated, we revised the University Rules and Regulations in order to give students some rights," Caperton said.

Dr. Carolyn Adair, current Student Government adviser, said that in recent years Student Government has experienced tremendous growth.

In 1972, Student Government formed three branches of government: executive, legislative and judicial. Four standing committees were formed to support the legislative branch: academic affairs, external affairs, rules and regulations and student services.

"Now we have between 450

and 500 students involved in Student Government," Adair said. "We have student representatives who are members of the University committees, student government committees and sub-committees. Some committees have two or three student representatives."

Adair said that students involved in Student Government today are professional and business-like.

"The students are not only interested in the welfare of the student body, they are also interested in the welfare of the overall university and community," she said.

Adair said that although Student Government has changed in the past years, its primary goal is to be an effective voice of the students at Texas A&M.

## Polling places open Tuesday

Student elections will be held here Tuesday and Wednesday.

Eight polling places will be open, including: Zachry Engineering Center, the Memorial Student Center, the MSC bus stop, Sterling C. Evans Library, Kleberg Animal and Food Sciences Center, Heldenfels Hall, the Academic Building, the Academic and Agency Building and Sbis Dining Hall.

Students must show election officials a current Texas A&M I.D. card. Seniors are eligible to vote in the elections.

Election commissioner Les Asel said election officials will make sure that ballots are properly filled out and that each bal-

lot is coded to insure election security. He also said election officials will make sure there is no campaigning within 100 feet of polling places.

Asel said he expects voter turnout to be approximately 20,000 students.

"That's 8,000 students more than last year," he said.

Asel said the Corps of Cadets is the largest voting bloc in the student elections. He said that more than 15 percent of all votes are cast by cadets. Underclassmen cadets are required to show upperclassmen that they have voted, he said, but are not required to vote for particular candidates.

### voters' guide

The Voters' Guide is a special supplement to The Battalion. This guide was prepared by the Battalion staff to assist Texas A&M students in choosing candidates in this week's student elections. Journalism 203 and 204 students assisted with the production of this supplement.

### on the cover

The System Administration Building has long been a landmark on the Texas A&M campus. Built in 1932, it houses the offices of University and System officials. Once the site of the annual Aggie Muster, the building is the symbol of the Texas A&M administration. Photo by Diana Sultenfuss.

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