**Minutes for Senate Meeting 3/11/15**

**Called to Order: 8:49 P.M**

**Opening Roll:**

* Roll called by Sen. De La Cruz.

**Public Comment:**

* Michael Christakis: Interim Vice President for Student Success
  + Had coffee day today again.
  + Forum held this morning on public engagement.
  + Encourages students to log community service hours on MyInvolvement.
  + VP Christakis plans on continuing to come to senate meetings at least once per month.
* Kim Bessette: Assistant Vice President for Finance and Business.
  + Broad based fees are governed by SUNY policy.
  + Campus Life fee will be raised to $60 from $30 for next semester.
  + Recreation and Athletics fee are also being raised in line with the HEPI.
  + Sen. De La Cruz: Can we check where the Campus life fee is being checked?
    - Broad listing of what it’s being used for on website.
  + Sen. Pascarella: Are the Recreation and Campus Life fee together?
    - No one likes fees, so rather than create a new fee, SUNY wanted them to add onto an existing fee so they are combined.
  + Pres. Agyemang: Last year we were told all the campus life fee money would go to programming not administration costs, however some of it was used for salaries, will this added money go for salaries?
    - When the additional $30 is added, it will not go to added salaries.
  + Are there any fees that we have that aren’t mandated by SUNY?
    - There are some administrative fees, like late fees and health insurance that aren’t mandatory.
  + Sen. Schwab: How do you determine if fees are opt-in or opt-out?
    - SUNY policy governs that.
* George: We are doing great environment work.

**Opening Remarks:**

Sen. Markisello:

* Packed house tonight.
* Congratulations on the elections.
* Student Activity Fee became voluntary after the referendum. We now have no basis for a budget. No funding for clubs, no concerts, no speaker series.
* We need to prepare for the fact that next year is going to be a very difficult time.
* Bill Nye is coming the week after spring break.

Sen. De La Cruz:

* Congratulations on the election.
* This is going to be one of the worst crises we face as a Student Association.
* It’s up to us to make a legacy.

**University Report:**

* Congratulations to election winners.
* OSI is always here to support us.

**Judicial Report:**

* **No Judicial Report**

**Board of Finance Report:**

* First Budget meeting was on Sunday but it is a moot point now.
* Given the circumstances with the student activity fee budget might be late.
* We can only allocate about $300,000 next year.
* Dir. Teklu is working on a petition for a re-vote.

**Executive Report:**

Gender and Sexuality Concerns:

Community Affairs and Outreach:

* Pine Hills clean up on 4/18.
* March Madness event encouraging student groups to get involved in community service.

Academic Affairs:

* Forms for outstanding faculty out now.
* Working to put together UPD appreciation night.

Multicultural Affairs:

* Cultural Carnival will be 4/12.

Programming:

* Bill Nye is coming 3/25.

Legislative Affairs:

* No Report.

Communications:

* Met with Res Life to put together pilot program.

Dippikill:

* No Report.

Student Group Affairs:

* Over 100 submissions for SA scholarships.
* They won’t exist anymore next year based on the activity fee vote.

Comptroller:

Marketing:

* Giving away TV for attendee of Pine Hills Clean Up.
* Expects student groups to help with petitioning on Student Activity Fee.

President/Vice President/Chief of Staff:

* LGBT conference happening 4/10-4/12.
* Pres. Agyemang: Urges everyone to vote for student activity fee.
* Met with administrators to discuss the student activity fee vote.

**Committee Reports:**

Rules and Admin:

* No Report.

Appropriations:

* $35,447. 74 in Supplemental & $298.80 in New and Unfunded.
* No Acting Chief Justice came into approve student group constitutions.

Government Operations:

* No constitutions were approved since Chief Justice Engwer graduated.
* Ethics Sub-Committee 2015-1: Came to conclusion that nomination process of Nick Butler was not corrupt even though he is friends with the SA President and VP.
* Ethics Sub-Committee came to conclusion on 2015-2 that the Senate censure Sen. Sanzone for voting on and speaking on the motion to table the confirmation of Nick Butler despite his conflict of interest.

Community Outreach and Engagement:

* New Community Outreach committee members will meet Sen. Efekoro after Senate.

Constituent Relations:

**Legislative Agenda:**

**Motion to Add Senate Bill 109 to the agenda.**

***Passed by Unanimous Consent***

**S. 1415-102 Appropriation- African Student Association**

* Need appropriation to fund cultural event this semester.
* Appropriation request totals $5875.
* Sen. Domberg: In light of the student activity fee vote do you think this amount is excessive?
  + Appropriations money was allocated for use this year and student groups shouldn’t be punished this year based on the vote.
* Last year over 400 students came to the event.

***Passed by Unanimous Consent***

**S. 1415-103 Appropriation- SWAP**

* $2408 to attend a conference.
* Student group works to use meal trades to feed the homeless in Albany.
* Want to go to Food Hunger summit in Georgia.
* 4 E-Board members will attend.
* Sen. Schwab: Has any fundraising been done for this event?
  + Limited amounts of money, need appropriation.
* Sen. Markisello: Was there any consideration of opening event beyond E-Board?
  + Didn’t want to to ask for the requisite amount to make that happen.

***Passed by Unanimous Consent***

**S. 1415-104 Appropriation- Spanish Club**

* New student group seeking initial $250 budget.
* Work to promote Spanish language on campus.

***Passed by Unanimous Consent***

**S. 1415-105 Appropriation- Overspending Waiver (Rugby)**

* Miscommunication with previous Comptroller led to accidental overspending.
* Need waiver in order to apply for appropriation because they technically overspent.
* Bill amended to ensure that overspending forgiveness is just applied up to this date.

