

Syracuse University

## SURFACE

---

Syracuse University Honors Program Capstone Projects    Syracuse University Honors Program Capstone Projects

---

Spring 5-1-2012

# University Union: Becoming Syracuse University's Official Programming Board and a College Programming Paradigm

Robert John Dekker  
*Syracuse University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://surface.syr.edu/honors\\_capstone](https://surface.syr.edu/honors_capstone)



Part of the [Arts Management Commons](#), and the [Music Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Dekker, Robert John, "University Union: Becoming Syracuse University's Official Programming Board and a College Programming Paradigm" (2012). *Syracuse University Honors Program Capstone Projects*. 165.  
[https://surface.syr.edu/honors\\_capstone/165](https://surface.syr.edu/honors_capstone/165)

This Honors Capstone Project is brought to you for free and open access by the Syracuse University Honors Program Capstone Projects at SURFACE. It has been accepted for inclusion in Syracuse University Honors Program Capstone Projects by an authorized administrator of SURFACE. For more information, please contact [surface@syr.edu](mailto:surface@syr.edu).

# **University Union: Becoming Syracuse University's Official Programming Board and a College Programming Paradigm**

A Capstone Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements of the Renée Crown University Honors Program at  
Syracuse University

Robert John Dekker  
Candidate for Bachelor of Science Degree  
and Renée Crown University Honors  
May 2012

Honors Capstone Project in Music Industry

Capstone Project Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_  
Assistant Professor Ulf Oesterle

Capstone Project Reader: \_\_\_\_\_  
Bandier Program Director David Rezak

Honors Director: \_\_\_\_\_  
Stephen Kuusisto, Director

Date: May 10, 2012

## **Abstract**

This Capstone project completed per the requirements of the Renee Crown University Honors Program in form is part research paper, part personal narrative, part topical history, part business plan, part guide and resource, and part portfolio. It is structured in four critical parts. The first will be a history of programming at Syracuse University as it relates to the history of University Union, the university's official programming board. This overview covers fifty years, beginning in 1962 with the founding of the board. Following this will be an assessment of the capacity of college programming to further the goals of unifying, educating, enriching and enhancing student bodies and lives at institutes around the country. In this phase of the paper, information gathered regarding University Union's counterparts at other institutions of higher education is synthesized and evaluated. This section will bridge the gap between the past and present, the latter of which is focused on in the third section. The progress made by University Union in the past four years is evaluated and the author speaks to the position of the organization fiscally, structurally, and socially. The objective perspective taken in the prior sections informs these analyses of the aforementioned fields. The conclusion of this paper, which ultimately delivers the balance of the corresponding Capstone presentation, is focused on the final component of this write-up, the future. In this section the author outlines the responsible fiscal model to be utilized by the organization to best position itself for growth, success and ultimately sustainability.

© Robert Dekker 2012

## Table of Contents

<b>Abstract .....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Preface .....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>Chapter 1: What about a University Union – The History of UU .....</b>	<b>1</b>
UU Is You: The origins of University Union (Pre 1967) .....	2
Purpose Redefined (1967-1980) .....	5
What about a University Union? (1980-2000) .....	10
Familiar UU, Familiar Problems (2000-2008) .....	14
<b>Chapter 2: Your Student Fee... College Programming Boards .....</b>	<b>18</b>
Slope Day Programming Board – Cornell University .....	19
Vanderbilt Programming Board – Vanderbilt University .....	21
<b>Chapter 3: Becoming SU’s Official Programming Board .....</b>	<b>24</b>
Building upon success- Becoming the Official Programming Board .....	26
<b>Chapter 4: A Future Paradigm .....</b>	<b>28</b>
Assessment of Present Position .....	28
Setting Goals .....	31
Internal Adjustments .....	31
External Adjustments .....	31
Future Paradigm .....	33
<b>Works Cited .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Appendices .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Summary of Capstone Project .....</b>	<b>44</b>

## Preface

University Union has been the critical component of my time at Syracuse University. The Official Programming Board of Syracuse University has embodied the perfect blend of real world academic application and fulfilling student engagement and involvement. My time in the organization has been transformative for both the board and myself.

I personally have been a part of over three hundred and fifty University Union events, five-dozen weekly Board of Directors meetings, and hundreds of executive and general board meetings. My countless hours of commitment to the campus population in this organization have informed and altered my perspective on the world and helped to shape the individual I am today. Likewise, my four years in the organization have contributed to the growth in size, scale and prominence the organization has experienced. Now, as president of University Union, I am at the crossroads of past and present programming on this campus. I am charged with the envisioned leadership that is required to perpetuate the organization's success.

Given the aforementioned discussion, I have selected my work with this campus organization as my Renée Crown University Honors Program Capstone project. I am persistently frustrated by the lack of continuity in the campus and the organization's knowledge of the arc of its history. Time and perspective have a unique way of distorting all histories, and this process is something that I have seen firsthand in four years on the university's programming board. This document will serve as a critical link between the past, the transformative present and the promising future of the organization.

This work on a college campus, although adjacent to formal studies, is essential to student life. Programming on college campuses has the unique ability to unify, educate, enhance and enrich students' lives. I will explore in detail its importance and its implementation on this campus and campuses across the United States.

This Capstone project in its culmination is part research paper, part personal narrative, part topical history, part business plan, part guide and resource, and part portfolio. It will be structured in four critical parts. The first will be a history of programming at Syracuse University as it relates to the history of University Union. This will cover fifty years, beginning in 1962 with the founding of the board. This will be followed by an assessment of the capacity of college programming to further the aforementioned goals. In this phase of the paper I will synthesize information gathered regarding University Union's counterparts at other institutions of higher education. This section will bridge the gap between the past and present, the latter of which is focused on in the third section. I will examine the progress made by University Union in my four years as a member, and I will speak to the position of the organization fiscally, structurally, and socially. The objective perspective taken in the prior section will inform my

analysis of these aforementioned fields. I will conclude and ultimately deliver the balance of my Capstone presentation on the final component of this write-up, the future. In this section I will outline the responsible fiscal model to be utilized by the organization to best position itself for growth, success and ultimately sustainability.

## **Acknowledgements**

Special thanks must be extended to my Honors advisor, Ulf Oesterle, and Capstone reader, David Rezak. Their mentorship throughout my time at Syracuse University has been over abundant and formative beyond words. Thanks as well to the rotating cast of University Union Student Affairs consultants: David Sargalski, Meggan Ford, JR McGrath, and especially Kevin Tashereau and Matt Scherr. Without their guidance, I, and by extension this Capstone, would be lost. Thanks as well to my wonderful co-workers and friends within UU, especially the three Boards of Directors I had the privilege of taking part in. Lastly, thank you to my parents and family who have selflessly and lovingly supported me and prioritized their children's' education above all else.





## **Chapter 1: What about a University Union – The History of UU**

### **Introduction**

The history of any establishment (nation, organization, family, university, team, etc.) should inform its stewards. As each individual learns through education, exploration and conditioning, so too should organizations collectively and actively retrieve and respond to information about their past. Collective recollection and shared points of reference are essential for organizations to enact change and progress their mission and goals. This is often served by the long-term service of a core of members. Registered Student Organizations on college campuses lack this luxury, as their constituents have a maximum duration of service of four to five years. Therefore, in this brief window of time, leaders must be recognized, elected, trained, gain needed experience and transform from general member to organization leader. A step in this process that is most often overlooked, as it is not critical to the day-to-day operation of an organization, is the long arc and direction of the body.

Throughout the history of University Union that I will outline below, this critical flaw will be clear. Over the organization's 50 years of operation, the prominent group has progressed and digressed repeatedly in relation to a number of issues, including official programming board status, funding and structure. It is

my hope that the information I have archived and the narrative I have constructed relating to UU's history will help to train and inform future leaders of Syracuse University's official programming board. The research has certainly informed the construction of the final portions of this Capstone and has helped me to more concretely ascertain my place in the union's history. By gaining knowledge of where we have been, as President of University Union I have been better equipped to chart the organization's future. There are successes and failures to learn from, as well as traditions to consider and understand, and some to resurrect.

The following account is the history of University Union as understood from periodicals and documents from the period. The chapter is organized chronologically. This history is as complete and accurate as my research will allow. It is largely limited in scope, as often times the only sources available to me are Syracuse University newspaper, the *Daily Orange*, correspondence, internal documents, flyers, personal accounts and passages in the school's yearbook. What is lacking is a robust collection of objective sources. Also these documents do very little in the way of providing background in order to anchor and contextualize the information. Nonetheless, the exercise of compiling this information has been extremely beneficial, and it is my hope that it will aid the organization greatly in the future.

