

Political debate sheds light on party differences

by B.J. Shields
staff writer

While most debates held in public forum involve candidates running for political office, Tuesday night's meeting of representatives from the College Republicans and Young Democrats served a different purpose. Both of the organizations sponsored a political debate that allowed students to better understand the differences between the major parties.

The event took place in the Reed Union Building room 114 and began at 7:30 p.m. Complimentary pizza was available, and all members of the Behrend community were invited to attend.

Roughly 30 students attended the debate, and most of all who were present participated.

After the audience took their seats, the presidents of the clubs made brief statements on the future of the organizations as well as on their purposes. Both organizations hope to debate on a national level next year. Both parties invited any interested students to become involved with the clubs at Behrend.

Before the actual debating began, Dr. Robert Speel, associate professor of political science, explained the format for the event. The first 45 minutes allowed for discussion of pre-drafted questions on the following topics: the war in Iraq; the economy and affirmative action. Each side had one minute to state their responses to five questions on each topic. Following the first half of the debate, the floor was opened for guests to ask questions or offer comments on any other political topics.

Dr. Speel introduced the speakers for each side. David Sandy, Finance, 03, represented the Young Republicans and Matt Leister the Young Democrats.

Students who wrote questions prior to the event were asked to read them to the debaters. The first question concerned weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, and asked the speakers to share their views on the war in light of the fact that none have been found.

Leister, answering on side of the Democrats, said he felt the war was based on a flagrant lie. He opposed the war, asking in retrospect why the United States still has not turned up any WMDs.

Speaking on behalf of the Republican side, Dave Sandy told the audience that

while war is always a failure, it was necessary in this case to shut down resistance by Saddam Hussein.

"He's a rapist and murderer of his own people," said Sandy. "Saddam didn't take care of his end of the bargain in offering to disarm."

Also regarding the war in Iraq, both parties were asked what they think is the best solution to the American presence there. The two speakers again offered differing opinions. Sandy stated that the United States must stay as long as possible to help rebuild and secure the future of the new democracy. Leister stated his preference for a quick withdrawal, though he said it must be timely in helping form a sturdy new government in the war torn country.

Further questions regarding Iraq were discussed, including one student questioning a shift in opinions in the Democratic Party. Also debated was a seeming double standard in the decision of the United States to attack Iraq but not North Korea.

When the time came for Sandy and Leister to respond to questions about the economy, an audience member pointed out that Sandy leaned towards capitalism while Leister's ideals seemed to favor

the blue-collar worker.

In a last minute change of plans, Chris Strayer, English 03, took the podium on behalf of the Young Democrats to debate issues surrounding affirmative action.

The first question posed asked the debaters if they feel affirmative action is a form of reverse discrimination. Both parties agreed they do not believe in reverse discrimination, though Strayer spoke in support of affirmative action and Sandy was in opposition.

"I don't think we should have them (affirmative action policies) at all," Sandy said.

At the end of the formal debate, the audience had the opportunity to ask any further questions of the speakers. Most audience questions during this period revolved around the economy and taxes, and occasionally around the issues involving the U.S. and Iraq. The debate, however, became heated when questions regarding abortion laws came up.

Strayer, who had rejoined the audience by that point, asked Sandy (who had already taken a pro-life stance) if he would oppose abortion if the fetus showed signs of mental retardation.

"...let's say if there was the possibility the unborn flesh had no chance of

enjoying life or becoming fully functional in society," said Strayer.

Sandy responded passionately, calling Strayer an animal and later referring to him as Hitler.

"Who are you to say who can or cannot be fully functional in society?" said Sandy.

Strayer noted that he works closely with physically and mentally handicapped people, and has been around these people all of his life. The audience applauded as both Sandy and Leister agreed that handicapped people should be just as much a part of the human race as anybody else.

Further topics were gay marriage and adoption. Sandy was undecided on these issues, and Leister favored both.

The debate ended at 9:10 p.m. with both sides shaking hands. The audience applauded, recognizing the speakers' efforts to communicate their positions on issues currently being debated by politicians.

The College Republicans meet on Thursdays at 12:20 p.m. in Reed 3. The Young Democrats meet Wednesdays at noon in Reed 112. Anyone interested in politics is invited to attend these open meetings.

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2003-2004

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Bring your lunch to the Penn State Behrend Wintergarden and enjoy world-class performances in an informal setting.
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SAF deadline fast approaching

by Ryan Russell
advertising manager

The deadline for Student Activity Fee proposals is coming up on Wednesday. Why should students care about this deadline? This is your chance to bring great new programs and activities to Behrend or improve existing ones. Want to see a famous band or a world-renowned speaker live at Behrend? Do you think that some new equipment could help enhance student learning or provide entertainment on-campus? Then you need to fill out a SAF proposal before Wednesday.

