

Northwestern University

Associated Student Government

Meeting of the Senate

February, 11, 2014

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**
2. **Approval of the Journal:** Available at [bit.ly/ASG-Senate-Minutes](http://bit.ly/ASG-Senate-Minutes).
3. [**Executive Board Reports**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mUoSpi_PewGEjrsed2hfJ2_9OUMgI16xSwXKIixE0QE/edit#bookmark=kix.1tx6i3ka0ej8)
4. **General Order:** [Student Group Senate Seat Apportionment](https://docs.google.com/a/u.northwestern.edu/document/d/1I5EJNcrPongFG-T9Paev8l5BpL8OFk2XMMN5xHcH1HM/edit)

**Dana: all this is a reminder that applications for student group seats are due next wednesday and the link is in the order.**

1. **General Order:** Sustainability Vice President Christina Cilento

DivestNU, the coal divestemnt movenet. I’m one of the student leaders of this. this is the first international coal and fossil fuel divestment movement. We’re working on taking out the 17 million $ in coal investments. We don’t konw exactly about any of this, because there’s no transparency. Tech, Norris will be able to send letters to the board of trustees to ask them to be more transparent and not close the issue of divestment. We’re going to send all the letters to the head of the investment subcommittee. we’re going to be at swift at 7 to put coal on a mock trial and people are going to be sharing their experiences with coal.

**General order:** study abroad opportunities

Hi guys, i’m here to talk about the IPD office. for summer fall and year round programs. we arrange a variety of study abroad options, from research to academic. I’m here to talk about financing opportunities. obviously it’s very expensive. Recently IPD has received generous donations to allow us to mitigate the cost. obviously you can use financial aid, but the only caveat is that if you use NU financial aid you can’t use financial aid for another quarter. there is outside scholarship money as well there is diversity abroad program these programs are on the I{PD website and are easily accessible. IPD also has a host of different scholarships based on merit and financial need. Those are all on the website and i have flyers. Thru buffet center and GES institute. the point of this was to tell you the chances of studying abroad drastically increase. 80% of the costs will be mitigated. Questions?

**New Business:** [SR1415-08 Northwestern Divestment Resolution](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mUoSpi_PewGEjrsed2hfJ2_9OUMgI16xSwXKIixE0QE/edit#bookmark=id.h496h0wit79g)

Dana: would the author come up?

\*introductions\*

A roadmap of what i’m doing today: clearing up what this bill does, and then telling you why you should support it.

THe first and most important part of this resolution is the transparency clause. Northwestern lags behind its peer schools in its lack of transp[arency in its investemts. Yales et al have socially responsible investment policies that prevent investment. Northwestern does not release its investments and the fact that we can’t se what’s invested. But northwestern has to take as tance on a specific issues: the vilation of palestinian human rights. but htis isn’t a one time thing. We need to make sure that northwestern doesn’t reinvest in promlem companies.

So having established what this does, lets establish why you should support. Nobody disputes the facts on the ground: palesitne is occupied and human rightsare being violated. The Wall, gaza blockade, buldozing homes. These human rights violations are unacepptable. You as students are complicit becasue we are part of an institution that is complicit. We need to leverage our power to make sure we are making respoinsible choices. Maing the most money in the right way. if we dont take a stand against the moral . I dont want to pait the conficlt as anything but complex. but what isn’t complex is human rights violations. these are black and white. the interational communit yhas decided that there are some things that are unacceptable no matter what. Abstaining si no better than a no vote and apathy ….

Dana: now we will start a 10 min q&a

Q: why are they focusing on israel?

A: idk why does anyone focus on anything? this resolution si in response to the 2005 BDS call by palestinian orgs. We are standing in solidarity with them because they asked us to. Palesitne is the common denominator between all these companies, but all companies commit human rights abousees elsewhere.

i also want to add that wea re saying this is the only human rigths violation we care about. we chose this because we stand in solidarity and hope you do.

