



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

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**Student Affairs Committee
Annual Report, 1991-92**

The Student Affairs Committee met five times during the 1991-92 academic year. The Faculty Manual describes the purposes of the Committee as follows: "Its functions are to review all aspects of student life at the University outside the formal responsibility of other standing committees, including the regulation of student organizations and the operation of the Division of Student Affairs."

To fulfill its mission, members of the Committee decided at the first meeting to devote the year to a consideration of the functioning of the Division of Student Affairs with particular emphasis on several high-profile issues facing the Division and the entire University community. Vice President Dennis Pruitt apprised the Committee of the need for his Division to take on added responsibilities while operating on a reduced budget. He explained some of the reorganization efforts that had been undertaken and noted the areas most affected by funding cuts. This provided the Committee a valuable framework in which to consider University responses to important student affairs' issues.

There was a review of University activities with regard to AIDS, including the policy adopted in 1986 and the AIDS Task Force established at that time. The Director of the Student Health Center addressed this issue and the overall efforts underway to deal with the troubling problem of sexually transmitted diseases through a variety of educational initiatives. The major concern is the continuing gap between student knowledge and behavior.

Members of the Committee expressed concern about Student Health Insurance which has been a perplexing problem surrounded by confusion. It is expected that a new plan will be in place for the 1992-93 school year.

Carl Stokes, Director of Law Enforcement and Safety, explained the system in place for University response to emergencies utilizing 9111 number and the campus police. The security response time appears to be very good when callers follow the proper

procedures. Related to this is the resource system the University activates in response to emergencies and critical events that impact on students. There is a Trauma Response Team which responds immediately and intervenes with affected individuals and groups at critical points during and following a crisis.

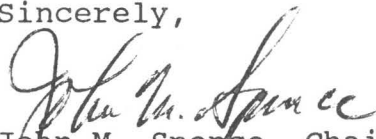
The Committee heard an in-depth explanation of the provisions of the American Disabilities Act which pertain to students and was provided with a description of University responsibilities and services in this regard. Some of the problems attendant to providing services under the terms of this Act were discussed and the need for University-wide information about the legislation and its ramifications was stressed.

The Committee was very concerned about the whole issue of sexual harassment, especially criminal sexual assault. Given its charge, the Committee's primary focus was on the University's procedure for reporting cases of sexual harassment and the steps to be followed by alleged victims. There was concern as to whether procedures might have a "chilling effect" and lead to an unwillingness on the part of the alleged victim to seek appropriate help and redress.

As the Committee was beginning its investigations of these matters, President Palms directed the establishment of a University-wide Task Force to examine and revise/improve University policies and procedures in this critical and sensitive area. The Committee determined that it would seek representation on that Task Force and hope that its Report could provide some direction for the Committee's activities in the next academic year. The Chair of the Committee served as a member of the Task Force.

The members of this Committee worked diligently to address complex areas of concern. They welcome suggestions from faculty colleagues, student groups, and other appropriate constituencies about items to be addressed in the future.

Sincerely,


John M. Spence, Chair
Student Affairs Committee