#### **UU Is You: The origins of University Union (Pre 1967):**

University Union ascribes its approximate date of conception as 1962. The most concrete record of the organization's creation is mentioned in the 1965 Syracuse University yearbook. The page on which the brief history of the

programming committee is included notes that the now independent organization was created “in 1962 as an [Student Government] subcommittee.” Also included is a photograph of our earliest sitting officials: Art Chairman, Dan Snyder; Public Relations Chair, Jim Palcic; Fund Raising Chairman, Frank Kelly; Programming Chairman, Sue Goldin; Chairman. Ann Cooney; and Secretary-Treasurer, Patty Smith.<sup>1</sup>



The Onondogan, 1965

Though the organization was founded in 1962, it traces its roots back to 1926. At this time there was no student life center on campus and students desperately wanted a social space to call their own. University Union traces its earliest origins to a 1926 meeting. This assembly, comprised of 150 concerned students, came together with the goal of raising \$10,000 to purchase a space on

---

<sup>1</sup> "Onondagan" 121)

University Place that would be converted into a student center at some point in the future. Plans were drawn up for a new facility but this movement folded in 1937 due to lack of support and financial backing. University bylaws prevented students from directly soliciting donors and alumni inhibited the students' movement. The total sum raised by these students amounted to only \$2,000, far short of their goal. The students' needs were served a variety of ways over the next thirty plus years, with substitute centers occupying various facilities on campus. In 1949 plans were drawn up for a \$15,000,000 student center when the Activities Center and the aforementioned student union merged. After a decade this movement similarly floundered and failed.<sup>2</sup>

Enter: University Union. The aforementioned subcommittee began as part of the Syracuse University Student Government, now the Student Association. This body itself formed in 1957 with a purpose similar to its present iteration, to provide a voice for SU students and to allocate student fees for the benefit of the student body. The split from SG came in 1965 when the Student Senate approved University Union's constitution. The new constitution came with a new focus, and that was on the health of the student body.<sup>3</sup> As the name would suggest, the intention of the new organization and its programming was to provide points of unity and recreation for the student body. The goal of creating a student union center remained intact and all proceeds from events as well as the sale of UU buttons went to the effort of creating a Union.<sup>4</sup> Forums continued to be held on

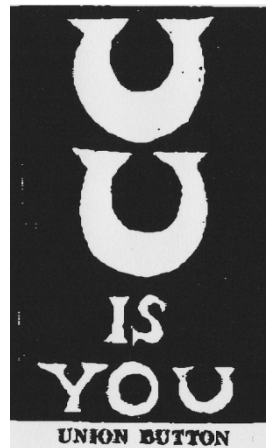
---

<sup>2</sup> "Daily Orange" 22 Sep 1967)

<sup>3</sup> "Daily Orange" 5 Aug 1965)

<sup>4</sup> "Daily Orange" 3 May 1965)

the topic of the Union as the organization went about planning events. Early organization-sponsored activities included pep rallies, quad screenings, free weekly movie screenings, and concerts by Josh White and Dave Brubeck.<sup>5</sup> The core purpose and competency of the organization was shifting to programming.



#### **Purpose Redefined (1967-1980):**

The official shift to being a programming body came in September of 1967. At this time the \$2,000 that had been collected for the construction of the building was reallocated to student programming. The sitting president of University Union, Chuck Hicks, remarked that the progress was too slow to have these funds go untouched. The purpose of the reallocation of this sum was to enhance student life on campus and provide impetus for students to more actively support University Union and its future efforts to create a union.<sup>6</sup> University Union continued to provide programming to the campus that included weekly movie screenings, pep rallies and student jam sessions. These events included the year-end celebration of Spring Weekend, the earliest precursor to the present

---

<sup>5</sup> “Daily Orange” 3 Mar 1966)

<sup>6</sup> “Daily Orange” 22 Sep 1967)

Mayfest and Block Party festivities.<sup>7</sup> With the renewed focus on the programming, the group made its first inroads into the media field with the production of a weekly newsletter.<sup>8</sup> Throughout University Union's history it has been the umbrella organization that has supported a magazine, a TV station and a radio station in addition to the aforementioned newsletter.

The student union remained a contentious topic and was featured prominently in the 1967 Student Government presidential elections.<sup>9</sup> Both president and the *Daily Orange* editorial board were in favor of the construction of a union, but neither candidate had concrete plans in achieving the goal. Without the support and focus of University Union, the movement again faltered.

In the spring of 1968, Jerry Tatarian and Mary Franciosi were elected as chairman and vice chairman, respectively, of University Union. They responded to the concerns of the students regarding a union facility that were abandoned the year prior by the UU administration. Enacted in the fall of 1968, Tatarian and Franciosi established the first internal boards of UU. We use an expanded model of that which they created over 40 years ago to this day. Their union had three boards. The first was a "Policy Board" that now is represented by the executive cabinet. This was the head of operations and long-term direction and planning of the organization. The second board was the "Programming Board" and focused on what had grown to be the organization's core competency. The final board was the "Development Board." This group focused on outreach, architecture and

---

<sup>7</sup> "Daily Orange" 5 May 1967)

<sup>8</sup> "Daily Orange" 26 Feb 1967)

<sup>9</sup> "Daily Orange" Nov 1967)

fundraising for a potential student center. With this renewed dual purpose, the organization proceeded. The offices of University Union were formerly established in the basement of Kimmel Dormitory in an “experimental union facility.”<sup>10</sup>

Although the young organization lacked a permanent home, its expansion was not hampered. In 1971 University Union Video was founded.<sup>11</sup>

Concurrently SU Lightworks established a television network, Synapse, that, although innovative and groundbreaking, lacked the infrastructure needed for growth. These cutting edge and vocal organizations were offshoots of the Syracuse University student strike and subsequent movements resulting from the Kent State shooting.<sup>12</sup> Wary of student’s use of the media, the university sought to silence some of the more radical voices. In 1977 UU enveloped the station to for University Union Television (UUTV). The organization broadcasted its student-generated programming on the university’s closed circuit television network. Like UU proper, the station was entirely student run. The station had a tumultuous inception and had the entirety of its funding cut by the Student Association in the fall of 1978.<sup>13</sup> This is the first documented case of fallout that occurred between University Union and the Student Association.

Differences in opinion have tended to rest squarely on the allocation of funds that SA administers and UU utilizes. Of particular concern to UU officials at the time, given the limited allocation, was to attract talented students. Student

---

<sup>10</sup> Havens

<sup>11</sup> “Syracuse University Magazine” Vol. 7: Iss. 3

<sup>12</sup> Hersler

<sup>13</sup> “Daily Orange” 29 Nov 1978



employees at the time, including UU Directors of Concerts, UU Cinemas Directors<sup>14</sup>, and UUTV staff, were awarded stipends for their service to the student body.<sup>15</sup> This is a marked change from the current policy of the Student Association. The current finance codes disallow payment to be rendered to student staff and performers. A curious exception is the stipend set aside for the President and Comptroller of the Student Association.

Throughout this time University Union made no significant gains in establishing a Union. In 1967 then-Chancellor William Tolley promised to act on the student center issue. However, with Tolley's retirement in 1969, the university was still left without a student center. A number of funding campaigns were suggested but ultimately none were enacted.<sup>16</sup> Programming during this time period included a successful Billy Joel Concert held at the War Memorial Theater in the winter of 1977.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> Eppolito

<sup>15</sup> Coffey

<sup>16</sup> Galpin, Greene, Wilson, and Barck 251-255

<sup>17</sup> Collier



In response to student pressure, administrators converted a student residence, Walnut Cottage, into a Student Activities Center (SAC) in 1976. The campus was largely divided on the reallocation of space and relocation of its 19 residents. University Union was widely criticized for their support of the Walnut Cottage SAC.<sup>18</sup> The space did not suffice to meet students' needs and protests persisted. In 1968 concerns were exacerbated by the reluctance of university administrators to borrow funds to create a student union building<sup>19</sup> and the announcement of the construction of the Carrier Dome. Students felt their need for a student center was simply not being taken seriously and that an alternative agenda was being pursued. In response, Chancellor Eggers guaranteed the construction of a student center would occur within four years.<sup>20</sup> In 1979 students assisted in launching a phone-a-thon to raise funds for the promised student center. The movement raised \$50,000 before stalling.

---

<sup>18</sup> Fisch

<sup>19</sup> Martin

<sup>20</sup> Coffey, and Salmon Jacqui 1

While the student center movement stalled, University Union was making strides organizationally. In the fall of 1979 University Union became the administrators of the portion of the student fee allocated for programming. All student organizations had to approach University Union in order to secure funding for their events.<sup>21</sup> This is an uncommon arrangement for a programming board of a university. Essentially the Student Association collected the student fee and allocated it to University Union, who then allocated it to the campus's various organizations. Given UU's role as a programmer, the process seems dubious, as campus organizations would be forced to compete with UU's own events for programming capital. Regardless, the arrangement persisted into the next decade.