Q: why did you feel the need to g obeyoud transparency?

A: we feel uneasy when the investment officer says hes’t rying th o mae the most money. There are compelxities in this confict

Q: doesnt divestment deter peace talks and demonize israel?

A: No. this is about the companies. those who are committing human rights violations. thsi does not affect peace talks.

Q: BDS has 3 clauses: Ending the Istaeli occupation of arab lands

A: we intermept this as ending the illegal settlements and blockade. and ensuring that israel treats all citizens equally. they can’t vilate anypne’s rights

q: why aren’t you affiliated with a one or two state solutoin?

A: we can’t, as students, demand a solution for people over seas. our focius is ending our complicity.

Q: I am confused. Whe there is signs all over campuses … ????

A: NU divest does not believe that zionism= racism

Q: why was it written on the sidewalks?

A: it was written by an individual affiliated by NUdivest

Q: don’t you think this could marginalize students who support israel?

A; paelstinian studensta already feel marginalixzed.

Q”: do we know if NU invests in these companies?

A: no but its’ likely

Q: what about dialogue?

A: we have had many informational sessions. I’d call that dialogue. I’d add that while dialouge is great it’s noting without action.

we had a great discussion on monday

Q: how do you feel about uman rights violation on the other side?

A: hamas is a terrorist organization. Isreal is a goverment. Israel’s policies don’t target hamas.

ever-expanidg borders threaten Israel’s own security.

Q: you said you want substantive action? it’s highly unlikely that our university will divest? It’s unlikely that BDS affects israel?

A: this is not aBDS movement, we don’;t want boycott or sanctions. When we talk about divesting these companies , we are sending a message we are unwilli

Motion to extend by ten minutes: seconded

Dana:additional ten minutes

Q: in one of your enactment clauses, it says incuding but noit limited to six companies … is it just those six companies?

A: these are the companies we are targeting right now. they are most likely to be invested now.

Q:why can’t you divest from both sides/ condemn both sides? this resolution seems one-sided.

A: we are not saying HAMAS is good. we are not investing in HAMAS. but people are saying invest in Israel.

Q: Because hamas is a democratically elected gov’t of Gaza, why doesn’t htis target egyptian companies that do the same thing?

A: what does it mean to stand whith anoippreseed people? it doesn’t mean we know what they need. they asked for this,

Q: why doesn’t the resolutoin say you aren’t attached to BDS?

A: we think our resolution is pretty clear. We are not responding to the entire call. this is about 6 companies. The fact we stand in solidarity with BDS doesn’t mean we are BDS.

Q: yo uback up your claims with th eUN … the UN says palestine IS a state.

A: a state can define its borders, defend its people … collect taxes! all orgs say israel is violationg human rights

Q: why do student groups support you?

A: theres a lot of dialogue that exemplity human rights these things have in common that they care about human rights and don’t want to be compict.

Q: have you talked to the administraiton?

A: no

Q: Do you think israel has a right to exist?

A: we have no political stance. We have spent countelss hours together, and we haven’t hd this conversation once because its irrellevant.

Q: can you speak to the success of these resolutoins at other campuses?

A: yes, all of UCal schools have voted to divest. NH college has already divested.

Q: could you talk about what makes NU divest different from other resolutions?

A:every school is different, we’ve tailored this to our student body. It’ns not a rignd organization.

oother schools have different transperance policies.

Q: YOu’ve talked a lot about the board of trustees, but what’s going to happen if this passes to the students? students have felt threatened?

A: I want to reiterate that this legislation is not BDs. this is about a universal standard of human rights. when students are made uncomfortable, it’s not ideal, but it happens. we need to recognize that the status quo makes students uncomfortambe. these violations are being done in the name of jews everywhere, i don’t want to be complicit in this. the status quo is not some holy place where nobody is feeling uncomfortable.

Not to offend anyone, but i don’t think that amyone’s discomfort here is comporable to palestinian experiences.

