



Maryland Student Legislature, Inc.

***ORGANIZATION AND PROGRAMMATIC
FIVE-YEAR PLAN***

VOLUME III

2005-2010

The creation of the third Maryland Student Legislature Organizational and Programmatic Five-Year Plan was initiated in the spring of 2005 by MSL, Inc. Chairman of the Board Douglas J. Testerman and Alumni Association President Brian Griffiths. These policy concepts and positions are based on the discussions, meetings, and work-sessions of the MSL, Inc. Board of Directors during the summer and fall of 2005.

This third Five Year Plan is a rededication to the process initiated by the original Maryland Student Legislature Five-Year Plan developed by William Troy Simmons and Charles Henry Gavins, Jr. dated September 1987, and the second Five-Year plan developed by Ronald Abramson, William Troy Simmons and Bartolomeo Lancellotti dated 1992. While this policy paper outlines the concepts, goals and mechanisms we believe the Maryland Student Legislature should develop as it evolves, each specific must not always be taken literally. Rather, our policy paper should be viewed as an open-ended blueprint for future directions for the future of our organization.

MARYLAND STUDENT LEGISLATURE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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OVERVIEW

Since the publication of the second Five-Year Plan, the Maryland Student Legislature has gone through a period of readjustment. However, the organizational concept of the Maryland Student Legislature continues to strengthen its roots across our state.

The Maryland Student Legislature program continues to enjoy a great deal of success. The program remains incorporated, and retains its non-profit status. We have slowly developed a fundraising apparatus that has so far included two annual spring fundraising dinners. We continue to alert the business, political, religious and social leaders of Maryland about our program and our continuing commitment in helping our state find solutions to complex policy programs. We have maintained longstanding relations with the academic community in Maryland while continuing to foster new relationships. We have furthered our standing as the "Voice of College Students Across Maryland" by continuing to develop relationships with the leadership of the Maryland General Assembly. We have also developed a strong and active Alumni Association that continues to foster relationships with those who have meant so much to the past of our organization.

Despite all our progress, we have encountered unexpected difficulties. Membership initiatives are still not as successful as they need to be.

College and university support, particularly in financial matters, still does not come easy. There have been discussions with the Maryland General Assembly concerning the eventual receipt of financial support from the State, with no success. Financial support from the business and academic community remains at a distance. Programmatically, institutions such as the Judicial Branch have been dormant for a number of years. Delegations flounder in strength from year to year, with some strong delegations from the past being lost over time.

Yet, our commitment to our organizational goals and the ideals that are the Maryland Student Legislature remains steadfast. This commitment dominates our thinking as we begin to push our organizational frontiers further in this document.

As with previous Five-Year Plans, we have organized our discussions along organizational and programmatic lines, with a few added special issue topics.

ORGANIZATION

Corporate

In the next five years, the Board of Directors will continue to become more expansive in its mission and structure. The Board must maintain the continued development in scope that it has seen over the past several years. As the Programmatic Division continues to develop and mature, the Board of Directors will need to increase its public and private role.

The Board advocates the creation of a support staff. Initially, the support staff will be limited to one staff member who will help ensure that the day-to-day operations of the Corporation are executed. The staff member will work closely with both the Board of Directors and the Programmatic Division to ensure that the work of the organization is being completed, and to provide support wherever it is needed. The support staff would expand as the organizations scope and mission expands.

The Board also continues to advocate the establishment of a corporate headquarters. We advocate locating and leasing permanent organizational and programmatic office space. Preferably, this space will be located in Annapolis, with easy access to major highways as well as conveniently located near our state capitol. The office would house all of the organizational and programmatic records. The space would provide small office space for organizational personnel and programmatic officers. The office would be equipped to hold small conferences and Board of Directors meetings, and would be used as the official MSL Archive. Toward the end of this period, we anticipate that the staff member will be housed in this office and will assume responsibility for maintaining the office space.

Toward the end of this period, we project the Board of Directors creating and defining the corporate mission for our second twenty-five years, which will be included in our next document.

Financial

In the area of finances, we continue to advocate the creation of an elaborate endowment fund as theorized in our initial Five-Year Plan. We anticipate that a limited amount of sources will set our initial fund. We anticipate continuing our foundation grant proposals to fund our endowment and our organization, with a concentration on Maryland foundations. We also anticipate that more fundraisers will be held during the Academic Year. We maintain our commitment to an Annual Fundraising Dinner to allow donors and students to interact in a social setting, to raise awareness for our organization and our mission, as well as spotlighting the students that make up the Programmatic Division of our organization. We will continue to reach out to local businesses, corporate, political, and academic leaders in an effort to raise our organizational profile and to raise awareness about the need for fundraising for our organization.