#### **What about a University Union? (1980-2000):**

It appeared as if a movement for student center was stalled indefinitely, despite the efforts of students, including UU members who had helped to raise the initial \$50,000 worth of contributions. This money was in danger of being returned to donors when the Schine family contributed the naming sponsorship of 2.5 million dollars in 1982. Once these funds were secured, the university administration largely took over the process of securing the remaining sponsors.<sup>22</sup> The Hildegard and J. Myer Schine Student Center was completed in 1985 and dedicated during homecoming weekend that fall.<sup>23</sup> The Schine Student Center quickly became the "Busiest Place on Campus" and grew to be an integral part of

---

<sup>21</sup> Schneider

<sup>22</sup> Galpin, Greene, Wilson, and Barck 251-255

<sup>23</sup> "Syracuse University Magazine" Nov 1985

campus life. Many clubs and organizations, including University Union, moved their offices to the new facility.<sup>24</sup>

With the new facility in place, the original purpose of University Union had been fulfilled. However, the newer goal to entertain the campus still persisted. UUTV introduced their first show taped in front of a live audience, “Double Take” and began doing pieces that featured remote filming in 1980.<sup>25</sup> Additionally conventional entertainment continued and diversified. The first concert at Skytop Field was held in September of 1981. The event, that featured The H-roids and The Atlas Linen co, unfortunately with an attendance of only 1,400 students, paled in comparison to the comparable September concert of 1980. This event occurred on the quad and drew 8,000 students for a performance by Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes.<sup>26</sup> This event on South Campus is the oldest precursor I have identified to University Union’s annual Juice Jam concert that has occurred at Skytop Field since 2007, now in its fifth year of existence.<sup>27</sup> Of note beyond alterations to existing offerings was the addition of the WERW radio station to the University Union umbrella of organizations. UUTV experienced significant growth during this time period, expanding from 50 members to over 300 by 1987. It became known as an excellent place to hone professional skills.<sup>28</sup> In 1999 UUTV won three awards from the National Association of Broadcasters including College Broadcaster of the year for

---

<sup>24</sup> “Syracuse University Magazine” Apr 1986

<sup>25</sup> Beasley

<sup>26</sup> “The Daily Orange” 16 Sep 1981

<sup>27</sup> “The Daily Orange” 3 Sep 2007

<sup>28</sup> “Syracuse University Magazine” Vol. 7: Iss. 3

member Will Swope.<sup>29</sup> As University Union's umbrella organizations prospered, there was conflict at the Board of Directors level, the group that oversaw the various constituent groups.

Sporadically chronicled during this time in the *Daily Orange* were a number of conflicts with the Student Government Association as well as some fluctuation in the structure of the University Union board. One such instance came in 1985 when SGA comptroller, Charles Wynder, froze half of University Union's funds. University Union at the time was still in charge of dispersing funds to all other organizations for programming. Wynder used the leverage he had over UU's funds to demand programming more representative of female and minority student groups.<sup>30</sup>

Wynder was successful and the University Union Board of Directors was restructured. Though University Union was not officially a branch of the student government at the time, its board was comprised of leaders of other student organizations and the President and Comptroller of the Student Government Association. The board was reassembled to include members of the Student Afro-American Society, the Association of International Students in America, the Greek Council and WJPZ-FM89.<sup>31</sup>

This model of the organization has alternated in and out of use. Today University Union is entirely autonomous and SA officials are not permitted to sit on the boards of both organizations. This structure persisted in the organization

---

<sup>29</sup> Ennis

<sup>30</sup> McAdam 5 Feb 1985

<sup>31</sup> McAdam 15 Feb 1985

and, from a programming and structure standpoint, the board maintained relative stability in form, function and scope of programming for the next decade. The Fall 1998 Annual Report of University Union lists the structure of the organization as identical to 1985. According to the report, the board consisted of the President of University Union, the University Union Comptroller, the SGA President, the SGA comptroller, the Graduate Student Organization President and Comptroller, a Cultural/Ethnic Representative, a student at large elected by the SGA and approved by the board, a graduate assistant and the prior year's UU President and Comptroller. This group met once a month to oversee programming and allocations.<sup>32</sup> This is an interesting model that does not imply total autonomy for UU as we have recently appreciated, but does have the benefit of being a more representative group for programming. However, as noted in McAdam's second piece, the various constituencies made the group dysfunctional, argumentative and ultimately defunct before its restructuring.<sup>33</sup>

In March of 2000 it was proposed that the Student Government Association and University Union should merge to improve programming on the campus. Cited as a reason for the merger was that student groups had two competing outlets to approach in order to secure funding for events. The conflict of interest of having an internal programming board in SGA was noted.<sup>34</sup> The merger ultimately failed and the relations between the two organizations soured. Instead of merging, University Union became more autonomous than ever.

---

<sup>32</sup> Dalamangas

<sup>33</sup> McAdam 15 Feb 1985

<sup>34</sup> Silver

**Familiar UU, Familiar Problems (2000-2008):**

Spring of 2000, University Union ratified a constitution that eliminated from its board of directors SGA, GSO and other RSO officials and became entirely autonomous. The board was reduced to the UU President, a Vice President of Public Relations and Promotions and the UU Comptroller, and the name University Union Enterprises was adopted.<sup>35</sup>

This constitution was short-lived, and in September of 2002, after operating for less than two years with the aforementioned document, was abandoned along with the word “Enterprises” in the organization name for a new governing document. This new constitution was adopted that added the Directors of the Programming Boards, Concerts, Cinemas, Speakers and Comedians as well as the WERW general manager and UUTV general manager to the board. It was stipulated in Articles VI and VII that UUTV and WERW respectively were independent “organization[s] under the umbrella of UU. UUTV [and WERW] maintain their own constitution and Board of Directors.”<sup>36</sup>

This is the constitution that our present organization constitution is modeled after. The only change to this constitution before my tenure on the University Union Board of Directors was when UUTV separated from the organization in 2003 to become an independent organization. It was felt that UUTV could better serve the campus community if they exited the University Union umbrella.<sup>37</sup> The University Union Constitution adopted in the fall of 2004

---

<sup>35</sup> University Union Enterprises Constitution 2000

<sup>36</sup> University Union Constitution 2002

<sup>37</sup> Johnson

formally eliminated UUTV from the organization and added a fifth programming board, the Smorgas Board. This programming arm was responsible for unique and off-beat events.<sup>38</sup>

After University Union became an entirely independent organization, relatively little changed regarding the size and caliber of University Union programming. The organization remained the primary source for large-scale entertainment at the university. As a result, beginning in 2005 and again in 2007, University Union officials petitioned the Student association to become the “Official Programming Board” of Syracuse University. The desired distinction would mean that University Union would be given an operating budget annually, would be guaranteed to roll over funds from year to year, and would have all major talent solicitation directed to the organization. The ultimate goal of this proposed status was to allow UU officials to plan events well in advance to combat rising costs of popular artists. Additionally the rolling over of funds would allow University Union to become less reliant on the student fee allocation over time by retaining ticket revenues from year to year. The March of 2007 proposal led by UU President Clarence Cross III was rejected and scheduled to be addressed in a school-wide referendum in the fall.<sup>39</sup> There is no record of this referendum having occurred, and this was the closest UU came to enacting this legislation.

Beyond the structural changes to the organization, it was around this time that a number of prominent UU events and now Syracuse traditions began. Block

---

<sup>38</sup> University Union Constitution 2004

<sup>39</sup> Dearing



Party in its current iteration had an initially rocky start. The event had occurred since the 1980s as a literal block party to celebrate the end of the year and was held in Walnut park. The earliest physical record of the event I have been able to find is an event poster from 1989 that states that Block Party '89 occurred on April 29<sup>th</sup> in the park and featured Tommy Conwell and the Young Rumlbers, with other acts.<sup>40</sup> After a riot and bonfire in 1998, the event was banned and was restarted in 2000 with a concert. The event was cancelled in two years after UU officials were unable to secure No Doubt and the Goo Goo Dolls for the spring concert.<sup>41</sup>

The tradition of Juice Jam began in 2003 as a concert in “the Standart Parking Lot near Lawrison Hall.” It would move to Skytop Field in 2007, where the event remains to this day.<sup>42</sup> The concert now features a student involvement fair where over one hundred campus organizations have tables to promote their events and recruit new members. The event is how all new students are welcome to the campus and marks the beginning of student activities events for the year.

The Speakers and Comedians Board also regularly brought talent to campus during this time at least once a semester. This core of programming has remained relatively static even until today. In September of 2008 I joined University Union and began to actively volunteer for the Concerts, Performing Arts (Combination of Speakers and Comedians), and Promotions boards. I

---

<sup>40</sup> Block Party 89 Lithograph (Copy)

<sup>41</sup> Curreri

<sup>42</sup> “The Daily Orange” 3 Sep 2007

became actively involved in two critical components of campus life by joining University Union: extracurricular involvement and programming.

## Chapter 2: Your Student Fee... College Programming Board

### Introduction

College Unions/Campus Centers started out literally as the “union” of 3 debating societies at Cambridge University in England, and has evolved into being known as one of the places on campus where all members of the campus community (students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and guests) can come together both formally and informally to get to know and better understand one another. Through your work, you will help us cross the bridges that we build together to form our community. We will pass the light on to you so that you can teach others to cross those same bridges.

The importance of college programming centers and the events that they provide is wonderfully expressed above in Bridget Yule’s, Director of Syracuse University’s Student Centers and Programming Service, welcome address to newly hired student center employees.<sup>43</sup> She touches on both the importance of student centers as well as the importance of the events that occur in them. The extracurricular experience at American universities has become increasingly important over the last few decades. The organizations and events beyond a school’s academic offerings have the tremendous power to deepen learning, enhance overall experience, unify the student body and improve the lives of students.

---

<sup>43</sup> Talbot 2

I have experienced this firsthand with my experience with the Syracuse University Better Together Chapter. University Union co-sponsored with this interfaith organization for our annual Juice Jam concert in the fall of 2011. The event corresponded with the tenth anniversary of September 11<sup>th</sup> and was turned into a benefit concert that raised \$40,000 for charity, collected over 3,000 canned goods and brought together over 7,000 students on the important anniversary. The concert itself prompted dialogue from the student body on the anniversary. In the end the event was transformative and effective and furthered University Union's goals of entertaining, educating and enhancing campus life.<sup>44</sup>

The three aforementioned goals are outlined in the University Union constitution but are likely tenants of UU's counterparts on campuses nationwide. All universities have programming boards of various forms, functions and scales. In an effort to improve the form, function, and scale of University Union, I have explored a number of programming boards at comparable universities. The two I have selected to research and outline in detail are Cornell University's Slope Day Programming Board and Vanderbilt University's Vanderbilt Programming Board. My exploration of these boards will inform the model I propose for the future operation of University Union.