Moiton to extend 5 minutes: seconded.

Q: you seem to like the term apartheid. would you say that israel is an aparteid state?

A: israel is not the same as aparteid south africa. but there is a UN defiition and it fits.. which is what we used. We’ve actually removed it from a lot of our resolution.

you can call it whatever you want but it’;s messed up.

Q: given that yoyu’re guessing northwestern is complicit, but we know for a fact that there are countries NU invests in like Qatar with human rights issues.

A: this isn’t the only issue anyone should care about. This is about solidarity. the people of qatar haven’t said anyting.

Q: Given that these companies operate in israel, isn’t it simplistic to say that we aren’t divesting from israel?

A: we’re divesting from companies whose products directly violate hman rights.

Q:On ASG committees we talk a lot about peer institutions, what are they doing?

A: i don’t konw of a list of peer institutoins thathas a specific term, but i used a list of schools with similar academic caliber. Columbia, Yale, UCal schools.

Quesiton period is over.

1. **Old** **Business:** [Supporting the Real Food Challenge Campus Commitment and Real Food Calculator](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mUoSpi_PewGEjrsed2hfJ2_9OUMgI16xSwXKIixE0QE/edit#bookmark=id.6s5cqpa9onzd)

Now we are moving to old business.

Renee: Almost everone eats food from sodexo. we partake in industiralized system that exploits the earth, environment, workers, and our health. it creates dead zones, large scale growers have been convicted for slavery for exploiting workers. this resloution stands against this. most organic farms pay above minimum wage. northwerster throws its wight behind sustainability. peer institution have committed to sourcing Real Food, pioneering a path. this will enchance the dining experience. wider variety of food sources. also heathier. dining hall workers can learn new skills preparing food. a committment to 20% real food by 2020. a billion dollars would shift to sustainable food if everybody did it. $5,590 for a standard meal system. we need everyone: students, dining service workers we are going to redirect our food system towards workers who respect the environment.

Dana: now we move into question period.

Q: (jake) have you been in talks with the school with what this would cost? it’s already very expensive. What extra would we spend?

Answer: we’re starting a dialogue - looking for other ways to cut costs - cut food waste. Sodexo buys too much food and it gets wasted. thers’ a lot of space for cost saving mechanisms, theres’ a lot of room to talk about htat. we can cut down on transportation costs. working with the university will get us more involved.

Q: can we add a clause about abandoning the resolution if costs go too high?

A: the thing is, the majority of schools didn’t raise costs

Chris: the system is optimized as it is. at sodexo’s end, we have a meal plan that is optomized.

Dana: reminder that the resolution is not binding. Adding a clause doesn’t ensure that costs don’t go up for students.

A: we are also 100% in favor of not raising prices, not that we think it needs to be a separate clause.

Q: what kind of discussions have you had with the university?

A: the first step of committing is showing a baseline survey, this only involves Sodexo. we just started the baseline survey.

Q: what is the baseleine survey?

A: gives us a sense of where we are right now. in terms of sodexo’s purchasing.

Q: how long have you been working on this?

A: since august.

Q: What is this resoltion going to do in terms of helping your discussion with sodexo?

A: it will demonstrate student support. It’s a big deal.

End quesiton period, go into debate. time for a con.

Con: I wanted to speak because i think the facts are skewed. they’re presenting something as if there aren’t consequences. something has to give. either food quantity, higher costs, administrative costs. Iv’e worked with sodexo and i think this is a noble cause, but something will give. we can’t do it and expect there to be no cost. Iv’e worked on food waste and dining hall hours. like chris said, it’s highly optimized - there’s not that much waste. if we do impement this, there will be consequences.  
Chris: i was saying the system might NOT be optimized.

