**STUDENT ASSOCIATION SENATE MEETING**

**Campus Center, Assembly Hall**

**November 06, 2013, 8:30 PM**

CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING ROLL

*Chairman Witte convened the meeting at 8:35 PM.*

* Pledge of Allegiance
* *The following Senators were present:*

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| * Sen. Haris Alic * Sen. Anthony Balzano * Sen. Nadia Belkin * Sen. Devin Caravello * Sen. Patrick Cronin * Sen. Khadija Cuevas * Sen. Stanley De la Cruz * Sen. Skyler DeAngelo * Sen. Beroro Efekoro * Sen. Benjamin Engwer * Sen. Allie Faver * Sen. Alex Flood * Sen. Rob Forman * Sen. Michael **Gray III** * Sen. Roevelle Gustave * Sen. Chenaniah Henderson * Sen. Brad Hershenson * Sen. James King | * Sen. Matthew Krush * Sen. Stephanie Leader * Sen. Michael Longo * Sen. Cylas Martell-Crawford * Sen. Casey Olszewski * Sen. Kathleen Orlan * Sen. Diana Parisi * Sen. James Perry * Sen. Shireen Ramnath * Sen. Zach Ripka * Sen. Johnathon Rood * Sen. Roger Rook * Sen. Brittany Russell * Sen. Vanessa Salamy * Sen. Emma Schwab * Sen. Jacob Sherretts * Sen. Connor Wilkins |

**Absent with an excuse**: Sen. Alexa Cappola, Sen. Corey Carmello, Sen. Ashley Klingberg, Sen. Daniel Markisello, Sen. Joe Messmer

**Absent without an excuse:** Sen. Stephanie Augustin, Sen. Lyle Weintraub, Sen. Steven Nevins

**Also in attendance:** President Francis Agyemang, Vice President Nick Butler, Chief of Staff Marc Cohen, Director of Academic Affairs Derek Ellis, Director of Community Engagement and Outreach Rose Avellino, Director of Gender and Sexuality Concerns Emma Suarez, Comptroller Lee Stanton, Deputy Comptroller Tyler Paladino, Director of Programming Ajon Crump, Director of Student Group Affairs Katie Thomas, UAlbany Sustainability Counsel, Former Senator Justyn Turner.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

-Motion to skip reading of the minutes by Sen. Leader, second by Sen. Cronin.

-Motion to approve minutes with unanimous consent by Sen. Cronin, Second by Sen. King.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

UAlbany Student Sustainability Council:

* Sustainability week is next week, beginning November 11th.
* There will be a different focus for each day of the week. Group has been working on better promoting the event. Will be tabling outside CC.
* Distributes flyer, encourages participation.

-Sen. De La Cruz: Regrets that only two senators were present at the Presidential forum this past Monday, November 4th. Lack of attendance at an important university event does not positively reflect student leaders. Urges a stronger SA presence at future events.

-Director of Programming Ajon Crump:

* Sent out emails to senators, several student groups and organizations on campus with an invitation to a Presidential forum on diversity and inclusion. Has not received a response from any student leaders in SA. As elected representatives, someone should be present to listen to President Jones’ plans for implementing diversity on campus. Has received responses from other student groups on campus but none from SA.
* Strongly encourages senators to email her at acrump@ualbany.sa.org to confirm participation at this important university event.

-Sen. King: Announces there will be an event next Thursday in the Danes after Dark lounge from 8pm-11pm. Invites senators.

-Sen. Orlan: The UAlbany women’s **golf** team is hosting a charity event for Special Olympics at Lake George. Asks for donations for the cause.

-Sen. Deangelo: Young Americans for Liberty will be hosting their yearly charity event, the March of Dimes. Group is currently having a bake sale and tabling for donations. Requests senator support.

-Sen. Rood: On November 19th, Beta Alpha Psi will be hosting a fundraising event in the form of a dodge ball tournament. The entrance fee is $5/person. There will be lottery tickets, prizes and a raffle. Invites senators to come out and play.

OPENING REMARKS:

-Chairman Witte: Announces there are senators who have recently resigned from office.

* Sen. Snyder, a former member of the Appropriations committee is no longer part of senate. Sen. Krush has occupied the vacant position.
* Sen. Torres has resigned as Chair of the Community Outreach and Engagement committee. Ranking member Sen. Forman has been appointed chair. Any interest in filling the role as ranking member should be expressed via email.

-Vice Chair Krush: Announces he has brought in chocolate cakes for senators on behalf of the UAlbany Running Exchange.

UNIVERSITY REPORT:

No report

JUDICIAL REPORT:

No report

BOARD OF FINANCE REPORT:

-Sen. Longo:

* The board met last night, currently in the process of formulating the new budget packet.
* The student group meeting that was scheduled for November 19th must be postponed due to issues with securing a location. The meeting has been rescheduled for December 3rd, location to be announced.
* Board will be finishing the budget packet in the upcoming weeks.