### **Slope Day Programming Board – Cornell University**

Cornell University's Slope Day is an annual tradition at Cornell that marks the end of the academic year, much like Mayfest and Block Party do at Syracuse University. Over the past eight years, Slope day has transitioned from an

---

<sup>44</sup> "University Union Programming Board Constitution" 2011

informal day of student celebration to a school sanctioned event, in the same fashion that Mayfest in Walnut Park has evolved.<sup>45</sup> The organization that is responsible for putting on the event each year is the Slope Day Programming Board.

Like University Union, the Slope Day Programming Board (SDPB) is an entirely student-run organization that plans a concert event and secures talent for the engagement. The primary difference between this organization and University Union is that the SDPB is only responsible for the planning of Slope Day, whereas University Union programs over 50 events per semester.

Structurally the organizations are quite similar. Each is run by an “Executive Board,” University Union’s being its Board of Directors. There is a division of labor along the lines of specific tasks. The SDPB has individuals in charge of promotion and Slopefest (a component of slope day), as well as an Administrative Director, a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. An interesting point about the Slope Day Programming Board is that its general members elect the executive board. This would be worrisome to me as the election process when open to the campus population can often become about campaigns instead of actual qualifications.

In regards to their membership, both graduate and undergraduate students are permitted to participate. At Syracuse University only undergraduates who pay the student fee are allowed to participate and benefit from the organizations and events funded by their contributions. The two universities differ in that Cornell

---

<sup>45</sup> Weinrich

University allows for the SDPB to apply for and assess an eighteen-dollar fee from each student that attends Cornell University. With a total population comparable to Syracuse, the total amount collected by this fee amounts to well over \$200,000. The organization is guaranteed its funding each year, whereas University Union must apply each spring for its budget through the Student Association.

Slope Day has grown to be a significant celebration and each year boasts a fair number of guests in attendance. Attendance is free for Cornell students and had its most successful iteration to date in 2011 with 17,500 attendees.<sup>46</sup> The success of this free open-air concert is worth considering for its funding model and its involvement of all levels of students. The student programmers of the event have the luxury of being hyper-focused on their singular area of responsibility and expertise. University Union has so many moving parts and functions that this would be difficult to achieve but is certainly desired.

### **Vanderbilt Programming Board – Vanderbilt University**

The Vanderbilt Programming Board is the fine institution that provides “social, cultural, educational, recreational and multicultural activities at Vanderbilt University,” according to the group’s constitution.<sup>47</sup> The organization’s Music Group hosts the group’s largest events of the year, Commodore Quake and Rites of Spring.

Like Cornell’s programming board, the Vanderbilt Programming Board (VPB) is all student-run. In fact, their board is strikingly similar to University

---

<sup>46</sup> Cornelio

<sup>47</sup> "Constitution and Bylaws of the Vanderbilt Programming Board"

Union in its form and function. The board is overseen by a President and Vice President, and then there are “individual member organizations” led by chair people with specific tasks. The boards of the VPB include the Music Group, the Friday Late Night Programming Committee, Great Performances (Performing Arts Equivalent), Homecoming, Vanderbilt University Speakers Committee, CityVU, and Vandy Fanatics. This organization is a programming board through and through and offers all the amenities that most universities offer split between a number of clubs and organizations. Vandy Fanatics are the equivalent of Ottos Army, CityVU is a Connective Corridor initiative within the board, and the homecoming portion of the board takes the place of Syracuse University’s Traditions Commissions. The organization is robust and is responsible for what have become known as tremendous programs.

The Vanderbilt Programming Board also appears to be subject to the same sort of funding arrangement as University Union. Each of their member organizations applies for a budget with the student government. Although they are one organization, like UU, the arms function in relative autonomy. As in University Union, if funding is not achieved by one board, other boards can contribute funds to their programs and work together to petition the reallocation of other resources.<sup>48</sup>

The research of the Vanderbilt Programming board has helped me to think more broadly about the role University Union could play on campus as the official programming board. Outside of our large events there is room for

---

<sup>48</sup> "Constitution and Bylaws of the Vanderbilt Programming Board"

participation in spirit and traditional events. The Union, like VPB, also is a prominent organization for other groups to partner and cosponsor with for their expertise in programming. It is comforting that University Union seems to be on the same trajectory as another school with remarkable programming. I will encourage my successors to also think creatively about how University Union can be involved with campus life.



## **Chapter 3: Becoming SU's Official Programming Board**

### **Introduction**

My tenure in University Union has been transformative for both the organization and myself. I entered Syracuse University a young and somewhat shy freshman in the competitive Bandier Program for Music Industry. I had moderate experience in leadership positions but nothing of real significance. I joined University Union to gain experience in event production and to meet classmates. At the close of my first year I was elected to the University Union Board of Directors as a Co-Director of Promotions.

The Board of Directors is a collection of approximately a dozen student volunteers and makes up the core governance and planning body for University Union events. The Board is led by a president and vice president and, in addition to the three roles mentioned thus far, includes a Director of Public Relations and Directors of Concerts Cinemas and Performing Arts. Just before I joined the organization, UU Speakers Board and UU Comedy combined to form the Performing Arts Board. Also in 2009 the board included the General Manager of WERW, but in 2010 the two organizations split and the radio station became an independent RSO. The only boards remaining in University Union focused solely on the planning, promotion and execution of events.

While a director my sophomore year, I had the privilege of overseeing promotions for a record-setting Juice Jam that featured Girl Talk and sold in excess of 4,700 student tickets. Our Performing Arts performers that included John Legend and Andy Samberg, and they sold out 1,500 seats in Goldstein Auditorium. Three of our four Bandernarch Music series shows on the year sold out the 350 capacity Schine Underground, and Block Party 2010 Featuring Drake and N\*E\*R\*D filled the Carrier Dome to capacity at close to 10,000 attendees. University Union had effectively executed a flawless year of programming.

Additionally University Union worked collaboratively with the Student Association to reestablish the university tradition of Mayfest when the administration announced that the day was no longer scheduled to occur. SA and UU officials raised their concern directly to Chancellor Cantor and developed a plan to safely carry on with the tradition that joyously and raucously marks the end of the academic year. The two groups collaborated to establish an event in Walnut Park that occurs on the same day as the Mayfest concert and features free food, entertainment and alcohol for students of age. This collaboration would prove to be important and longstanding for this event.

Based on University Union's success and given the strong relationship with the Student Association, the proposition of University Union becoming the official programming board again was raised. Outgoing UU president Darren Goldberg began to discuss the possibility of enacting legislation for the semester to follow. It has become the habit of outgoing presidents of University Union to

forward an initiative onto their successor, as Darren Goldberg passed this initiative on to his successor, Andrew Beyda.

### **Building upon success - Becoming the Official Programming Board**

While I studied for the semester in Los Angeles, University Union remained prosperous in Syracuse. The year's Juice Jam concert sold out for the first time in the event's history and picked the organization right back up from where it had left off the previous year. Similarly the proposal to make University Union the Official Programming Board (OPB) remained open for discussion. After a series of meetings, a formal proposal was drafted from University Union officials to the SA cabinet outlining the changes that were sought and required legislation. The main provisions were the title of "Official Programming Board," an annual budget, guaranteed rollover of funds and an investment of capital in the newly established OPB.

After numerous discussions with both parties, it was decided the first two desired provisions would be put up to vote in a bill that would change SA's finance codes to declare University Union the Official Programming Board and to guarantee the group an annual budget. On November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010 the provision went up to vote in the assembly and passed. After nearly a decade, University Union had been granted a major platform from which to grow. The distinction of Official Programming Board was made possible by the track record of success University Union had established after nearly 50 years on campus.<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>49</sup> Figures regarding University Union concert attendance can be found in the appendix included in Document 2

I returned as Vice President of University Union for the spring semester and was elected President in March of 2011. Just as Darren had passed an initiative on to Andrew, Andrew charged me with securing the final two portions of the Official Programming Board status and establishing a long-term financial and structural model for the organization.

I worked through the summer and maintained close communication with SA administration to discuss the potential for a special allocation of a University Union seed fund to increase the scale and frequency of our long-term planning. By fortunate circumstance these funds became available when a budget oversight compounded over a number of years had accumulated a sum of 1.5 million dollars in an account that was specified for student programming. After developing projections for the responsible use of these funds and a series of conversations regarding responsible use of these funds, a bill was drafted and put to vote in the SA assembly on October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2011. The bill passed and awarded a total over just over one million dollars to University Union and secured annual rollover.<sup>50</sup> This commitment of the student government and body to University Union has positioned University Union for tremendous growth in its future events and endeavors.

---

<sup>50</sup> Barillari

## **Chapter 4: A Future Paradigm**

### **Introduction**

University Union finds itself at a critical crossroads. The organization is well positioned to take advantage of its recent success but requires modifications in structure and process to go about doing so. Based on the history, recent events and the study of corresponding organizations, I have assembled a thorough action plan and financial model for the organization in the years to come. The document was assembled in the form of an End of the Year Proposal and was a direct result of the work I have put towards this Capstone. I will give an overview of a number of its sections here, but the document itself can shed further light on the issues raised. The End of the Year Proposal is the critical culmination of my Capstone and my time in the organization. I am confident in its stipulations and have passed the material on to my able successor to attempt to legislate.

