

# OPINION PAGES

## Our VIEW

### The great debate

Candidates' pros, cons eliminate consensus

In today's ASUN election, you'll find six outstanding executive candidates on the ballot. The main difference between them is how they approach campus leadership. Voice runs on idealism and a deep concern for student opinion and inclusiveness. Focus thrives on pragmatism, attention to detail and questioning the status quo.

Because of this, four of us pick Focus, two pick Voice, one asserts that no party represents him, and no one's changing sides anytime soon. Usually, we write only the board's majority opinion, but in the spirit of elections, we thought we'd be more democratic.

**Focus:** Those of us who favor Focus appreciate the fact that Paul Schreier, the first engineering major to run for ASUN president, was unafraid to irritate every student fee user — including us — in order to evaluate what expenses were in students' best interest. On every committee he has served on, he's challenged the status quo and raked through budgets and proposals with a fine-tooth comb. He's demonstrated his willingness to be one hell of an unpopular person at times, as a good leader must. We want more students sitting on university boards, such as the board that approves special fees for courses, and his mission is utter university accountability to students. John England and Trisha Meuret share that important goal.

England wants to assess operations in the Athletic Department, which he claims has operated without student input for too long. Athletics might scoff, but it's a genuine action plan that strikes at the heart of a serious student concern.

*Those opposed think Focus has fewer action elements on its platform than Voice, that leading ASUN is about more than money-watching and detail, and that ASUN candidates should have demonstrated a commitment to diversity.*

**Voice:** Those of us who favor Voice appreciate the heartfelt commitment of Andy Schuerman, Rachelle Winkle and Vernon Miller to inclusive leadership with integrity. Each leads through consensus, not conflict, and when they speak, their idealism can move a room to jump on their bandwagon. They are very receptive to new ideas, and their platform's action elements involve on support for all students, especially students of color, to whom they have demonstrated total commitment. They have a large platform, including helping to develop a safe ride home program, starting a summer retreat for incoming freshmen and improving Culture Center facilities.

*Those opposed to Voice think a demonstrated ability to question and dispute sometimes popular elements of administrators' agendas is more essential for ASUN officers than the ability to provoke extensive discussion and arrive at feel-good consensus.*

See you at the voting booths.

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## Lupo's VIEW



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## DN LETTERS

### Represent this!

Both ASUN party platforms boast that they want to help underrepresented groups on campus. I find this extremely ironic when in fact both parties neglected the residence halls so blatantly last evening by only campaigning at the greek houses. Where was my candy bar?

Residence hall students are extremely underrepresented in ASUN government, or should I say greek government. If you want me to care about the issues, you better convince me I should care. If you want my vote, convince me before election day. If student turnout is less than 10 percent, why wouldn't you target the underrepresented groups, including minorities, women and residence hall students?

No wonder students don't vote if you make campaign promises of what you'll do in office, and can't even keep them before the election. *Newsflash:* you missed a dorm of more than 400 women last night when you were wasting your time at overrepresented fraternities and sororities.

**Rebecca Kaiser**  
sophomore  
English and political science

### Quit representing sides

It has been very interesting trying to decide which ASUN party to side with this year. Not only are each set of candidates qualified to lead us into the new millennium, I consider them all friends. This is the dilemma I am faced with today.

One thing that has disappointed me greatly is the partisanship I have witnessed. Many people are either committed to Voice or Focus, and have not actually stopped to think about the people running for each position nor the issues that face us as a campus. Many have let party propaganda influence their judgment in choosing who the best people are for these positions. Yes, each party's election preparation is supposed to be a fun experience for all involved — a chance to make friends and to work for a common cause. However, associating with a party is not a justification to belittle the personal character or integrity of an opposing candidate or party, nor to judge individuals based on the perceptions of others. We must remember what our true goal should be: to build a better university. We can only achieve this if we elect the most qualified individuals.

So, it is with this Voice that I

hope to Focus everyone's attention on what is really important in this election: the issues and the resolve of the candidates, not the propaganda or misperceptions inherent in party politics. Best of luck to all the candidates!

**Brett Stohs**  
sophomore  
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### A forum less effective

I just attended the forum tonight (Monday) on the incident involving Duc Tran and members of the Phi Gamma Delta last Wednesday. For those of you who don't know about the incident, in a brief summary, Duc Tran was in front of the Union last Wednesday and was repeatedly hit with snowballs coming from the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity balcony. When Tran retreated into the Union, returned with friends to discuss the matter with Delta members, he and his friends were again pelted with snowballs. There is more to the story, so if you have questions, contact the Vietnamese Student Association. My concern is with the forum.

First of all, I was disgusted by this incident and disgusted by the fraternity president's attitude. He was defensive, arrogant and altogether seemed as though he couldn't care less about the forum. Yes, he did write a list of sanctions for the five members including: 1) a face-to-face apology to Duc Tran, 2) an apology letter to the VSA and ASA, 3) required attendance for the five

members to three cultural events, and 4) required attendance at a diversity retreat in the future. I think these sanctions are *ideally* very noble. But practically? They won't happen. Reasons?

One — The president's attitude. Besides the fact that he described attendance at three cultural events and a diversity retreat as "punishment," he would not allow his members to try to explain their actions or to answer questions. He stuck to his "statement" and wouldn't respond more than that.

Two — The fraternity is *requiring* the five members to go. They're not *supporting* all of the members going, or trying to *enhance* their own culture, they're *requiring*. Of course the attitude of the members will be negative when they attend these events and they will probably finish their "punishment" with the same arrogant attitudes they had going into the events. Phi Gamma Delta have not tried encouraging their members to attend cultural events in the past (to my knowledge) and they are not encouraging them to do so now. They are "punishing" them by requiring them to attend cultural events. So strange that something so positive could be called a "punishment."

Three — Frat guys stick together. One brother won't turn another in if he doesn't attend the mandatory event of retreat. It's all nice in writing, but in reality, it won't work. Nice thought, boys.

The forum tonight was not productive. It ended with people arguing, interrupting each other, fighting, and refusing to answer questions. No thanks to the "mediator." No one was happy with the result; sadly enough, this forum could have been extremely productive had it been mediated properly. Right now, every person who attended is probably angry with someone. I encourage those who attended to try to put away the bitterness and work on *making* this campus what it should be — friendly and *safe* to everyone. Also, let's work on making safe, cooperative forums where people can speak their mind, confident that no one will interrupt them, rebuke them, or attack them.

Also, to everyone out there who thinks its fun to pick on "the little guy," whomever that may be, don't make the same mistake these guys did. *Think before you act.*

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