

COVID-19 Online Platform



The situation of the **2020 COVID-19 Pandemic** has changed the ways of life of students across the world. Many universities, including ours, have gone to an online methodology that attempts to salvage what remains of the Spring semester, under the directive of the University System of Georgia (USG). As such, It is expected for us, the representatives of the Student Body, to express the major concerns, atypical to the "normal" way of life of a student, that are prevalent as of the following month and the months yet to come. As such, our campaign will have an extra, official platform to ensure that we can represent the students well, even amidst adversity, and promote student wellbeing outside or inside of campus.

Promoting Students' Wellbeing

- Develop through means of our available Social Media platforms a **system of weekly exercise schedules** to provide students with the proper means of training safely, and provide them a goal to reach and improve.
- Find ways to do a *"Keeping the Blaze Alive"* fundraiser to assist those students who are struggling with the current economic collapse brought by the **COVID-19 Pandemic**, through the usage of systems like gofundme™, Patreon™ and other platforms available.
- Promote the extension of the **VSU Cares program** to hold funds for assisting students during the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Assist with the development of a **Student Mutual Aid Resource Hub** (Following the example of Trinity College) using cell-text services like Google Sheets™ in which students can provide help, such as transportation and housing, and for students with urgent needs to be able to request assistance to other students.
- Promote the **increase of learning of students by providing resources** like Khan Academy™, CodeAcademy™, Microsoft Azure™, and Duolingo™ where students can learn a multitude of different skills at no cost.

Continuing our SGA Duties

- Develop through means of platforms like Zoom™, Youtube™, Twitch™ or Microsoft Teams™ ways to host the **Fall 2020 SGA meetings** in the case the pandemic continues well beyond the end of the year, and continue our labor to ensure the objectives set on this platform and future agendas are met.
- Develop an **Online archive of SGA Meetings** for all of our students to access publicly, and be aware of the current situation of the SGA and our actions.
- Advocate for student needs to our administrators, particularly under these times of uncertainty, and promote the improvement/updates of systems like the Blazer Allocation Fund and VSU Cares Fund to ensure their proper functionality during this pandemic.
- Ensure **Student Organizations have proper guidance via constant email communication and direct contact with student leaders** to ensure the COVID-19 pandemic does not affect their continuous work if the Fall 2019 Semester persists with the online format due to the Virus.

Innovating through Adversity

- Creating a **"VSU Social Media Spotlight"** with the collaboration of the official VSU's Instagram and Twitter accounts to provide exposure for students who desire to be upcoming influencers and support them by ensuring an early following and expanding their reach.
 - **Informational:** These students would fill out an application form, that will include proof of ownership of the account, as well as general information of the content of the account, and once filled, such account will be on a waiting list to ensure they follow student conduct lines and are ready to be approved/denied. Once the procedures are done, the exposure will be provided within a reasonable margin of time.
- Creating a **"Student Experience Spotlight"** in SGA's Instagram, to allow students to share their stories and their thoughts of the COVID-19 Pandemic. We believe it is pivotal for students to be able to express themselves and share stories, as a way of not only expression but also as a way to relieve stress and get to know others are also fighting through this situation.

Regular Platform - FALL 2020/SPRING 2021

Student Organizations

- Create assistance videos for students who are interested in developing their **own organizations**, to help guide them on how to use the Presence™ system, how to use the resources provided by us, as well as explaining everything they need to know about funding for their org.
- Assist **Student Organizations that did not or were incapable of meeting the required amount of events per semester due to the COVID-19 Pandemic**, as well as facilitate assistance and guidance to those student organizations that did not meet the required amount of events for other unrelated reasons, so as to not damage the interest of students in developing new organizations.

Student Convenience

- Continue the ideas proposed on Resolution 20-03 and ensure the process of **increasing withdrawals and the inclusion of advisors in the withdrawal process** to ensure no student gets lost and understands the benefits and consequences of their decision properly.