#### **Assessment of Present Position**

In assessing University Union's current position, I consider a number of components of the organization's health. These criteria include quality of leadership, general member involvement, public opinion, funding, SA relations and strength of our relationship with our Office of Student Activities advisor/consultant. Each component is of critical importance for the success of

the organization. I am happy to report that as I depart the organization I feel it is positioned more advantageously than it has been in the past.

*Leadership* – Great leaders do not occur by happenstance. The most adept leaders gain their skills and knowledge when given the opportunity to learn and serve. University Union is in the habit of crafting great leaders. Our internal board structure that I will touch on shortly has stabilized to a point where there is a relatively clear path and upward progression in University Union. By the time individuals become Board of Directors members they have extensive experience to pull from as a general member and executive board member. The same can be said of the individuals who come to fill the executive positions of President and Vice President. UU leaders grow as their responsibilities and positions grow. We are consistently praised for the professionalism and conduct of our staff.

Our general member involvement in the past year has been adequate (but barely at times). There is certainly room for improvement in this regard. Engagement and incentivizing volunteers is the most difficult part of managing these members. They are an important first line for the outreach and public perception of UU, and it is critical that they feel engaged, appreciated and positive about their involvement. Plans are in place to implement a University Union-wide reward points system as well provide members with apparel and complimentary tickets to shows for their hard work.

Public opinion has similarly waned, largely as a result of lack of general member engagement. Students have been vocal about their displeasure in show lineups, and UU's reputation has been tarnished slightly. However, it should be

noted that there is a high attrition rate in the audience of University Union, given that it serves a college campus where 25% of students leave each year. The organization is a public awareness campaign and one great show away from having full public support once more.

University Union, given the aforementioned seed-funding bill, is positioned tremendously well. The injection of capital to University Union's programming budget has given University Union a pool of resources that rivals any other college programming board in the country. Sound management of this allocation could result in further and substantial gains for the organization.

Similarly, our relations with Syracuse University's student government have been very strong lately. The interactions of the two organizations were once plagued by animosity and mistrust. Over the past three years, cooperative strides have been made, as outlined in the prior section. Continued cooperation could see the full extent of my proposal enacted.

The final critical area that I have chosen to assess is our relationship with our OSA consultants. We are presently consulted by both Kevin Taschereau and Matt Scherr. These advisors have provided us with critical support in furthering the missions and goals of the organization and are constant champions of our efforts. Past advisors have not brought the same level of vision and ambition that Kevin and Matt have to their roles. They encourage the Board of Directors to expand upon our current mission and to succeed in enacting internal and external change in relation to University Union. In my tenure alone we explored new settings and venues for various acts and added a large-scale concert to the winter

lineup. Without their support the event would not have occurred.

### **Setting Goals**

Outlined in my attached proposal and important to rearticulate are a set of goals that I have devised for University Union moving forward:

Further the missions and goals of University Union to entertain, educate, and enhance student life at Syracuse University by creating the best conditions for success.

Decrease University Union's reliance on the Student Fee and increase self-sufficiency in programming.

Provide long-term fiscal direction for both University Union and the Student Association Finance Board in regard to the organization's allocation.

Improve communication and cooperation of both organizations to benefit the student body of Syracuse University by improving programming and making available resources to other student organizations.

I constructed my proposal and fiscal vision for University Union by first assembling these goals. After reflecting on the problems faced and what I felt the organization needed to achieve, I began to chart a vision that I felt would best position University Union for growth and success. Many steps need to occur in conjunction with one another in order for the organization to act upon these goals. The required actions can be divided between necessary internal improvements and necessary external changes. The proposal tackles the external changes in depth but does not provide the most extensive information about the internal changes that have been and will be enacted to ensure future success.

### **Internal Adjustments**

The most pressing internal adjustments I identified as necessary were the addition of a University Union Comptroller and the addition of a board for



collaborations. These are both positions that I added to the organization's constitution as president.

The model that is included in my year-end proposal in this Capstone's appendix (Document 3) is a complex fiscal plan for the future of the organization. I felt it was particularly important to install an individual whose sole responsibility would be to monitor the health of this model and to act as the organization's fiscal agent.

The Collaborations and Brand Partnership Board was also formed under my guidance. This board is responsible for internal and external (Registered Student Organization and corporate/community) partnerships, sponsorship and collaboration. The director is in charge of coordinating events with collaborators as well as soliciting and arranging future partnerships. An organizational structure chart outlining these changes can be found in the appendices section of this Capstone (Document 1A-C). With the appropriate internal conditions and structure in place, University Union is well-positioned for success. The final component of this plan is to adjust the external conditions affecting University Union to be most advantageous for the organization.

### **External Adjustments**

The final component necessary for University Union to function properly and effectively as the Official Programming Board of Syracuse University is a guaranteed annual allocation. The model I have devised to accomplish this is outlined in my end of the year proposal to the incoming University Union President, the President of the Student Association, OSA staff and the SA

Comptroller. I have proposed University Union be allocated a percentage of the student fee automatically on an annual basis. The benefits of this arrangement are well outlined in the document that can be found in the appendix section of this Capstone write up (Document 3).

### **Future Paradigm**

The ultimate goal of this project and my time in University Union is and was to make Syracuse University a paradigm institution for college programming. With a renowned school for public communications, Newhouse, and a tremendous music industry program, The Bandier Program, it is only fitting that the extracurricular activities in this field are of a superior caliber. In truth, University Union is not far off from its peer institutions. Rites of Spring at Vanderbilt University and Cornell's Slope Day are some of the most popular college events in the country, and Syracuse University's offerings compete well with these in a number of ways, especially in the reduced cost to students and the ratio of event cost versus attendance. For example, Cornell has double the attendance at Slope Day for less than one third of the cost as discussed above.

The financial vision for the organization that I have attached is the product of hours of dedication and reflection. It is tempered by consideration for what is a responsible use of student funds and how present action can impact future conditions. To begin to assemble my model I envisioned where University Union was headed should no changes be made to our model of operation. I began by estimating our annual budget demands for entertainment in the foreseeable future. I gauged the cost of talent against the annual average inflation rate over the past 5

years of 2.5%. I also adjusted the total student allocation against inflation, as the student fee has consistently been rising, as has enrollment, so this fund will continue to grow over time and likely at a rate more aggressive than 2%. I then tied the estimated UU allocation to 30% of the total available student fee. This is because over the past five years UU has consistently been allocated approximately 30% of the fee. Based on the fact that the growth of the total fee will likely be greater than inflation, it means our annual allocation will likely be greater than what I have predicted in my projections. However, as in all financial projections, it is important to consider worst, best and most likely cases.

When doing so and as projected in Appendix Document 4, sheet 1, the result over ten years will be a growing sum in University Union's miscellaneous funds account that will total \$1.5 million dollars. However, this excess is not acceptable when it is student money that is stagnating. This large a sum is too great to regularly turn over with consistent success and it does not benefit any students when it is not utilized. In effect, University Union like a government, is servicing a community, and also like a government does at times, University Union is running at a surplus based on our current allocation and ticket sales. We are not spending as much as we take in every year. This projection was also based on conservative (worst case) ticket sales. Document 4, sheets 2 and 3 contain best and most likely case projections for the direction of UU finances. Sheet 2 projections are based on every large scale show being tremendously successful, while sheet 3 pulls slightly from each prediction to create what I feel is a more realistic projection.

It is on this final model that I built my financial vision for University Union. The whole of my proposed plan is outlined in Appendix Document 4 and should be considered as part of this Capstone write up. The basic principle of my model is that over time University Union will become less reliant on the Student Association allocation and will seek to maintain assets with appreciable liquidity of a total value of one million dollars. This model is built for sustainability. It is my goal that the University Union supplemental fund will not simply be a spend-down account that is depleted over time. It is important for the future of the organization that it is treated as a valuable investment and commodity to benefit Syracuse University students fifty years from now when University Union celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Syracuse University's University Union is an organization with a rich history and a promising future. It has been a life altering, defining and fulfilling experience to have been actively involved in its operation and success. I am proud to leave the organization better than I found it and feel my contributions to the Union and the model I have proposed to incoming University Union President, Lindsey Colegrove, and SA President, Dyan Lustig, will benefit generations of Syracuse University students.