EXECUTIVE REPORT:

-Vice President Nick Butler: Announces that everyone has been paid and doing a good job fulfilling office hour requirements.

Chief Of Staff Marc Cohen:

* Announces that President Francis is unable to be present at tonight’s meeting due to his attendance at a charity function.
* UAlbany veterans are currently fundraising, selling bracelets. On Monday November 11th, they will be holding a flag raising ceremony on Collins circle.

-Director of Multicultural Affairs Rachel Arnaud: (Cohen) No report.

-Director of Student Group Affairs Katie Thomas: Announces that the town hall meeting was planned to take place on November 19th for students to inquire on the budget process. Due to issues with room availability, the meeting will now be scheduled for December 3rd, location TBA.

-Director of Programming Ajon Crump: No report. Opens for questions.

-Sen. Schwab: Inquires on whether a decision has been made regarding what artist will be performing at Parkfest.

-Director Crump: The Programming department is still deliberating on whether to book one big artist or several smaller ones. One big artist raises inclusive issues, searching for one that can relate to a larger population of the student body.

-Sen. Cronin: Has there been any updates regarding where the event will be held? Is the stadium still an option?

-Director Crump:

* Programming intends to use either the football stadium or the SEFCU arena. Preferably would like to steer clear from using the entry plaza due to past issues regarding the outdoor venue allowing access to the concert without buying a ticket.
* The venue will depend on the relevancy to the artist and the event’s anticipated attendance.

-Chairman Witte: Inquires on whether Programming has recently received a bill from the university.

-Director Crump: Affirms that the Programming dept. has in fact been billed for the speaker series reception.

-Chairman Witte: Announces that SA was originally under the impression the university would be covering the cost of the reception.

-Sen. Krush: What course of action has been taken regarding the bill?

-Director Crump: The SA as a whole has been billed, not the Programming dept., thus qualifying it as an Executive issue.

-Comptroller Stanton: Office has been looking into the issue. A meeting is scheduled with the university for tomorrow, November 7th at 4:30pm. As of now, comptroller intends to hold the university accountable for the balance.

-Sen. Longo: What is the balance amount?

-Director Crump: $7,500. Typically, the cost for receptions range between $13,000- $15,000. It appears as if they have paid for half the expense, but is not certain.

-Sen. Olszewski: What was specified in the original agreement regarding who would be responsible for payment?

-Director Crump:

* The agreement was not in writing, but was explicitly stated in a meeting with the Director of OSI with President Francis present, thus there are reliable people that can vouch that this verbal confirmation did in fact take place.
* Confirms that there was a follow-up meeting, however, that did announce the university did not intend to fund the entire cost. The Programming dept. has just recently received the invoice for the $7,500 balance.

*No further questions, steps down*

Comptroller Stanton: Announces that the comptroller’s office intends to pursue avenues to hold the university accountable for the entire cost of the reception; SA does not want to be responsible for paying this balance, will report on the details of tomorrow’s meeting.

Director of Community Engagement and Outreach Rose Avellino: Announces that the winner for of the SA service challenge is **L’Chaim**, a Jewish student group.

-Sen. Engwer: How many total submissions were there for the challenge?

-Director Avellino: Five.

*No further questions, steps down*

Student Advocate **Torres**:

* Currently working on the tobacco-free campus initiative.
* Plans for full enforcement of the tobacco ban by September of 2014.
* Major obstacle has been informing the student body.

Chairman Witte: Announces there will be a SUNY wide SA conference this upcoming weekend (November 9th). Vice President Butler and Sen. Alic will be attending to represent SUNY Albany. If anyone has any ideas or issues to be brought up regarding student assembly as a whole, please contact V.P Butler, Sen. Alic or Chairman Witte.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

-Ranking Member of the Rules Committee Sen. Deangelo: No report.

Chair of the Appropriations Committee Sen. Engwer:

* Committee met last night to vote in regards to the 48 hour time range for bill submission. Will be further deliberating on this topic for the next couple of weeks.
* Currently a budget of $53,029.88.

-Chair of the Constituent Relations Committee Sen. Cronin: Committee met last night to discuss student groups that are applying recognition.

-Chair of the Government Operations Committee Sen. Wilkins: Committee will meet tomorrow at 7pm in front of the SA office.

-Chair of the Community Engagement and Outreach Committee Sen. Forman: Regrets that Sen. Torres will no longer be with senate, will work to best ensure his transition as Chair is smooth.

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA:

**-1314-058: (Student Group Policy Reform Act)**

-Chairman Witte:

* Sponsor of bill, will be speaking on its behalf.
* Proposing new edits to the by-law regarding student group recognition procedure.
* Agenda distributed to senators consists of old by-laws as they currently stand along with new proposals. Sent out a memorandum at earlier in the week that fully explained the proposed changes.
* Changes consist of rearranging the procedure in which student groups become recognized, requiring the group to define their group prior to undergoing the process of becoming recognized instead of after.
* The group will receive short term recognition upon submitting a definition until long term recognition can be established.
* Opens for questions.

