

May 4, 2016

Stephonn Alcorn
Gabby Naylor
Student Senate Executive Committee
Student Senate
1301 Jayhawk Blvd, Room 410
Lawrence, KS 66045-7548

Dear Stephonn and Gabby:

This letter pertains to the 2016 student fee document (2016-141) passed by Student Senate, which proposes a \$2-per-semester fee to create an additional, separate student government — the multicultural student government. I am writing to inform you that I cannot recommend that fee for Kansas Board of Regents' approval because the separate multicultural government for which the fee was created does not exist, nor will the separate government be developed for 2016-2017, the year for which the fee is intended.

As you know, our present student government is represented in the University Senate. Current University Code does not allow the existence of multiple independent groups representing a constituent group (students, faculty or staff) within University Senate. In a letter dated April 15, 2016, the president of the University Senate, Professor Michael Williams, wrote to members of the proposed multicultural student government explaining that University Code does not allow multiple student governments to be represented in the University Senate; and further, that revisions to allow multiple independent governments of students, faculty, or staff would require at least a year of deliberation. Thus, there has been no University Governance recognition of a separate multicultural student government as a part of University Governance, and as a result there is no official internal recognition of a separate, parallel multicultural student government as part of University Governance.

One of the most important ways in which our students are represented externally is at the Kansas Board of Regents, the governing body for higher education in Kansas. Kansas Statute 74-3229 explicitly limits representation from each university to KBOR to one student elected by the entire student body, and that one student must be certified by the chancellor or president of the university. Thus, an independent student government cannot be an official representative to KBOR, nor can it be officially recognized as representing the student body of the University of Kansas.

Finally, I believe that the independent student government proposed in the document sent to University Senate is not an optimal way to achieve the goals we have for diversity and inclusion

at the university and, indeed, may lead to greater divisiveness. I realize that this proposal grew out of concern about the accessibility and openness of student government to all of our students. Personally, and as chancellor, I am committed to the further development of a university environment — including governance — in which all students, faculty, and staff are included and respected, and valued both as individuals and as members of their identity groups. I look forward to working with you toward that goal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bernadette Gray-Little". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Bernadette Gray-Little
Chancellor