In an effort to continue the financial development of the organization, as well as to assist member institutions with academic funding, the Board of Directors will also continue to

formalize the calendar process by approving yearly organization calendars far in advance of the beginning of the fiscal year.

Advisory Board

In the next five-years, we project a reestablishment of the Board of Advisors. The Board of Advisors will be tasked with the initiation and completion of a diverse number of projects with the consent of the Board of Directors. We see the Board of Advisors assisting the Board of Directors in representing MSL, Inc. across the state and helping to raise the organizational profile of our organization.

We advocate a Board of Advisors consisting of fifteen individuals. Advisors would be drawn from diverse business, political, religious, social, and academic fields.

We believe that the Board of Advisors projects should focus on two areas. First, the Advisors will conduct an aggressive public relations campaign to inform other organizational and civic leaders about MSL, and our organizational mission. Through this, we will solicit their financial and institutional support. Second, a campaign should be initiated to inform educational and non-profit organizations in Maryland and surrounding Mid-Atlantic area about our organization and our mission.

Faculty Panel

In the next five years, we project the continued nurturing and development of the State Faculty Panel. The State Faculty Panel will be comprised of the Delegation Advisors from every MSL member institution. The Faculty Panel will by necessity need to become more formalized, more active, and more involved in our continued development.

We anticipate that the Faculty Panel will further develop the prototype MSL academic class. We advocate the expansion of the prototype class over this period and the introduction of the class at selected MSL Member Institutions.

The Faculty Panel will also help the organization continue to expand throughout Maryland. Faculty Panel advisors will be enlisted to promote MSL and the MSL Organizational Mission to other faculty members across the state. Faculty Panel members will be able to use their existing personal and professional relationships to allow MSL to gain a foothold in institutions that has no MSL organizational experience.

In the area of the simulation, we believe that we must continue to cultivate the support of our Faculty Panel and faculty advisors. We must continue to utilize these resources, especially Political Science faculty. We can draw on their expertise of these advisors, and their support can help further legitimize the program. As the simulation design expands and evolves, its educational value must continually evolve, and Political Scientists are best equipped to explain and help develop this experience.

Alumni Association

In the next five years, we project the continued development and expansion of the Alumni Association mission. We anticipate that the Alumni Association will be able to assist the Board of Directors, Board of Advisors, and State Faculty Panel in completing a number of diverse projects. The Alumni Association will encourage alumni to attend more MSL sponsored functions, and to interact with current programmatic members on a more regular basis.

The Alumni Association will also take the lead in encouraging alumni in assisting the corporation in fulfilling its educational mission. Alumni will help educate current members of the programmatic component by assisting with workshops during the organizational Leadership Retreat, as well as by assisting with classes and participating in discussions during the Leadership Training Institutes.

The Alumni Association will also take the lead in cultivating the existing network of MSL supporters and alumni. The Alumni Association will take the lead in networking between the alumni and the students, allowing them to expand and cultivate their opportunities in landing internships and employment opportunities.

The Alumni Association will continue to expand its sponsorship of activities for the organizational and programmatic branches of MSL, Inc. They will be more active in fundraising for their own initiatives, as well as with fundraising for programmatic and organizational purposes.

The Alumni Association will continue to expand its organizational and administrative role, through the eventual publication of the MSL Directors and the MSL Speakers Bureau. Most importantly, the Alumni Association will continually foster positive experiences through the state for alumni and programmatic members. The Alumni Association will continue its existing role in conducting the annual Alumni-Student Luncheon, as well as continue its role in support of the Annual Fundraising Dinner.

PROGRAMMATIC

Simulation Design

In the next five years we project an expansion and evolution of the design of our programmatic simulation. Our institutional structures will continue to develop as we introduce new structures and reintroduce older structures. This growth period will allow students to fully understand the current structure, which will lead to a great educational benefit to current students and will allow an institutional memory of procedures, customs, and mores to pass on to future student leaders.