***Passed by Unanimous Consent***

**S. 1415-106 Appropriation- Doctors for Hope**

* This money will be used as their base budget for the remainder of the year.

***Passed by Unanimous Consent***

**S. 1415-107 Appropriation-Line Transfer**

* Need to transfer funds to ensure there is at least $100 in the new and unfunded line.

**S. 1415-108 Board of Finance- Cassie Orlan**

* Cassie Orlan was a Senator (Ranking member of the Appropriations Committee) and Associate Director of Community Engagement and Outreach and would make a great addition to the Board of Finance.

***Passed by Unanimous Consent***

**S. 1415-109 Referenda Amendment**

* We need to get the Student Activity Fee back.
* We can’t go from a $2.5 Million budget to $300,000.
* Want to strike by law saying referendum can only be held at a general election so a new referendum could be held on the issue.
* No new referendum could be held without this bylaw change.
* Sen. Dunleavy: Why should there be a new referendum when there just was one?
  + Marketing on the vote was not effective.
  + Students didn’t realize what they were actually losing.
* Sen. Schwab: This bill doesn’t say that there has to be a re-vote, just creates the option for there to be one eventually. Our constituents want this.
* Sen. Crepsack: We should at least send out an e-mail better explaining the fee.
* Sen. Longo yielded to Haris Alic: Nothing will get done without the fee, we need it.
* Sen. Sandberg: Doesn’t understand why fee needs to be paid when groups could privately fundraise.
* VP Cohen yielded time to Matt Krush: We might need a referendum at some point in the future, which is why bylaw should be passed.
* Sen. Terezakis: Student Activity Fee is essential and we should do whatever is necessary to bring it back.
* Sen. Henderson: Gives Senators more flexibility to do their jobs the right way.
* Sen. Alford: Groups like Middle Earth and Five Quad need our help.
* Sen. Markisello: Discussion should not center around the Student Activity Fee.
* Sen. Webb: There are many students who are pissed off with the way we are spending their money. We need to increase trust with them.
* Sen. Chowdhury: Still provision requiring 2/3 of senate to vote to call the referendum, check on power.

***Passed by Unanimous Consent***

**Motion to add Bill S.1415-110 to the docket.**

***Passed by Unanimous Consent***

**S. 1415-110 Referendum on Student Activity Fee**

* A lot of students didn’t understand what the fee was for and would have voted differently had they fully understood.
* Student Association needs this funding and it is our obligation to make our organization work.
* Sen. Schwab: Constituents are pouring out asking for help with the situation. There was a difference in the wording of the question from previous years. This change in language contributed to the result.
* Sen. Dunleavy: Section VII makes no sense, should be stricken. **Stricken.**
* Sen. Eager: Student Activity improves so many lives on campus. Five Quad saves lives.
* Sen. De La Cruz: Forty-Three years of Fuerza Latina history will go down the drain without the Student Activity Fee. Student Association just wouldn’t be the same.
* Sen. Chowdhury: We would be losing 200 student groups. We would be doing a grave injustice if we don’t allow this to come up for a re-vote.
* Sen. Longo yields time to Haris Alic: Doesn’t understand why this is a debate, we are nothing without our funding.
* Sen. Dunleavy: Will be abstaining on bill because he is conflicted on the issue. Worried about precedent set by holding referendums over and over again until we get result with which we agree.
* VP Cohen: Going around a lot of people were unsure of what they were voting on; yields to Middle Earth President. Middle Earth can’t fund their programs with fundraising.
* Sen. Webb: So important for prospective students to see the results of the student activity fee at work. **Amended to include that it would be a disservice to incoming freshman.**
* Sen. Markisello: If this bill passes the decision will be up to the Elections Commission. Also will solicit opinion from higher powers. Dates are already blocked out for what were once potential run off dates to hold a second referendum. We will reach out to SUNY Farmingdale to see what they did when the same thing happened there.
* Sen. Dunleavy: We are all under the impression that another referendum will vote in a Yes vote. If it doesn’t, we should respect the will of the students.
* Sen. Kamins yields to Larry Ginsburg: A lot of the funds are used to help students practice their religion and support cultural groups.
* Dir. Teklu: The outcry from students compels us to act.
* Sen. George: This isn’t because we don’t like the result, it’s because students didn’t understand the referendum question.
* Sen. Toranzo: Encourages all Senators to go out and explain the Student Activity Fee to the students.
* Sen. Lugo yields to Donovan Swanson: What type of students will we attract without funded student groups?
* Sen. Conroy: Plans on knocking on doors to raise awareness about the fee.
* Sen. Eager: Yik Yak comments are brutal about the fee vote, we need to make people more aware.

***Bill Passed by Roll Call Vote 35-0-2.***

**Old Business:**

**Motion to Table bills 78-80**

***Passed by Unanimous Consent***

**S. 1415-81 Chief Justice- Nick Butler**

* Sen. Terezakis apologizes for delaying Nick Butler’s confirmation unnecessarily.
* Sen. De La Cruz: This past week has shown us the Supreme Court needs leadership. Nick represents that leadership.
* Sen. Schwab: Knows no one more qualified for this position than Nick Butler.

***Passed by Unanimous Consent***

**New Business:**

**Closing Remarks:**

Sen. Markisello: No Remarks.

Sen. De La Cruz: Thanks for passing resolution.

**Closing Roll:**

* **Called by Sen. De La Cruz.**

**Senate Adjourned: 10:56 P.M**

**Prepared by Austin Ostro, Secretary of the Senate**