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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Senate Begins Year by Proposing Plan for Student Input in College Budget and Tuition Decisions; legislation calls for AIESEC to become Senate agency

(AUSTIN) – Two pieces of legislation will be introduced during the Senate of College Councils first General Assembly meeting of the 2010-11 school year on Thursday, Sept. 2 at 7 p.m. in the Glenn Maloney room (SSB G1.310).

The first piece of legislation, named S.R. 1002, concerns Senate’s call for the creation of College Tuition and Budget Advisory Committees in each of the University’s 18 colleges and schools. Prompted by a state-mandated, University-wide 5-percent budget cut for the 2011-12 budget cycle, and a 10-percent cut for the 2012-13 cycle, the legislation seeks to increase student involvement in decisions relating to “college priorities, budget allocations and cuts, and differential tuition in the college,” by creating advisory committees consisting of students and faculty of each college or school.

In addition to calling for the creation of CTBACs in every University college and school, the resolution – authored by Senate policy director David Liu and former Senate policy director and member of the Graduate Student Assembly, Reid Long – recommends that “the committee issues a written report outlining its recommendations within each area of its jurisdiction.”

To further increase transparency “within the larger college or school community,” the resolution also recommends that each CTBAC hold “open meetings and forums both before and after issuing a written report.”

The resolution is a direct result of S.R. 1001, a resolution which Senate passed in April that called for “University administrators, when making decisions that reduce the quality and quantity of student academic opportunities, to actively solicit student input at the departmental and college levels.” In addition to faculty members, each CTBAC will consist of three students appointed by the president of each college’s Council; two graduate students appointed by the president of the Graduate Student Assembly, and the Student Government representative from that college or school.

If S.R. 1002 is passed by the College Councils, it will be sent to “the Office of the President, the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, the Chair of the Faculty Council, the College Deans, the President of the Graduate Student Assembly, and the President of Student Government.”

In addition to S.R. 1002, another piece of legislation will also be introduced before the Senate assembly – S.B. 2001. If passed, the bill would amend the Constitution and Bylaws of the Senate of College Councils to include the Austin chapter of AIESEC as an agency of Senate.

Known as the “world’s largest student organization,” AIESEC is “an international, student-run, non-profit that works to break down cultural barriers and assumptions by facilitating an exchange program that allows students to experience other cultures first hand.”

Started in 1948 as an organization to develop “friendly relations between member countries,” AIESEC International now has over 50,000 members and is present in over 107 countries and territories. Additionally, AIESEC has a set of values which includes: “activating leadership, demonstrating integrity, living diversity, enjoying participation, striving for excellence, and acting sustainably.”

“The collaboration between Senate and AIESEC would strengthen both organizations in order to create more effective programs geared toward study abroad and service-learning initiatives,” Senate executive director and co-author of S.B. 2001 Carisa Nietsche said. “AIESEC and Senate would work together to both publicize and improve study abroad and service learning programs across campus.”

In addition to coordinating an exchange program that “enables over 4,450 students and recent graduates the opportunity to live and work in another country,” AIESEC’s “primary work is to develop leaders and facilitate an exchange of students on international internships.” This role has enabled AIESEC to put on over 350 conferences and provide over 7,500 leadership positions for its members.

“AIESEC aspires to facilitate leadership development and awareness of other cultures across national borders through the firsthand experience of their competitively-priced internship abroad program,” Nietsche said. “This year Senate plans to specifically emphasize and work on study abroad and service learning initiatives; Senate even created a permanent standing committee – the Academic Enrichment Committee – charged with working on policy initiatives in the realm of study abroad and service-learning.”

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