



Bring Feminist Leadership to Your Student Government

Why Bring Feminist Leadership to Your Student Government?

Student government organizations on college campuses wield incredible power – from determining the budgets of student groups to managing student relationships with the school’s top administrators. Electing feminist students to general membership or leadership positions of student government can dramatically change the campus culture. When progressive students take a more active role in the decision making process, progressive groups receive more access to student funds and other resources, campus women’s rights issues have a reliable voice in student government, campus programming more frequently includes pro-women and civil rights activism, and support for equality and tolerance becomes institutionalized in the university system. Make a difference on your campus by electing feminist leaders!

Why Elect Feminist Leaders

- Student government often sets budgets for student groups. Feminist leaders can ensure adequate funding for progressive, feminist organizations.
- If the administration won’t act on a critical campus women’s issue – from sexual violence to lack of reproductive health care to not enough female faculty members – feminist leaders can address the issue from a formal decision-making body on campus.
- Student government often develops special campus programming. Feminist leaders can include feminist speakers and activism in these campus-wide activities.
- Feminist leaders in student government can ensure that feminism, equality, and tolerance are fully integrated into formal campus policies and discourse.
- Across the country, women are underrepresented in local, state, and national elected offices. We need to start training and electing young women leaders early, beginning with student government.

Recruiting Feminist Leaders

Where to Look

- FMLA executive board and general membership
- Other progressive student groups’ leadership and general membership
- Student employees or volunteers at the campus women’s center or student health center
- Student organizers of special campus programming on women’s issues
- Other women’s organizations – such as Women in Engineering or Pre-Med Women

- Current activist members of student government (you might already have an ally you’re not using!)

What to Look For in a Potential Candidate

- Commitment to feminism, equality, and equal opportunity
- Willingness to devote time to participate in student government
- Strong communication skills
- Leadership experience
- Willingness to advocate for feminist issues despite potential opposition
- Existing relationships with student government

Convincing Feminist Leaders to Run

- Explain the importance of having a student government ally for progressive causes – she can help change the campus culture!
- Give examples of past student leaders who have done good work for progressive issues, or how the lack of feminist leaders have hurt progressive issues.
- Make it easy for her – find out in advance the requirements for running and time commitment if she wins.
- Talk up the advantages of having student government experience on her resume – it’s a strong indicator of ability to future employers.
- Give potential candidates the Feminist Majority Foundation’s Take Action sheets for running and winning a feminist student government campaign!