### Works Cited

- Barillari, Rachael. "Student Association | University Union receives \$1 million at meeting." *Daily Orange* [Syracuse] 17 Oct 2011, n. pag. Print.
- Beasley, Carolyn. "UUTV revises programming, features remote productions." *Daily Orange* [Syracuse] 11 Feb 1980, n. pag. Print.
- Block Party '89 Lithograph (Copy). New York: Syracuse, 1989.
- "Building University Union: SU's Common Denominator." *Daily Orange* [Syracuse] 5 Aug 1965, n. pag. Print.
- "Buttons, Alum Game Raise Union Funds." *Daily Orange* [Syracuse] 3 May 1965, n. pag. Print.
- Coffey, Thomas. "SU Cable TV System called 'limited'." *Daily Orange* [Syracuse] 11 Nov 1977, n. pag. Print.
- Coffey, Thomas, and Salmon Jacqui. "Editors question Egger on stadium, student union." *Daily Orange* [Syracuse] 6 Oct 1978, 1. Print.
- Collier, Mike. "Piano Man to play in Syracuse Tonight." *Daily Orange* [Syracuse] 9 Dec 1977, n. pag. Print.
- Cornelio, Noelle. Slope Day Programming Board. Application for Undergraduate Students Activities Fee Funding Allocation 2012-2014. Ithaca, NY: , 2012. Print.
- Cucceri, Rebecca. "UU Concert Board will not hold Block Party." *Daily Orange* [Syracuse] 15 Apr 2002, n. pag. Print.
- Dalamangas, Emily. University Union. Board of Directors. Annual Report: Fall 1998. 1998. Print.
- "Edit | Juice Jam finds home on South Campus ." *Daily Orange* [Syracuse] 3 Sep 2007, n. pag. Print.
- Ennis, Dan. "UUTV wins national recognition." *Daily Orange* [Syracuse] 15 Jan 1999, n. pag. Print.
- Eppolito, Marsha. "UU Seeks increase in stipends." *Daily Orange* [Syracuse] 19 Oct 1977, n. pag. Print.
- Fisch, Irwin. "'Mel No! We Won't Go!'" *Daily Orange* [Syracuse] 1976, n. pag. Print.
- "Forty-One Years of Utter Frustration." *Daily Orange* [Syracuse] 22 Sep 1967, n. pag. Print.
- "FUBS for UU." *Daily Orange* [Syracuse] 3 Mar 1966, 1. Print.
- Galpin, William Freeman, John Robert Greene, Richard Wilson, and Oscar Theodore Barck. *Syracuse University: The Eggers Years*. 5. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1998. 251-255. Print.
- Havens, Jean. "New UU Officers Plan Changes; Create Three Separate Boards." *Daily Orange* [Syracuse] 3 Apr 1968, n. pag. Print.
- Hersler, Bob. "National student strike begins today; 4000 here protest war, military, treatment of Panthers." *Daily Orange* [Syracuse] 5 May 1970, n. pag. Print.
- Johnson, Terence. "UUTV will change name after break with University Unio." *Daily Orange* [Syracuse] 23 Sep 2004, n. pag. Print.

- Marks, Marilyn. "SU Balances this year's budget; records \$77,501 surplus funds." Daily Orange [Syracuse] 15 Sep 1978, n. pag. Print.
- Mauer, Liz. "Concert off the Quad." Daily Orange [Syracuse] 16 Sep 1981, n. pag. Print.
- McAdam, Todd. "Frozen UU program funds may be entirely restored." Daily Orange [Syracuse] 15 Feb 1985, n. pag. Print.
- McAdam, Todd. "Wynder freezes half of UU funds." Daily Orange [Syracuse] 5 Feb 1985, n. pag. Print.
- "Schine Center Among Recently Dedicated Buildings." Syracuse University Magazine. Nov 1985: 1-2. Print.
- Schneider, Stacy. "UU to Administer all campus-wide programs." Daily Orange [Syracuse] 24 Sep 1979, n. pag. Print.
- Silver, Stephanie. "SGA merger looms with University Union." Daily Orange [Syracuse] 28 Mar 2000, n. pag. Print.
- Talbot, Bridget, comp. Syracuse University Student Centers and Programming Services: General Manual 2008-2009. Syracuse, NY: 2008. 1-53. Print.
- "The Busiest Place on Campus." Syracuse University Magazine. Apr 1986: 16-21. Print.
- The Onondagan. 82. Syracuse, NY: 1965. 121. Print.
- "The Sitcom Club" Syracuse University Magazine: Vol. 7: Iss. 3, Article 9. Available at: <http://surface.syr.edu/sumagazine/vol7/iss3/9>
- University Union. Board of Directors. University Union Enterprises Con. Syracuse, NY. 2000. Print.
- University Union. Board of Directors. University Union Constitution Syracuse, NY. 2002. Print.
- University Union. Board of Directors. University Union Constitution Syracuse, NY. 2004. Print.
- University Union. University Union Programming Board Constitution. Syracuse, NY. 2011. Print.
- "UU Plans 3 Festivities." Daily Orange [Syracuse] 5 May 1967, n. pag. Print.
- "UU to Distribute Free Newsletter." Daily Orange [Syracuse] 26 Feb 1966, 7. Print.
- "UUTV's History plagued with troubles." Daily Orange [Syracuse] 29 Nov 1978, n. pag. Print.
- Vanderbilt Programming Board. Constitution and Bylaws of the Vanderbilt Programming Board. Nashville, TN. 2012. Print.
- Weinrich, John, ed. "History." Slope Day. Slope Day Programming Board, 2012. Web. 5 April 2012. <<http://slopeday.cornell.edu/history.php>>.
- "What About a University Union?." Daily Orange [Syracuse] Nov 1977, n. pag. Print.

## Appendices

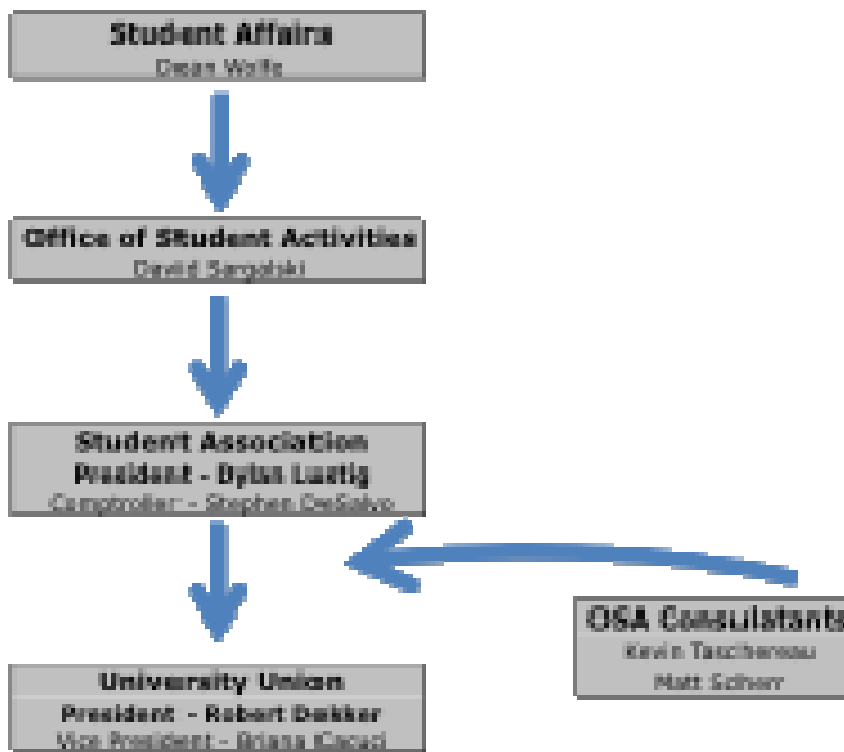
Document 1: Organization Charts

Document 2: Concert Attendance by Event

Document 3: My University Year End proposal, which was the critical portion and result of this Capstone project

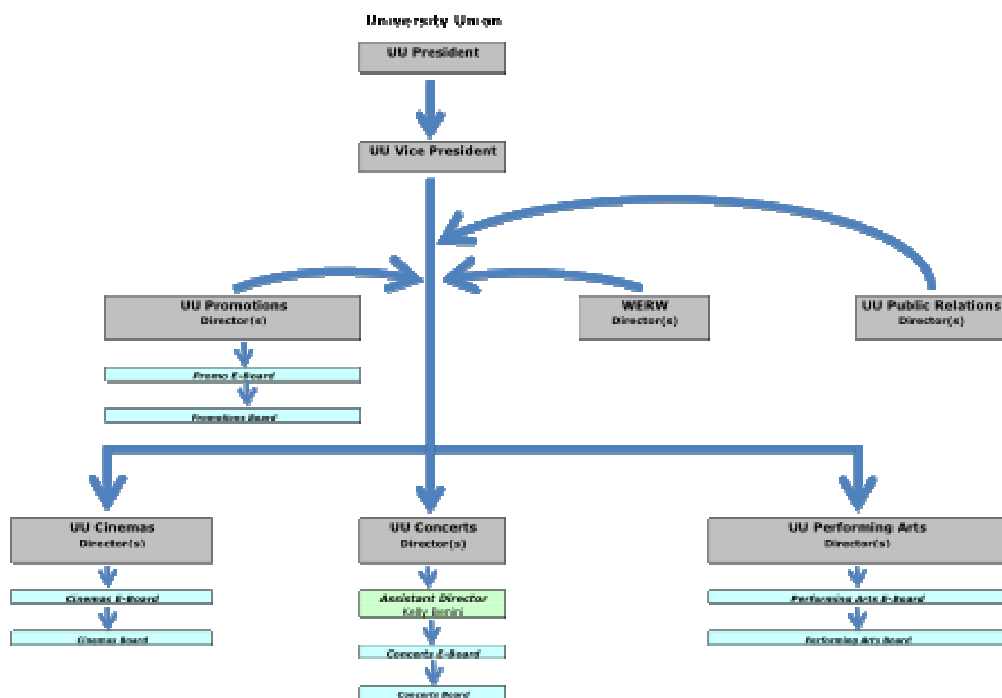
Document 4: This collection of Microsoft Excel documents are my financial projections for University Union. Sheet one is the projection of the current financial model with moderately successful shows – it is basically the worst-case scenario projection. The next projection is the best-case scenario projection, where University Union large-scale events are excessively successful. The third set of projections is the most likely case scenario where there is a mix of successful and unsuccessful shows. Sheet 4 is my proposed financial model with a decreasing reliance on the SA student fee. The next sheet is information based on University Union's historic allocation. Sheet 6 is a sample of University Union's annual budget. This collection has also been submitted digitally with my Capstone.

