

# GSU to file suit against Board for discrimination

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By Tayloe Nickey

The Gay Student Union (GSU) will file suit against the University Board of Visitors for "blatant discrimination" against the GSU, Russell Williams, GSU president, said yesterday.

The Board Friday refused to hear an appeal for funding by the GSU.

"Other groups that are identical to the GSU in their nature and purpose are being funded," Williams said. "We feel this is blatant discrimination on the part of the Board."

Williams said the GSU has a "verbal agreement" with the Lowe and Gordon Law firm of Charlottesville to handle the litigation, adding the GSU will take action as soon as it officially hears from the Board.

Student Council last fall established a "just need" figure for the GSU but refused to allocate money to the organization because Council claimed it did not have the authority to override a 1973 decision by the Board that the GSU was "primarily political and social in nature."

The GSU then appealed to the SAC for funds. Nevertheless, the SAC turned the group down, citing the Board of Visitors Guidelines for Student Activities Fund allocation as rationale. Under Board guidelines, organizations of a political or social nature or of a substantially social nature are ineligible for student funds.

The GSU then appealed the SAC decision to University President Frank L. Hereford Jr. who subsequently turned it down because he said he failed to see any change in the nature of the GSU since the 1973 Board ruling denying the GSU funds.

The money the GSU seeks would subsidize phone bills, procurement of educational literature and preparation of a pamphlet to explain the GSU, Williams said, adding Council had found the GSU to be justified in claiming a need of \$485.

The GSU is a fundable organization as a service body without political or religious affiliations, Williams said. The group's social activities are not the organization's primary function, he added.

No subsequent changes in the GSU constitution affecting

classification of the organization have been made, however, Williams said yesterday. He thinks the GSU has always been a fundable organization, Williams added.

The GSU re-wrote its constitution this year for organizational purposes. Under the old Constitution, an action taken by officers of the organization would have to be voted on by the entire organization.

"We did not revamp our constitution to make ourselves fundable," he said, but rather to make structural changes within the organization. "It wasn't anything that affected fundability."

The changes in the constitution were intended to give more administrative freedom to GSU officers.

Associate University Legal Advisor Ralph D. Pinto said he had no knowledge of the case and declined further comment.