- Collaborate with Vending Machine Vendors to ensure that **vending machines across campus have the ability to take credit cards, ONE Cards or cash**, as many of them don't have the ability to take credit cards and thus, this would make sure people have access to these products.
- Promote the **acquisition of Rain ponchos for students and faculty** in buildings far away from parking decks (Library and Palms Dining Hall as the example) to cover themselves on times of rain and thunder and keep our blazers safe and healthy. Under certain websites, Ponchos can be bought for a mere \$0.55 and are even cheaper in bulk. it would be a worthy investment if students/faculty **could rent them** (similar to the model of renting laptops in the New Media Center) **and return them at a later date**, with only a lost item fee of replacement if the individual **loses** the poncho.

Lending a hand to our Community and Campus

- Promote volunteering programs for students and SGA Senators to assist the City of Valdosta with the **cleaning of our streets and sidewalks**, to ensure that our community looks spotless. We all live here, together, so we must take care of our city.
- Continue the idea of providing "**Lecture days**" for kids across Valdosta to show our community that we care about our youth by having SGA interact with them and teach them new stories.
- Improve the "**Bulletin board clean-up**" to a Monthly event under which SGA dedicates one day to ensure that the information in bulletin boards across campus are fully updated and that past events are no longer taking space in the bulletin boards.
- Work alongside the Parking Department to promote the development of a system of "**Community Retribution**" under which students can have the option of partaking in community service hours as a way to pay a parking ticket.

Constant Innovation

- Encourage the IT department to develop **a system to properly organize the inbox of students** into categories to avoid amalgamation of different types of messages and ensure that students feel more comfortable when using their emails.
- Develop an SGA "**An Extra Hand for Faculty**" day, once each month, under which senators will provide a couple of hours of their time to assist Faculty across campus to ensure they know the student body appreciates their efforts and that SGA is always willing to help those who make possible our education.
- Work alongside the Athletics Department to **foster the creation of a Male Soccer Team for Valdosta State University**, for aspiring students whose dream is to participate in the Major League Soccer (MLS). Promote competitions through the **National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)** with other universities that advocate the sport and ensure that the Blazers dominate in yet another sport.
- Promote and assist in organizing **e-Sports tournaments** as a way to foster campus interactivity and healthy competition between students, and work alongside the new Recreation Center to ensure the success of these events.
- Introduce the "**Fireside Blaze Podcast**", which is a podcast following a similar methodology as Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Fireside Chats". This has seen positive reception by students in other universities such as Iowa State. In this podcast, the Executive team would hold a Bi-Weekly or Monthly address to the Blazer Nation, answering the questions of the students and providing explanations of the processes of SGA. This is with the end goal of increasing the connection with the students and ensure SGA can reach out to everyone, and everyone can reach out to SGA.
- Organize and promote alongside the Department of English a "**Literature Night**" to promote future writers to test their short stories, poems or chapters with an audience. It is also a good way to let them drain anxiety and emotion.

Improving Transparency and Fairness for SGA

- Develop an amendment of the current Code of Elections to **include an Appeal system** that allows student candidates to defend themselves against sanctions.
- Orchestrate the development of a **transparent system to elect senators who will participate on certain trips provided by the SGA**, based on performance, attendance, and fair distribution, to allow all senators to participate at least once in these events.
- Develop an **amendment to the current Code of Election to restore the term limit of Executive members for up to a maximum of 2 years, consecutive or nonconsecutive**. This is with the intention of providing new, future senators the chance of participating in Executive positions, and for SGA to always have new and fresh individuals continue the legacy of the organization with new, fresh ideas.
- Improve the **SGA Peer Mentoring System** to ensure that new First-Year Senators (FYS) are assigned a mentor, or a veteran with about a year of experience, to explain to them how the system works and encourage them to participate in certain aspects of student government.

Tweak the Parking Situation on Campus

- Continue Bob Greenbaum's and Jacob Bell's **Initiative to improve the safety of crosswalks on campus**. While it is hard to get data, Stories of students getting hit or about to get hit on crosswalks are everywhere. Several Students believe that this issue is something that must be addressed, and as such this administration would make it a priority to ensure proper safety for pedestrians.
- Develop by the end of the year **a call to action towards the administration to express the need for a proper solution to the North Campus Parking Situation**, which has already seen too many complaints by students. SGA would work on providing suggestions and data that could beneficiate the administration and then suggest several different alternatives to solve the issue.
- Work with SGA senators on **gathering data to find a proper solution to the Oak Parking Lot and Mass Media Parking Lot situations** by the end of the year, as many students have been having issues parking on those particular areas of campus.