Document 1A: External Structure – University Union

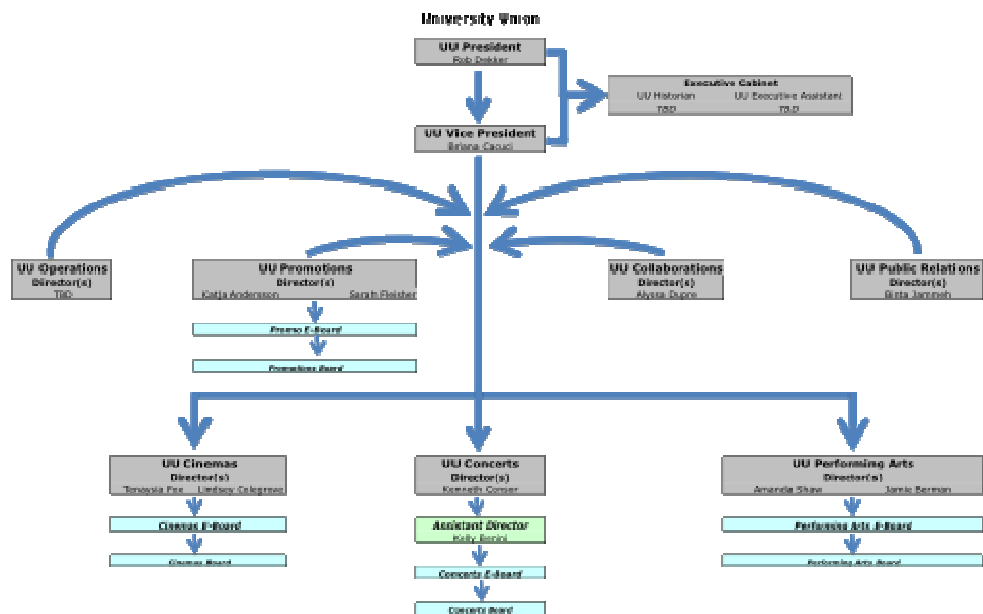




Document 1B: Internal Structure – University Union Circa 2008



Document 1C: Internal Structure – Present Day University Union



## Document 2: Concert Attendance by Event

Year	Event	Attendance
2011	Juice Jam Featuring B.o.B, Avicii and Chiddy Bang	7,121
2011	Block Party Featuring Kid Cudi, Nas and Damian Marley	14,463
2010	Juice Jam Featuring Lupe Fiasco, Passion Pit, Super Smash Bros	5,000
2010	Block Party Featuring Drake, N*E*R*D, K-OS, Francis and the Lights	9,457
2009	Juice Jam Featuring Girl Talk, Jack's Mannequin, The Cool Kids	4,700+
2009	Block Party Featuring Ben Folds and Guster	3,497
2008	Block Party Featuring Fergie and Sean Kingston	3,525
2007	Block Party Featuring Ciara and Lupe Fiasco	2,214
2006	Block Party Featuring Kanye West	7,817
2005	Block Party Featuring Snoop Dog	4,153
2004	Juice Jam Featuring Method Man	3,000

This information was gathered via personal correspondence with Carrier Dome Manager, Peter Sala, and from various *Daily Orange* reports.



# End of Year Proposal

May 11, 2011

Prepared for:

Dylan Lustig - President, Student Association 2012

Lindsey Colegrove – President, University Union 2012-2013

Prepared by:

Robert Dekker - President, University Union 2011-2012



## Table of Contents

Objective .....	4
Goals .....	4
Given .....	4
Proposal .....	5
Further Information .....	6
Appendices .....	A-D

### **Objective:**

The objective of this report is to make recommendations that will enable University Union to effectively program large-scale entertainment events on a more frequent basis in future years while increasing the caliber of events and decreasing reliance on the Student Fee.

### **Goals:**

Further the missions and goals of University Union to entertain, educate, and enhance student life at Syracuse University by creating the best conditions for success.

Decrease University Union's reliance on the Student Fee and increase self-sufficiency in programming.

Provide long-term fiscal direction for both University Union and the Student Association Finance Board in regards to the organization's allocation.

Improve communication and cooperation of both organizations to benefit the student body of Syracuse University by improving programming and making available resources to other student organizations.

### **Given:**

Bill 54.209 Declared University Union Syracuse University's Official Programming Board

University Union is presently experiencing an annual net gain when event expenses, ticket revenue and SA allocation are balanced

University Union's budget requests and allocations over the past four years have normalized and are now static from year to year

There is a lack in clarity in the distinction of Official Programming Board; there have been no tangible changes to the operation of University Union, its relation to the Student Association and its position and prominence at Syracuse University

Guaranteed annual funding will allow University Union to plan events over a year in advance if necessary

Per event funding greatly inhibits the possibility of creative and collaborative programming as directors are bound to specific and one-dimensional events based on their allocation

Artist tour routing does not constrain itself to the SA budget allocation

schedule; University Union has missed opportunities for artists because funding was not yet secured for future events and an offer could not be sent

University Union is consistently funded approximately 30% of the total student fee annually

University Union will be decreasing its reliance on the student fee over the next 10 years and will be best served with a steady sun-setting of our allocation instead of a year to year evaluation by the finance board

### I Propose:

*Given the aforementioned points, principally the fact that University Union is Syracuse University's Official Programming Board, I propose that University Union and its constituent boards are allocated an annual operating budget that is based on a percentage of the total student fee.*

The allocation's percentage will be at the discretion of Student Association Comptroller, and the release of the funds will have to be subsequently approved by the finance board and the general assembly.

University Union will submit a full report annually that includes detailed budgets for each of event in the upcoming year for consideration of the SA comptroller and Finance Board during the regular budget season.

Once allocated, the funds will be used at the discretion of the UU President, Comptroller and pertinent Programming Directors. However, all expenses incurred by University Union programming will be submitted to the SA comptroller for consideration.

University Union will be required to spend the whole of the annual allocation; none of these funds can be rolled over to the next academic year. In the event that excess allocation remains after the year's commencement, the funds will be returned to the Student Association to be reallocated for the next semester.

The initial percentage allocated should be gauged against the percentage of the allocation to which University Union has been awarded in the recent past – approximately 30%.

Over the next 5-10 years the allocation percentage can be reduced annually to free student activity fee funds for other organizations, events and publications. It is imperative this process happens gradually to ensure University Union officials can accurately plan for the year to come.



### Further Information:

Founded in 1962 as a subcommittee of the Student Government (later the Student Government Association, ultimately the Student Association), University Union has been an integral part of campus life for 50 years. Over these 50 years there have been numerous iterations and models by which the Student Association and University Union have operated. The changes proposed are not without precedent. In 1980 University Union was placed in charge of the allocation of all programming funds. All programming RSOs approached University Union for programming approval, due to the organization's successful track record and prominence. Furthermore, other universities operate with separate co-curricular fee that is directly contributed to a finance board. With this proposal, University Union and the Student Association benefit from both models. University Union is held accountable by the student government and will demonstrate unprecedented transparency in its operation with the SA comptroller. Conversely, University Union will be able to program events at the earliest possible availability of artists. The organization will be able to act with tremendous flexibility and a collaborative mindset in programming for Syracuse University.

The ultimate goals of this proposal are consistency, predictability, stability, transparency, and partnership in the budgeting process of University Union. Tertiary goals of these modifications will be increased self-sufficiency and profitability of University Union, allowing for an ultimate decrease in reliance on an annual student fee allocation. The need for an injection of capital from the student fee will never be eliminated, but the funds saved will be available for the use of other RSOs.

Based on the projections I assembled, University Union is operating with a surplus each academic year when program costs, student fee allocation and ticket revenues are balanced. University Union within 10 years will have amassed approximately \$1.5 million in its supplemental fund. This projection is based on the concert ticket revenues that approximately recoup the cost of talent. This is a realistic goal and was achieved for Rock the Dome 2012, a moderately successful show. If shows perform consistently well, as they have in the past (Block Party 2010, Block Party 2011), the total amount accrued could be in excess of the provided figure. Ultimately part of the answer is more programming and bigger programming. There are plans underway to add a fourth concert to the University Union concert lineup during the 2013-2014 academic year. However, there is a foreseeable threshold of sustainability in the Syracuse market for large-scale events, so a spend-down of this fund would not be reasonable or responsible.

I have included my proposed plan to responsibly normalize University Union's supplemental fund based on a secure percentage-based operating fee over the next ten years that sunsets University Union's percent allocation by 1% over seven years from 30% of the allocation to 23% of the allocation. Based on my projections, at 23% of the allocation, ticket revenues and event expenses will result in a non-negative/non-positive net change in the organization's year-end supplemental account.

The projected goal for the year-end supplemental account balance is an even one million dollars after the sun-setting of the allocation is complete. This sum will be a healthy amount that will see an approximate 50% turnover during the course of the school year. At any time at least \$500,000 will remain in the account while the remaining half is used in conjunction with allocation funds to program events. The half million dollars that remains is an important sum because it is the approximate honorarium and facility fee required to put on a major show (Jon Stewart, Nicki Minaj, Lil Wayne) should an opportunity immediately present itself on short notice.

