

# An Examination of the Power of Student Government

As defined by the American Heritage Dictionary, power is 1) the ability or capacity to perform or act effectively, and 2) the official capacity to exercise control; authority.

**Eye of the Rebel**

JACOB E. COLBIS

Having long considered the gross abuse of power by the students representing the tuition paying body of UNLV, I find that fault can not be laid upon the students, but upon the nature of the power which they wield. Granted through the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada System, the power of the Consolidated Students of UNLV (here forth CSUN) can be examined and further said to be nonexistent.

Realizing that CSUN has a constitution which grants it funds, we can also see that with these funds CSUN has also been granted numerous responsibilities: support of 1) the student paper, 2) the division of student safety and security, 3) the university

child care facility, and a great many other expensive services which, for consideration of length, I do not mention. CSUN supplies a great many services to the students of UNLV, but these services are the responsibility of any university system. Even without a Student Government, the Regents or the university administration would work to supply these services.

I do not make the previous statement blindly. An example of such action by the administration can be seen in the Intramurals Program. Approximately five years ago, CSUN directed the Intramurals Program, but as the program floundered, the Moyer Student Union took action to run the program and, to the benefit of all, our Student Government gave the program up willingly.

My point in this exposition of CSUN-offered services is to demonstrate that they are responsibilities, and responsibility is not power.

I have attended UNLV for four

years; living first in the Residence Halls, then with my parents and now on my own. I've held a variety of employee and "student leader" positions on campus. I am an involved student, I care about UNLV and I offer the vague resume above only to attest to this fact. In my time here at UNLV, I've witnessed many examples of what CSUN would like to believe is power.

The senate likes to brag about the beloved former CSUN President Joel Kostman. He claims to have influenced the Board of Regents and the Nevada Legislature to put a stay on tuition for a year, saving the collective students of UNLV over \$2 million.

I vote during every election, and I expect my state and local representatives to serve my needs. If I had needed a tuition stay, I would have written to my representatives. The tuition at UNLV, on average, is lower than any other university of its size. I, personally, did not find the tuition stay a mandatory agenda item, but the legislature did.

Raising the tuition every year

creates bad publicity for a university and thus a decrease in matriculation. The stay on tuition for a year also sends a message to student voters, "I'm an incumbent. I didn't raise tuition, therefore I must care about students. Vote for me."

There are simply too many advantages to not increasing tuition every consecutive year to credit our former president with this pro-student accomplishment.

I do not particularly enjoy disparaging Mr. Kostman, but his terms in office are those which some students associate with an effective student government. Obviously this is not so. I also use Kostman's terms rather than the present administration's, because at this time, the Student Senate and the Executive Board do not seem able to get past self indulgence and petty bickering to even claim that they wield any power.

I have noted the lack of power with our Student Government, but there are also various reasons why CSUN fails to perform

effectively, or control authority on campus, which, if asked, I may expose later.

Finding a lack of power within the institution of CSUN, I would hereby call for its termination; but in considering the recent history of Student Government, coupled with the mass exodus taking place on campus, I can faithfully predict the end of the CSUN before the end of the 94-95 school year. In essence, CSUN will cease to exist.

This action could take place under the university administration, under the Board of Regents, from a failure within CSUN, or as a single, final, grand example of the only power resting at the foot of our student leaders.

Unfortunately, at this time, I am not at liberty to reveal this information. However, as an involved, well-informed student I can positively say that our Student Government will end this school year.

—Jacob E. Colbis is an opinion columnist at The Rebel Yell.

**Letters to the Editor**

**Student Senate Still Hasn't Learned Their Lesson**

To the Editor:

After reviewing last week's *Rebel Yell* opinion page, it seems to me that some of our illustrious student senators are still not getting the message. I think this is due, in part, to the fact that they feel the Yell is just out to get them.

Well, I'm not a *Rebel Yell* staffer, and I sure don't like what I am seeing.

Silly me, but I thought that student senators signed on because they wanted to make UNLV a better place, not line their pockets with such perks as a \$5,000 (oops—\$3,700) banquet and trips all over the country. I agree with a great number of students on this campus that believe a couple of tailgate parties, in the face of their track record, doesn't spell success for the student senate. I think students would like to see a little more bang for their buck.

In addition, students are tired of the mind set of senators like Shawna Campbell. You really don't get it Ms. Campbell. You have no idea who you might have offended. To state that no females on the senate were offended by the sexual jokes at the senate meeting is presumptuous.

Wake up and smell what you're shoveling, Senator Campbell.

Male or female, you really can only speak for yourself and not your colleagues. Maybe it is this type of mind reading capability the student senators use to convince themselves they don't need to listen to the students who elected them.

I give credit to those student senators doing a good job, an a word of advice to those who are not.

Elected also means replaceable.

Kevin Cochran  
Graduate Student  
Counseling  
& Educational Psychology

## Student Employment Gets the Job Done

Most students can't afford not to work. The Student Employment Office, despite being understaffed and ill-equipped, works for those students.

"We give students the chance to work," said Susan Sanders, student employment coordinator. "They don't have to pay a fee or read the newspaper. There is no reason that a student who needs work can't find a job. They just have to use the job board and be persistent."