In the area of institutions, we advocate the development of three autonomous branches of government within the simulation to more accurately simulate the Maryland State Government. Therefore, by the end of the period most of the students will not be simultaneously serving in more than one branch of government. We project that the Secretary of State, Lieutenant Governor and Governor's Chief of Staff will be removed within the legislative aspect of the simulation. A President of the Senate will be created as the chief officer of the Senate. The election of the Speaker of the Assembly will be removed as a Council of State officer, and along with the President of the Senate will be elected only from the membership of their respective legislatures at the preceding Annual Session. Separate Committees for each chamber will be established to more accurately simulate the committee process. We also anticipate that an independent Judicial Branch will be established with the creation of a Court of Appeals.

We anticipate that the political parties currently in place will continue to develop. These parties will encompass more elaborate platforms and Caucus structures.

We also anticipate the creation of a Press component within the simulation. A model media of three to five students will be established to cover the proceedings, complete with the responsibility of creating a legislative and political journal of the simulation not unlike "Roll Call" and "The Hill."

With the continued development of these institutions, we anticipate that the boundaries of delegate allegiance to their educational institution will become further blurred.

Membership

In the next five years, we project a continued emphasis on membership expansion and membership retention. The current methods of external membership recruitment should be continued in earnest, as well as expanded. A "Membership Kit" should be established by the Program and sent to non-member institutions and those who submit inquiries via the MSL Website. This "Membership Kit" will be distributed to Political Science Department Chairs, Activities Coordinators, Student Government leaders, and Campus Political Leaders at these non-member institutions.

In the area of retention, we anticipate the need to continuously maintain the delegations with which we have contact. Retention of students must remain a priority to allow the program to

develop and maintain an intellectual cadre of students that will prevent wide scale leadership turnover, and will allow the maintenance of strong delegations. Student leaders will need to maintain constant contact with campus leaders at each of our member institutions. We anticipate the creation of an effective display kit to be used by our member institutions at activities fairs and other appropriate events to advertise MSL to their fellow students and encourage increases in membership at existing institutions.

We also anticipate the establishment of a program that will allow MSL to recruit target members into our program. Organizational and programmatic leaders will search for young potential leaders. These potential members will be drawn from known state student organizations and “recruited” into MSL. We advocate the targeting of younger first and second year college students, established campus leaders, as well as current members of college political organizations (i.e. College Republicans, College Democrats, etc). They would be offered benefits such as an invitation to a free Interim Assembly, helping to offset their financial burden of establishing a delegation, etc. This form of attracting members will result in propelling the growth of MSL.

We also anticipate an increase in membership from institutions offering MSL for Credit programs. We believe that the proper ratio of credit-versus-noncredit students should be 30-70. As the MSL for Credit program becomes more firmly established, those numbers may continue to rise. However, emphasis must be placed on the notion that walk-in students and MSL for Credit students will compete on an even intellectual playing field.

We anticipate that within five-years, the organization will maintain an average membership of 125 students per year. We also anticipate that the organization will finally achieve the necessary 3 delegate-to-1 senator ratio utilized in the real Maryland General Assembly.

Events

In the next five years, the organization will continue to expand the number of events held during the Academic Year. We anticipate that a third day will be added to the Fall Interim Assembly, allowing events to begin on Friday. We also anticipate a second, one day Interim Assembly will be added to the calendar for early February intended solely to deal with leftover legislation from the Fall Interim Assembly. Registration and legislative deadlines for events will be firmly established so that the Programmatic Division will have four weeks from the event’s universal deadline until the beginning of all events.

We anticipate that the organization will realize its long-time goal of establishing calendar dates for Annual Session events on a three-year advanced schedule. We also look towards the establishment of a permanent hotel to host our delegations on a yearly basis.

Additionally, we look towards the continued evolution of the Leadership Retreat. We anticipate that within five years the Leadership Retreat will evolve to a two-day, weekend event that brings components from the entire organization together to discuss leadership, programmatic responsibilities, and the continued growth and development of the organization.

Financial

In the next five years, we anticipate the continued development of fundraising within the Programmatic Division. Students should constantly be raising money so that they will have additional funds available for events and contingencies, as well as continuing to develop their fundraising capabilities.

The Programmatic Division will create an appropriate budgetary framework. Student leaders will work closely with organizational leadership to create a fiscally-sound, responsible budget for the upcoming year before the commencement of the next fiscal year. Student leaders will maintain a strict discipline to their budgetary plan and budgetary priorities except in the most extraordinary cases.