Ultimately a 7% decrease in University Union's reliance on the student fee will amount to over \$200,000 being made available to other student organizations. This decrease of University Union's dependence on the fee could increase the quality of other RSOs programming or ultimately serve to reduce the student fee. The return of \$200,000 to the available student fee would mean that the average cost per head of all student events could increase over 30% to \$50 based on the availability of funds. This would mean that a higher caliber of event could be programmed in the space we have available; a speaker or comedian with a \$75,000 honorarium in Goldstein Auditorium would be viable. Alternatively, this sum could be set aside annually to fund the renovation of current student centers or construction of a new facility.

It is in the best interest of the student body to change the means by which University Union is funded. Ultimately acting in tandem with the Student Association is the only way this can be achieved. The model assembled relies on relative stability. Ultimately University Union can become less reliant on the student fee but it must occur in an orchestrated fashion over time, not in a piecemeal fashion at the discretion of each incoming finance board and University Union President. The alternative to the proposed plan will be to begin to partially fund all events that UU applies for, with the caveat that UU contributes to the events with its miscellaneous funds, effectively sunsetting the allocation over time on a per-event basis. This is essentially what my model does but in a far less discretionary and convoluted way.

By being guaranteed annual funding, University Union will be in form and function the Official Programming Board of Syracuse University. The students will benefit from improved entertainment based on the organization's liberty to plan events well in advance. Additionally, the campus population will benefit from the student funds freed by this arrangement. I ask and earnestly advise these changes be considered as it will improve the operations of UU and further improve the relationship the organization has enjoyed with the Student Association. We do not seek special conditions to increase our allocation or control a larger portion of the fee. University Union is asking for more recognition and trust as the Official Programming Board to receive less (\$200 a year per year in 10 years).

For reference I have included a number of charts and figures:

A: The information compiled by Stephen DeSalvo regarding University Union's allocations since 2005 as gauged against the student fee. The allocation has been consistently in the vicinity of 30% for the past three recorded years.

B: This chart is University Union's annual budget request as it has appeared relatively unchanged for the past three years. The top portion that includes Mayfest, weekly movie screenings, the four annual Bandersnatch Music Series Concerts and two Performing Arts shows constitute University Union's static core programming. These are events that happen annually and are fully funded with limited exception each year. They, however, do not provide opportunity for profit, despite their high interest from the student body. The bottom portion is large scale University Union concerts that are subject to a number of variable costs. In the future Student Association allocation should be used to fund core programming and then used to program concerts utilizing University Union miscellaneous funds to supplement the talent portion of these events.

C: This is my projection based on the current state of University Union's financial model. I predict over \$1.5 million dollars to be amassed in less than 10 years.

D: This is my proposed model as described above

Thank you for your time and consideration of my end of the year proposal.

I look forward to hearing your feedback and wish you the best of luck.  
Take care and stay in touch.

Regards,  
Rob Dekker  
Rjdekker@syr.edu

## Student Activity Data

Year	Enrolled Students	Per Person cost (\$)	Total Amount (\$)	University Union Allocation	% of Total Fee	% of SA Budget
2002-03	22645	\$114.00	\$1,441,530.00			
2003-04	22447	\$139.00	\$1,730,133.00			
2004-05	22268	\$141.50	\$1,772,726.00			
2005-06	21374	\$150.00	\$1,706,100.00			
2006-07	21480	\$156.00	\$1,790,880.00	\$587,153.71	32.79%	34.07%
2007-08	21731	\$162.00	\$1,900,422.00	\$625,209.48	32.90%	32.85%
2008-09	22286	\$168.00	\$2,054,048.00	\$255,788.95	22.39%	24.14%
2009-10	22304	\$175.00	\$2,153,200.00	\$556,871.47	25.86%	29.32%
2010-11	22675	\$182.00	\$2,306,850.00			
2011-12	23216	\$189.00	\$2,478,924.00	\$677,975.94	27.35%	28.68%
2012-13				\$667,928.41		27.27%

**CORE PROGRAMMING**

<b>Bandersnatch</b>		<b>\$60,653.00</b>
	<i>Production/Misc</i>	\$15,653.00
	<i>Talent</i>	\$45,000.00
<b>Mayfest</b>		<b>\$25,044.00</b>
	<i>Production/Misc</i>	\$5,044.00
	<i>Talent</i>	\$20,000.00
<b>Cinemas</b>		<b>\$32,000.00</b>
<b>PA Show 1</b>		<b>\$54,351.20</b>
	<i>Production/Misc</i>	\$4,351.20
	<i>Talent</i>	\$50,000.00
<b>PA Show 2</b>		<b>\$54,351.20</b>
	<i>Production/Misc</i>	\$4,351.20
	<i>Talent</i>	\$50,000.00
	<b>Core Total</b>	<b>\$226,399.40</b>

**LARGE SCALE PROGRAMMING****Juice Jam**

<i>Stage</i>	\$45,380.64
<i>Talent</i>	\$150,000.00

**Rock The Dome**

<i>Stage</i>	\$90,000.00
<i>Talent</i>	\$150,000.00

**Block Party**

<i>Stage</i>	\$95,000.00
<i>Talent</i>	\$200,000.00

**Concert #4** \*\*\*To be added for 2013-2014 School Year\*\*\*

<i>Stage</i>	\$90,000.00
<i>Talent</i>	\$120,000.00

<b>Concerts Total</b>	<b>\$940,380.64</b>
-----------------------	---------------------

<b>Programming Total</b>	<b>\$1,166,780.04</b>
--------------------------	-----------------------



### **Summary of Capstone Project**

This Capstone, entitled “University Union: Becoming Syracuse University’s Official Programming Board and a College Programming Paradigm,” is as broad and diverse in its disciplines as its author, Robert Dekker and his course of study, The Bandier Program for Music and the Allied Entertainment industries. The project focuses on University Union, Syracuse University’s now official programming board. The author chaired the board his senior year, serving in the role of President, and has been a part of its board of directors for the two prior years.

The Capstone project in its culmination is a fiscal roadmap for future leaders of University Union as well as leaders of Syracuse University’s student governing body, the Student Association. This group controls the funding of University Union and its operations deeply affect those of University Union. However, in order to most adeptly advise on the future course of action for University Union, as part of this Capstone Robert researched the history of this the organization. While doing so he paid specific attention to the board’s interactions with the student government. In addition to the organization’s history, he explored the model of other institution’s programming boards to gain valuable insights and ideas to incorporate into the Syracuse University counterpart. In the third chapter the author weaves himself into the narrative of the organization as he brings to life the last four transformative years in his and the organization’s life. In the final section the author evaluates the present condition of University Union and discusses how to best position the organization



for the future. He also breaks down the nuances of the financial model he constructed.

In the first chapter of the Capstone the author pulls together a number of pieces to construct the first-ever cohesive narrative of the history of University Union. The fifty-year-old organization over its history has taken on many forms and functions. University Union initially began as an arm of the student government with the goal of constructing a student center on campus. This remained a prominent goal of the organization as it grew into a conventional programming board. University Union was successful in petitioning for the creation of a student center in 1985. Throughout its history University Union has hosted thousands of events for the Syracuse community and has been essential to student life. In the past it has been an umbrella organization for a radio station, TV station, print publications and online blogs. It has always been a prominent organization on campus and remains one to this day.

In the following section the author studies the model of Cornell University and Vanderbilt University's programming boards. He evaluates their model and determines useful components of their models to include into University Union's model, since Cornell has a very beneficial financing model. They receive their budget automatically each year as a fee that is assessed to all students, graduate and undergraduate. This keeps funding consistent from year to year and they are not required to apply for funding, as University Union is each year. Also, Vanderbilt's programming board provided a tremendous number of services to students that are served through other organizations at Syracuse. For example, the

Vanderbilt version of Otto's Army is part of their programming board.

Vanderbilt is a model institution in the capacity that programming boards have for outreach.

The author then outlines his time spent in University Union over the past four years. A history of tremendously successful programs allowed the organization to be named Syracuse University's Official Programming Board. This distinction means that University Union is the conduit through which all major entertainment brought to campus must pass. Additionally the organization was granted increased access to their funds through guaranteed year-to-year roll over and is now funded on a yearly basis. The author worked to secure the organization a one million dollar seed fund that will benefit the organization and its constituents, the student body of SU, for years to come.

The last section assesses the current strengths and weaknesses of the organization and identifies room for growth. Particularly, the author feels University Union could improve in general member involvement, public relations and outreach. From a structural and financial standpoint the organization is well positioned. In the next section of this chapter the author outlines goals that he feels University Union should prioritize moving forward, including improving and increasing events on campus and becoming more financially self sufficient as an organization. The author then suggests a number of specific places that could be improved and makes note of changes to internal structure that have already occurred.

The capstone culminates with an End of Year Proposal and the explanation of the suggested financial model for the organization. The author proposes that University Union should be given a guaranteed operating budget based on a percentage of the total student fee. The other component of this model is a sun-setting of University Union's allocation over the next ten years to provide more resources to other registered student organizations. The model is the product of a number of complex projections that are based on University Union's annual programming budgets for the next 8+ years.

The author hopes that this Capstone and the proposal that is its culmination are studied deeply by future University Union and Student Association leaders and considered for its benefits to both organizations and by extension the student body.