SAF revenues can be assigned for almost anything that would enhance the student life. Money could be used toward putting computers in dorm study lounges, improving student exercise facilities or to bring in a one-time program that would benefit or entertain all students that attend. SAF funds are also earmarked for women's groups, the gay community or ethnic organizations that want to bring more diversity programs to Behrend. As an added bonus, SAF proposals can also allocate money to pay for part-time professional staff, wages for students, and officials for athletics.

This is only a basic outline of what your SAF money can do for you. If you can think of an event or program that would benefit Behrend students that has never been heard of or seen, then you are encouraged to submit a proposal.

And the word "you" means any student. Any student that attends classes at Behrend is allowed to submit an SAF proposal if they decide to; you don't need to have completed a certain amount of credits, live on campus or be a member of any club to do so.

However, there are some guidelines that all students must follow when working on a SAF request: The event you propose must be open to any student who wants to attend; it must describe how your program or event will benefit the campus, and how it will enhance the out-of-class experience for those who participate; and it must explain how the event will be marketed towards students.

To print a copy of an SAF application request, go to the SAF homepage, <http://www.pserie.psu.edu/activity/>

and click on the "Online Application" link. After filling out the application, the next step is to hand in your proposal on or before Wednesday. This means it can be reviewed at the next SAF meeting on Nov. 10. At that meeting, the SAF committee will review and then decide on all submitted proposals.

"Generally, students are notified within a day or two whether or not their proposal has been accepted," said Dr. Ken Miller, director of student affairs and SAF committee co-chairman.

"Proposals are rejected because of a lack of clarity or because they are not in line with university policy. We give each proposal feedback on how it can be improved, and encourage students to reapply their proposal the following month."

So, if your proposal is not accepted at the Nov. 10 meeting, don't give up. The next opportunity to submit a proposal comes up on Dec. 3, and if you make a good case, chances are that some of the \$10,000 monthly budget can go toward your event.

And if your proposal is rejected in December, keep trying. There is no limit to the number of times you can submit your proposal, and no limit on the number of proposals that SAF can accept each month.

"In September, we funded 23 out of 32 proposals, and in October, we funded 13 out of 17," said Miller. "It really varies month by month."

Some of the proposals approved through SAF in October included the Battle of the Hill Paintball program, Spirit Day programs for the Lion Ambassadors, the Jeopardy Challenge, the Fall Leadership Conference, resources for Sign Language Classes, Craft Nights and Bowling for Hunger. And if you have an idea that you think would change student life here at Behrend, or just keep students entertained for one night, you could join this list.

If you feel as though you could make even more of a difference and want to help other students with their programs, you are encouraged to apply for a seat on the SAF committee. There is currently one seat open, and anyone interested in filling it should contact Miller at 217-6111, or contact SAF co-chairman Scott Soltis at sms520@psu.edu.

SGA Corner

courtesy of Student Government Association Minutes
Oct. 22, 2003

COUNCIL REPORTS

Academic Council has been meeting for two weeks now. Meetings are Thursdays at 6 p.m.

IFC did not meet last week because of Greek Week. Their meetings are Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.

Service and Honors' first meeting was Thursday in Reed 112.

MCC's kissing booth will continue through today outside of Bruno's. Meetings are Mondays at 5:20 p.m.

Panhellenic did not meet last week because of Greek Week. Meetings are Tuesdays at 5:20 p.m.

Recreation Council is concerned with the budget deadlines. They wanted to know if they could be pushed back a week.

No report:
Arts and Student Life

CLUB/ORG REPORTS

Treasurer Erica Sitter reported that she and President Scott Soltis are working on the SGA Budget, and that if anyone has any thought of anything to be included, let one of them know.

REPORTS

Academic Affairs are working on the Academic workshop. The dates for the workshop are March 17-18 from 10-2 p.m.

Budget members needed to attend one informational meeting. There is a list of times of the meetings at the RUB desk.

Constitutional Review has started setting goals. They reviewed the Behrend King Pin constitution and have suggested some changes for it. They have also received a constitution from the Behrend Equestrian team. They are also in the process of rewriting the SGA constitution so it would now include judicial board.

Diversity had no attendance last week.

Elections met briefly after the meeting.

Governmental Affairs is having a Rock the Vote on Nov. 12 and 13 from 11-3 p.m. outside of Bruno's.

Public Relations discussed their goals, namely informing students of what the SGA is discussing.

THON had a canning weekend last weekend on Upper Peach. They also put together packets to send out to all the clubs regarding the IFC/PHC/SGA Behrend Dance Marathon. Clubs have until Nov. 15 to decide if they want to participate.

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Recreation	James Wyble	jsw209
Student Life	Jeannie Roos	jmr404

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Student Affairs	Jeannie Roos	jmr404
Thon	Justin Curry	jrc284
	Rachael Yates	ray131

No report: **Student Affairs**