We anticipate a move towards full institutional funding of school-hosted events. Delegations will ensure that their institution or Student Government will fully fund these events. Students will secure funding for events within the institutional budgetary framework of their schools. Delegations will then complete proposals for hosting such events and submit them to the programmatic leadership. Delegations will then present their proposals to the program, and the program will select the hosting institutions for the upcoming academic year at each Annual Session.

The Programmatic Division will also have an important role in securing state funding for the organization. We anticipate that the Programmatic and Organizational Divisions will work together towards the common goal of securing annual funding from the General Assembly to augment our current fundraising activities.

SPECIAL TOPICS

Colleges and Universities

In the next five years we project a continued increase in our relationships with the institutions of higher education in Maryland. We continue to realize that this aspect will be vital to the continued success of MSL in a variety of areas.

We anticipate that the MSL for Credit program will finally come to fruition. While some institutions currently offer credit for participating in the organization, it has been a long-standing goal that MSL become part of the school curriculum. We believe that 20-25% of all member institutions will offer MSL as a full-fledged class. By the end of the five year period, classes will be established that will be semi-uniform in composition and structure. A curriculum will be created by the organization in conjunction with the State Faculty Panel. The instructor will most likely be the institutions MSL Delegation Advisor. We project that the classes will be a combination of directed individual studies, internships and classroom instruction, with between two and six hours of collegiate credit being offered. We anticipate that by the end of the period a majority of these classes will be transferable within the University of Maryland system.

In the area of support, we advocate enlisting and recruiting more Political Science and Communications department personnel to become active in our program. Their support, verbal or written, through the academic community of their respective institutions will continue to enhance the credibility of our program. We advocate an increase in our relationships with student activities and administrative personnel at all Maryland institutions within both the Programmatic and Organizational Divisions. A positive relationship with student activities directors and staff will promote MSL through the active student population, and will assist us in receiving mention in various student-oriented publications. It will also assist the Programmatic Division in easing transitions in gaining recognition and funding for individual delegations, as well as hopefully easing tensions between individual delegations and student government organizations. A positive relationship with collegiate administrators will promote MSL as an educational program beneficial to the entire academic community while providing for future potential services such as financial donations and other institutional support.

We also anticipate making inroads with other college officials. It is important for the Organizational Division to make attempts to establish working relationships with collegiate presidents, trustees, and the University System Board of Regents. Making collegiate presidents aware of our program and the benefits of our program to their institutions may make available to the program additional avenues of opportunities in the realm of institutional support, funding, and event planning. Trustees often have ties to the political, business, and civic community that may assist us in promoting the organization, as well as establishing potential sources of revenue and membership support. Members of the University System Board of Regents will also make avenues available to the organization across distinct university lines within the entire USM. Relationships with the Board of Regents will also potentially create an opportunity to establish a uniform MSL for Credit curriculum across all state institutions and ensure the potential of transferable MSL credit hours across all state institutions.

We also anticipate the establishment and blossoming of relationships with collegiate and academic oriented professional organizations. Organizations such as the Maryland Independent College and University Association, the American Political Science Association, and the *Pi Sigma Alpha* political science honor society will also provide opportunities to enhance our financial and educational profile.

Maryland State Government

In the next five years we project a continued positive increase in our relationship with the Executive and Legislative branches of the Maryland State Government. We envision the establishment of year-round communication with key figures of the government within both the Programmatic and Organizational Divisions. This communication will derive from letters, visits, and additional receptions. We anticipate that more government officials and decision makers will begin attending MSL programmatic events as this relationship develops. We hope and anticipate that the cultivation of this relationship will assist our efforts in securing state funding for MSL programs. Toward the end of this period, we anticipate that the hiring of a staff member to work out of an Annapolis office will help greatly towards the maintenance of this relationship.

Website

Within the next five years, the MSL website will continue to develop and evolve as the program develops and evolves. It will be important that the website is maintained so that the most up-to-date information and services are available to students, advisors, alumni and patrons. Legislation will be posted in a reasonable amount of time. Events will be maintained and edited as soon as changes are made available.

We also foresee that each delegation will have its own delegation page within the MSL website. Initially, these web pages will use a uniform template design to allow for easy updating of key personnel and information. As time goes on and as internet knowledge becomes more common place, delegation chairpersons may be allowed to develop websites more in tune with their school and their delegations, as long as they do so in a way that does not impugn the organization and will maintain key links and personnel contact information for membership recruitment.