**STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT**

**Will Leimenstoll (leimenst@live.unc.edu)**

**Overview of Responsibilities:**

The Student Body President is the chief executive of Student Government and oversees management of the Executive Branch. In addition to this role the Student Body President serves as a voting member of the university’s Board of Trustees. The Student Body President is the primary advocate for students to community leaders, university administrators, faculty, and state government through a variety of boards and committees. The Student Body President is elected to office each February and serves a one-year term of office.

Have some sort of introduction here about being SBP, excited about the year, how great/challenging it has been, etc. This is different from your perspective cause you’re just introducing what you do and the general aspects of being SBP. If you need some inspiration, I have Eve’s introduction. It can be very colloquial.

**Board of Trustees:**

March Meeting: I was not yet sworn in as Student Body President or as a Board member, however since I was already elected I tagged along with my predecessor, Mary Cooper, to meet the trustees during campus tours of newly constructed campus buildings.

May Meeting: This was my first meeting as Student Body President. I was sworn in at the full board meeting on Thursday morning. During this meeting the Board officially began the university’s next capital campaign, setting UNC’s vision for public higher education in the 21st century. I was chosen to sit on the accessibility and affordability committee for this task. We also said goodbye to Brenda Kirby, the university’s secretary for over thirty years, who retired in June. I reported on my team’s platform goals for the year, detailed our summer lobbying plans, and emphasized the importance of keeping UNC proudly public.

July Meeting: This meeting mostly focused on 21st Century Vision discussions. I sat in on the access and affordability committee as well as the models of undergraduate education committee and appointed Student Body Vice President, Rachel Myrick, to serve on this second committee in the future. There was also discussion of ongoing NCAA investigations into academic fraud at the university and chair of the faculty council, Jan Boxill, presented to the board regarding faculty support for the thorough investigations already being done. I reported to the board on progress with Money.unc.edu, concerns regarding financial aid at the Board of Governors level, and plans for University Dialogues – a series of discussions between student leaders and key administrators just prior to the semester’s beginning.

September Meeting: This meeting was just a one day meeting in order to allow observance of the Jewish holiday. The Board announced the chancellor selection committee at this meeting and reiterated its strong support for Chancellor Thorp and his leadership after the announcement of his resignation. The board also formally appointed Julia Sprunt Grumbles to be the interim vice chancellor for development after Matt(?) Kupec’s resignation. I reported to the board regarding the success of the student, faculty, staff, and community rally for the Chancellor and had all Executive Branch Officers attend the morning portion of the meeting so they could be introduced to the trustees. I also was happy to report on the change in policy regarding financial aid from tuition increases at the Board of Governors level. Student Government’s efforts here were significant and helped ensure a cap on financial aid from tuition increase revenue did not come to pass.

**Student Fee Advisory Subcommittee and Tuition & Fee Advisory Task Force:**

These two committees collectively approved seven new fees, twenty fee increases, and one fee decrease. These were difficult decisions to make, however these fees are necessary in order to safeguard many of the services and programs that make this place run. The Student Body Treasurer will delve into this in more detail.

**Chancellor Selection Committee:**

The Chancellor Selection Committee, which I was appointed to at the September Board of Trustees meeting, met for the first time on Monday, October 8th. Serving on this 21-person committee as one of only two student representatives is a huge honor and a serious responsibility. Prior to the first meeting I consulted with former Student Body President, JJ Raynor, who served on the selection committee that chose Chancellor Thorp. At this first meeting the selection committee chose Bill Funk and his search firm to help us in our search efforts for this university’s next great chancellor. The Student Body Secretary and Student Body Vice President pulled together reports on the firms the committee was choosing between, which allowed me to do research ahead of the firms’ presentations. There is no doubt in my mind that the committee made the right choice with Bill Funk & Associates. The committee also divided into subcommittees at this meeting. I will serve as a member of the public forum subcommittee charged with planning public forums for all campus stakeholders.

In addition to going into the meeting prepared, my team and I are doing a variety of things to gain student input so I can best represent all 18,000 undergraduates at the committee level. We have held four UNC vision-setting meetings with student leaders from all across campus where we discussed what students value most in a chancellor and in this university. The end result of these discussions and the upcoming public forum for all students will be a one-page document that expresses the chief concerns of students for the next chancellor. These thoughts will then inform the collective statement from the committee expressing the university’s overall goals in the next chancellor. Longer descriptions of this process can be found in other officers’ reports.

**Lobbying:**

Last May and June I went on three lobbying trips to Raleigh. The first was a meeting with Senator Richard Stevens, a Wake County Republican and a long-standing ally of public higher education in North Carolina. We met and discussed the timeframe for setting the budget during this short session and he advised me on strategies to use for lobbying with the current General Assembly.

In early June I organized two lobbying trips with the UNCG Student Body President, the NCSU Student Body President and a member of his executive officer team, and the UNC-CH Graduate and Professional Student Federation. We went in two consecutive days, handed out short letters with data on the impacts of budget cuts on the universities as well as personal stories from our respective campuses. We met with countless legislators and their aides, but the main takeaway of the trip was educational. We all learned a lot about how the General Assembly works and about the logistics of lobbying. We are now much better prepared to lobby this spring during the long session when we can have a much larger impact.