*Questions forum*

Motion to move to debate by Sen. Wilkins, second by Sen. Cronin.

*Debate forum*

-Sen. Wilkin: Cites privacy concerns regarding the by-law’s requirement to submit student group’s email address and password to the Student Association. There are no security mechanisms in place to protect this information, anyone can gain access. Presents security issues for student group.

-Chairman Witte: The requirement has already been a part of the by-law prior to this proposal. The bill is simply rearranging the order in which a group can become recognized, but is not adding any other requirements than what was already there.

-Sen. Efekoro: Believes the SA should be in possession of this information. When student e-boards graduate, the SA will be able to transfer email information to new e-board members.

-Sen. De La Cruz: Student groups should be responsible of managing their own lines of communication for new members. Should not be a responsibility of the SA.

-Sen. Schwab: Reminds senators that the current debate is in regards to the rearrangement of the steps to become recognized. If there exists any opposition to the specific details of the by-laws, senators can discuss their concerns at the next Rules committee meeting.

-Chairman Witte: Willing to entertain a motion to amend bill to strike the requirement for surrounding email information, although it is not part of the current bill proposal.

Motion to strike requirement to surrender email information to SA by Sen. Wilkins, Chair finds it friendly.

*Email requirement has been stricken from the by-law*

-Sen. De La Cruz: Expresses opposition to the minimum GPA requirement for student group involvement at a 2.0. Would not be in the best interest for student struggling academically to be involved in student group. The requirement should be a bit higher.

-Sen. Krush: Clarifies that the minimum GPA requirement refers to occupying an e-board position, not for general participation.

-Sen. Wilkins: GPA minimum requirements for group involvement should be up to the group’s e-board, not SA.

-Vice President Butler: These requirements have always been part of the by-laws. Debate forum should be focused strictly on passing the proposed changes to the order in which groups become recognized. Senate can pass this bill and make amendments to specific requirements at a later time.

-Sen. Schwab: Invites senators that would like to amend specific details of the by-law to the Rules committee meeting, Monday’s at 2pm in front of the SA office.

-Chairman Witte: The minimum GPA for involvement in Greek organizations is currently a 2.5., uncertain as to whether this applies to student groups as well and whether it is a minimum university requirement.

Motion to move to questions forum by Sen. Leader, second by Sen. Deangelo.

*Questions forum*

Motion to vote via hand count by Sen. Cronin, second by Sen. Leader.

**In favor:** 34 **Opposed**: 0 **Abstentions**: 1

*Bill passes*

**-1314-059: (Director of Legislative Affairs- Justyn Turner)**

Chief Of Staff Marc Cohen:

* Received applications for the position from seven qualified candidates.
* Decided on Justyn Turner due to his understanding of the position and his ideas for the position.
* Justyn has experience with SA as a former senator, plans to establish open communication with senators to discuss any confusing pieces of legislation.

-Justyn Turner:

* Introduces himself and one of his main ideas for the position regarding UAlbany day.
* Would like to improve the event as it represents one of the most important representations of our university. Would like to use it as an opportunity to express student concerns with elected officials at the event.
* Would also like to improve the visibility of student groups at the event to better showcase the work of UAlbany students.
* Opens for questions

*Questions forum*

-Sen. Leaders: Inquires as to whether Turner has ever worked for an assembly member or senator.

-Justyn Turner: Has not but cites experience working for city council, campaigning; has experience working with elected officials.

-Sen. Leader: Warns that any involvement with elected officials within the past two years would make it illegal for him to lobby.

-Vice President Butler: Regarding SA standards, it would be illegal for Justyn to lobby anyway. Senators are allowed to speak on issues but not lobby.

-Justyn Turner: Clarifies that his main objective would be to establish open lines of communication with elected officials at UAlbany day. Would like to create a more professional environment at the event and make it more inclusive. Does not intend to participate in any lobbying efforts.

-Sen. Sherrets: Cites previous unsuccessful efforts from former Director of Legislative Affairs to pull off a voter registration drive. Asks what ideas Turner has to improve student participation in the voting drive.

-Justyn Turner: Recalls a couple of organizations attempting to spread awareness last year. Intends to encourage student groups, Greek organizations and SA to participate in registering student voters by creating an incentive.

Motion to vote via roll call by Sen. De la Cruz, second by Sen. Schwab.

**In favor**: 34 **Opposed:** 0 **Abstentions**: 1

*Bill passes*

OLD BUSINESS-

NEW BUSINESS-

CLOSING REMARKS

-Chairman Witte: Announces there is a student group seeking a senator to be present at one of their weekly meetings. The group is volunteering to provide transportation to their residence on Washington Avenue at 7pm, Monday night. Asks for a senator to volunteer.

-Sen. King: Volunteers to attend student group’s meeting.

CLOSING ROLL and Adjournment

*Senators adjourned.*