And you can't argue with her, because she's got the numbers to back it up. According to Sanders, between July 1 and Oct. 13, 443 students found work with businesses that posted positions on the job board located in the Student Services Building. The number of students finding jobs may be even higher, but many students don't let her know they have been hired.

The job board is a one-stop shopping place for students looking for work. There are currently over 150 jobs posted on it. On an average day, 50 to 100 students request information about the jobs posted. That means Sanders and one part-time student employee generate as many as 400 job referrals, four per student, each day.

Sanders is also responsible for completing student contracts and payroll for on-campus student employees and all students involved with work-study programs.

"When I'm not here, Susan doesn't always have the time to answer the job line," Natalie Mazzullo, the office's part-time employee, said. "We would be able to post double or triple the amount of jobs we do now, but employers hang up when they get the voice mail."

It is the students that are losing. Numerous jobs are not finding their way to the job board, because no one is available to pick up the phone. And twice a month, Sanders is forced to completely close the job board for a day.

"When I close the job board, I feel like I'm letting the students down," Sanders said. "But if I don't close it, I won't finish payroll and these kids won't get



CHRISTOPHER MITCHELL

paid." It is a choice she shouldn't even have to make. When Sanders accepted this job, there had been two full-time employees and four student workers in the office. Budget cuts have nibbled those numbers down. It doesn't make sense to slash student employment's staff while the student population is growing rapidly. I know, I know, it doesn't make sense to cut the budget in most places around this campus.

It especially doesn't make sense to cut a resource that many students use to pay their way through college. After all, Sanders oversees the biggest segment of workers on this campus—students. "Most people don't realize it," she said, "but more students work on this campus than either classified or professional staff."

Sanders doesn't want much. In fact, she doesn't want to ask for anything. So, I'll say it—all she wants are the resources to effectively do her job.

"Students depend on this office to help them find a job," she said. "I want to help them find a job, but I also want to help them find a job in their field. If you work in your field, you get a chance to decide if that is what you want to do. We used to do more placement, finding them those types of jobs, but with our lack of manpower, it is difficult. We just don't have the time to do everything we would like."

Instead of helping students find a job that will help them build a resume and make contacts in their field, Sanders is locked in her office, manually entering data. She is using a ten-key adding machine and completing contracts on a typewriter. The technology in her office resembles technology in "The Flintstones."

Still, she manages to get it all done. But, you can only wonder how much more students would benefit if the Student Employment Office had what it needs—a bigger staff and modern technology.

—Christopher Mitchell is an opinion columnist at The Rebel Yell.

## Book on Black Intelligence Ludicrous

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—A young news executive here asked me, "What's your reaction to that 'Bell Curve' book about the genetic inferiority of black people?"

I laughed. Confused, he said, "I thought you'd be angry and call it a dangerous book."

I explained how, when I was in Mississippi just before and after the 1954 Supreme Court decision outlawing racial segregation in public schools, the defenders of Jim Crow never talked about genes; "Negro blood" was the feared substance.

A circuit judge, Tom P. Brady, was warning white people that "one drop of black blood thickens the lips, flattens the nose and puts out the lights of intellect."

Then I recalled asking others who claimed blacks were inherently inferior how they they explained the achievements of Ralph Bunche, Marian Anderson and Jesse Owens. "Well, they must have white blood in 'em" was the frequent reply.

**Guest Commentary**

CARL ROWAN

These crazy "blood" theories were not limited to backwoods bigots. The Rev. G.T. Gillespie, a leader in the Presbyterian church and president emeritus of Bellhaven College, wrote an article, "A Christian View on Segregation," in which he said that the child of an interracial marriage would be weaker than either parent. He said that "the intermingling of breeding stock results invariably in the production of 'scrubs' or mongrel types, and the downgrading of the whole herd."

This "Bell Curve" book would base all sorts of national policy actions on the supposed lower IQs of "black people." If educational, economic and other public policies are to be based on the mumbojumbo in the "Bell Curve" book, which says, in effect, that it is hopeless to try to lift blacks up to the level of whites, how do we now decide who is "black?"

I laughed at my Nashville colleague's question, because I re-

membered going to New Orleans on New Year's Day 1956 to see the first black play in the Sugar Bowl. Jim Crow hotel practices forced me to stay with a Negro family, one of very light-skinned people. One female in that family had been "passing" for years and was, in fact, married to one of the richest white men in New Orleans. She came to the family dinner alone and told me how she had recently been attacked by a little dog that tore her stockings.

The dog's white owner had run out to apologize and offer new stockings, explaining, "I don't know what's wrong with Bitsy. She usually only attacks niggers."

That dog that discerned so much about the "blood" and genes of this "passing" woman might well have been the chief researcher for Charles Murray and the late Richard Herrnstein, authors of this dreadful book, "Bell Curve: The Reshaping of American Life by Differences in Intelligence."

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## UNLV Student Senate Meeting Schedule

The Rebel Yell encourages all students to attend UNLV's Student Senate meetings.

Monday, Nov. 21,  
6:00 p.m. MSU

Monday, Nov. 28,  
6:00 p.m. MSU

Monday, Dec. 5,  
6:00 p.m. MSU