We are in the midst of planning a coordinated lobbying effort between the university’s official lobbying and state outreach team, Student Government and our Carolina Advocacy Committee, and the UNC Parent’s Council. This endeavor will allow us to truly make an impact on budgetary decisions in Raleigh this spring.

**Association of Student Governments (ASG):**

February Meeting: This was my first meeting of ASG. I came along with Mary Cooper and Zealan Hoover the weekend after my election and the student body referendum vote to remain a member of ASG. It was interesting to see how the organization worked and learn about the structure of the meetings.

March Meeting: I drove from Chapel Hill to Winston-Salem to attend the second half of this meeting only to find that quorum had not been reached. Very little occurred at this meeting, however UNC-CH student, Kevin Claybren did a phenomenal job presenting on efforts to start gender non-specific housing at UNC.

April Meeting: ASG’s new leadership was elected at this meeting at NCSU. Cameron Carswell of Appalachian State was elected as the new president and Alecia Paige of Western Carolina University was elected as the new vice president of the Association of Student Governments.

July Meeting: This meeting was an orientation for new Student Body Presidents with the new ASG executive officers. We were introduced to one another, the plans of the new ASG administration and some key leaders at General Administration. There was a distinctly different and more productive tone at this meeting as compared to previous ones.

August Meeting: The August meeting mostly revolved around getting to know all the new delegates and preparing for the upcoming discussion on financial aid from tuition increase revenue at the Board of Governors level.

September Meeting: I was only able to attend the Friday night meeting of the Council of Student Body Presidents this month. We recapped our successful lobbying efforts to the Board of Governors regarding financial aid from tuition increases, and discussed challenges to mental health on our constituent campuses.

October Meeting: I was unable to attend this meeting because I had previously scheduled conflicts. However an additional Student Congress representative went as a temporary alternate instructed to report back to me. From meeting notes and discussions with others it has been deemed necessary that there be an executive branch representative at every ASG meeting even if I cannot attend. To that end we have opened up applications for a Special Assistant to the Student Body President who must attend all ASG meetings and serve as a liaison between this organization and the Executive Branch of Student Government.

**Chapel Hill Transit Board:**

As Student Body President I sit on the Chapel Hill Transit Board. We discuss many transportation, infrastructure, and planning related issues in Chapel Hill and advise the town council on such issues. We meet biweekly unless there are no agenda items in which case the meeting is canceled. I have attended multiple of these meetings and have a transportation specific executive assistant, Danny Allen, who goes in my place when I cannot be there.

**Office Hours in the Pit:**

My team and I have held Office Hours in the Pit almost every week school has been in session since last March. This one-hour office hour period in the center of campus allows anyone to come talk to my Executive Branch Officers and myself about any issues or questions related to UNC and Student Government. It’s also been a great way for us to field queries and opinions from students at large as well as advertise our upcoming events. In the coming weeks the Student Body Secretary is continuing to work with her executive assistants to come up with structured office hour topics and interactive events to hopefully engage even more students in discussion. Office hours this semester are held from 11:00am-Noon every Wednesday in the Pit and if it rains they are in the Student Government Suite.

**Northside Compass Group:**

This group is made up of university officials, Northside neighborhood residents, and other community members. It is charged with developing a land bank in the Northside neighborhood to help strengthen and revitalize this important community within Chapel Hill. We have met three times in the last month at the Jackson Center to begin the discussions and determine next steps. I have also organized a student focus group to discuss why students choose to live in the Northside neighborhood and determine what alternate forms of housing could be developed to stem the flow of students choosing to live in Northside.

**Officer Perspective:**

Serving as Student Body President has been an incredible adventure thus far. It is unbelievable to me how much the team has accomplished in such a short amount of time. I have enjoyed every single part of being Student Body President and while it is a huge responsibility it is also a tremendous honor to serve so many great students in this capacity. The role has been both challenging and quite a lot of fun. Every single day is different and presents new and unexpected twists and turns as well as exciting successes and joys.

Many people have asked me what allows me to stay positive through all these hard times. It truly is the people I have the honor of working with. My Executive Branch Officers and myself have been a rock solid team and we have supported one another without fail throughout the entire process. I have learned so much from each of them and one of my favorite aspects of the job thus far has been the opportunity to watch all of them grow in their leadership capabilities as well. We push one another to be our best in every aspect of our lives. I am so grateful to have such an incredible team.

The thing that keeps me going most however is knowing that UNC is made up of incredible people like my Executive Branch Officers that I haven’t even had the opportunity to meet yet. Tar Heels aren’t just brilliant, hard-working, and driven people, they also deeply care about causes and passions much larger than themselves. Carolina is an amazing school filled with people who energize me every single day and who make it easy to work so hard for this student body.

Go Heels!

Will