




OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
JAMES R. ROACH, PH.D

To: University Senate
From: James R. Roach 
Date: September 12, 2003
Subject: Senate Resolution R-03-04-03

I received the senate resolution requesting that the university consider altering the name of the Student Center to contain a reference to what has been described as "lost history." After considerable thought and consultation with faculty, staff and students, I have decided not to approve this resolution.

When this issue was first raised in the Senate, the motivating force for this resolution, as I remember at the time, was the belief that the term "memorial" referred to our men and women in the armed services. The concern raised at that time was that the removal of the term "memorial" was not respectful of the memory of those who have served in the armed forces of our country. This did not prove to be true. There is no indication in any university records that the building was named for military veterans. From the research done, it is not clear at all what the term "memorial" referred to, although it was stated that it is feasible that the Alumni Association wished to remember all members of the university community by this designation.

At the present time, even after extensive research, there still exists a lack of clarity about the designation "Memorial Student Center." Because the Student Center building itself is the center for organizations and offices dedicated to student activities, I am convinced that its current designation, Student Center, clearly reflects the function and reality of this building. I feel it is very important for students to have a building designated as a Student Center, since this clearly reflects its dedication and its use. From my conversations with people on campus, there is strong agreement with this designation. The name Student Center reflects the center's purpose and truly honors students, and it is the basis for my decision.

I will do my best to track down the plaque and return it to the Midtown campus as requested by the Senate.