

The BG Town-Gown Commission

All college towns have to address the reality that students and permanent residents living in the same neighborhoods do not always see eye-to-eye. Tensions between students and permanent residents may arise when issues like loud parties, litter in yards, and crime diminish citizens' sense of safety and community wellbeing. This in turn fuels resentment toward university students, even though the overwhelming majority of students are upstanding citizens.

Some communities have addressed these issues by forming a town-gown commission. A town-gown commission is a public body that meets on a regular basis and is charged with maintaining and improving the relationship between the city and campus and between students and permanent residents. A town-gown commission will solicit input from affected community members and has the power to recommend public policy changes to city council.

After its proposal by Councilman Daniel Gordon, the Bowling Green City Council is currently working with the City Administration to draft legislation that would establish a town-gown commission. While the details remain to be ironed out, the commission will include as voting members both permanent residents and students.

Councilman Gordon is looking to his colleagues in both the Undergraduate Student Government and the Graduate Student Senate to encourage students – particularly those looking to take on a public leadership role in the community and work to improve the image of students – to consider representing the student population on the commission. Minimum time commitment is likely to be one meeting per month for a period of at least 15 months. Any USG/GSS members interested in serving on the commission should contact their respective government's leadership, who will likely be charged with appointing student representatives after the commission is established by law.

For more information, please contact Councilman Gordon at gordonforcitycouncil@gmail.com.