Pro: (Moira) if im not mistaken, sodexo said there may be some budget loophole open, so it’s plausible that food costs might not go up. Cornell’s food costs didn’t go up. Saying that food costs might go up might is not the way to look at htings. Things are expensive not because of activists, it’s because of companies exploiting students. if we were to pass this challenge, we would potentially see a world with no sodexo . cost is a legitimate problem ,but it’s not activist’s fault.

Con: one issue i have is that some things are oversimplified. i don’t think that switichng from organic food is going to be all that sustainable. it’s much less efficient in terms of land use. A university in suburban chicago might not be optimized to find organic food. What is “locally sourced food?” I’m not fully convinced that organic food is substantially healthier.

Pro: i think one of the main issues is you are conflating econoimic efficinecy with sustainability. just because organic farms aren’t economically efficient doesn;t mean they aren’t sustainable. soil erosion in iowa. the economic repercussions of environmental degradation is catastrophic. we’re looking well beyond 2020. looking long-term, efficient for generations to come.

Con: I want to clarify what i said prior, to reiterate my experiences with Sodexo. they were impossible to work with. I was trying to bring better food! I want organic, fresher food. but the narrative we are putting forward is that we can do that with no consequences, and that’s untrue. Sodexo is good at reducing waste. we can have a conversation about whether we shoudl buy food from a for-profit corporation. without wholesale changes to the system, if we change this there will be an effect and it’s naive to think that we wont.

Pro: people have made it seem like this is a radical change, but we’re only looking for 20%. right now we’re proably in the mid- teens.

I want to adress a lot of the food price points. i was privvy to some research on our dining hall costs. they’re astronomically high. i have no belief that sodexo is doing this correctly . we should trust the activists rather than Sodexo

we as students have seen that sodexo reduce waste does not reduce food costs.

1. **Old Business:** [SL1415-14:Name Changes and Code Cleanup](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mUoSpi_PewGEjrsed2hfJ2_9OUMgI16xSwXKIixE0QE/edit#bookmark=kix.z4u70liba2qz)

Now our last piece of business.

These are mostly changes to the code, mostly stuff that’s outdated. lot of grammatical and sytactial changes, and allowing the parlimentarian to make those changes. codificaiton fo th eanalytincs committee, removing the operations committee, removiong VP tech, making it Director of Tech. a coupe of otehr random things, like making Sustainability VP part of the cabinet. there’s one amendment thanks to Isaac. it’s that B status finance committee doesn’t have the authority to give out funding since all funding will go thru the A status, so i fixed that to give B status the authority.

Motion to amend to the current document: seconded.

PQ: seconded.

Vote to amend: passed.

Back to talking about the original piece.

Grace: what happented to T-status?

That’s not a thing anymore. all students who want to start a new student group go to CSI

Clarification: people were finding that all the B and T status groups couldn’t manange their time. now they get the attention they need.

Q: i’ve heard talk of changin the cheif fo staff selection process. why isnt’ that adressed?

A: because it hasn’t been brought up.

Q: chief of staff selection [process has been messed up, what gives?

A: it has a bunch of contradictions. we weren’t doing it by the rules.

Dana”: the intention was to have CoS selected in teh winter, and it was an oversight.

Q: is this just officially codifiying it?

A: yes.

Moving into debate:

Motion to amend:

[linked to amendment]

My amendment was someting that was discussed, it chenges the selection timeline for CoS to spring quarter, but not ath the same time. One of th eCoS’ jobs was to oversee selectoin comittees and the transision process. it’s better to make them do that at the end of the term rather than 5 weeks into their term. the only precenemt for CoS selected in winter is SGVP et al which are “service positions” thsi is more of an internal management position. this will give the prez the greatest say.

Q: why is this an amendment instead of a different bill, esp. since you anre not in favor of moving to old business?

A; this was discussed a lot before, and it was my understanding that this was going to be in this bill before it was going before rules. The selection process begins next week.

Clarification: we didnt have things queite right for new businiess.

PQ: seconded

Voting: passed.

PQ: seconded

Voting: passed

**Roll Call and Adjournment**