



MINUTES¹
 USG Senate Meeting
 Thursday, March 1st, 2012

Meeting called to order at 7:12 pm. Meeting held in Humanities 1006.

Agenda item 1.0: Attendance

The roll was called:

Senator David Adams	Present
Senator Oluwasegun Adedapo	Present
Senator Emily Alcott	Present
Senator Shon Augustine	Excused Absence
Senator Lance Bertrand	Present
Senator Tiffany Bibby	Late (7:26 pm)
Senator Nicholas Ela	Present
Senator Ray Fan	Excused Lateness
(7:18 pm)	
Senator Frank Fanizza	Present
Senator Max Gunther	Present
Senator Eric Lau (Neville Hall)	Present by Proxy (Mr.)
Senator Anna Lubitz	Present
Senator Corey Platt	Present
Senator Masood Rustemi (Amanda Jaeger)	Present by Proxy (Ms.)
Senator Najee Simmons (PPT)	Present
Senator Jason Sockin	Present
Senator Priya Sohi	Present
Senator David Szeszler	Absent
Senator Andrew Tausz	Present
Senator Leslie Umalie	Present
Senator Ryann Williams	Present
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President Mark Maloof	Present
Executive Vice President Deborah Machalow	Present
Treasurer Thomas Kirnbauer	Present
Vice President of Academic Affairs Adil Hussain	Absent

¹ Typically, minutes should only contain the essentials of a meeting. This includes the meeting time and location, a list of those who attended, as well as a record of all motions made and their outcome. Debate (or a summary of debate) is usually not included. I include it here at the request of the Chair. Mistakes and omissions are likely, so Senators are encouraged to e-mail the Secretary with corrections prior to the next Senate meeting, so that the record reflects what was actually said at the meeting and so corrections can be made efficiently.

Vice President of Clubs and Organizations Amanda Cohen	Present
Vice President of Communications Stephanie Berlin	Excused Absence
Vice President of Student Life Deron Hill	Excused Absence
Senior Class Representative Emilisa Trotman	Excused Absence
Junior Class Representative Dennis Nmecha	Absent
Sophomore Class Representative Christopher Priore	Absent
Freshman Class Representative Tyrik Jiang	Absent
Quorum established.	

Agenda item 2.0: Announcements

The Chair introduced two newly appointed Senators, Senators Sockin and Umalie. The Chair reminded Senators to submit their Senate reports and to attend their required office hours. The Chair referred Senators to the Senate's rules of order, regarding decorum in meetings.

Agenda item 3.0: Approval of the Minutes (2/23/2012 Meeting)

- Senator Bertrand moved to approve the 2/23/2012 meeting minutes.
 - Motion approved by unanimous consent.

Agenda item 4.0: Executive Council Reports

- President Maloof
 - The Elections Board has been meeting regularly this semester. They have posted an Elections calendar (tentative.) They are meeting at this time to take into consideration any of the changes that were made by the student body.
 - If any Senators are interested in participating in University committees, please inform the President.
 - The Heuretix contract is making progress. There are questions of logistics that the President wanted feedback from the Senate.
 - If all goes well, we should be in business by 3/12-3/19.
 - The Town Hall Meeting suggested that USG try the new allocation system internally before giving it out to clubs.
 - Senator Simmons: How would we test the functionality?
 - President Maloof: We would be using the system to make our internal allocations.
 - Senator Adams: At what rate does the Executive Council put in invoice requests?
 - President Maloof: I would like to trial the system for our office supplies and other expenses.
 - Senator Adams: Would it make sense to institute this as clubs are meeting the deadline, or should we meet until next semester?
 - President Maloof: In talking to the clubs, their feeling was that if we could get the system to them before April, so they have time to learn it, it would be ideal.
 - Senator Adams: How well attended was the town hall meeting?

- President Maloof: There were ten distinct groups, each with multiple representatives.
 - Chair: Mr. President, what straw poll question would you like to submit?
- Question: Having internal USG trial before rolling out the clubs?
 - Decision: Senate unanimously in favor.
 - Senator Adams: Could the Vice President of Clubs and Organizations send an e-mail to all groups, to gauge their interest in when they would want the new allocation system rolled out?
- Question: Should we roll out the new digital voucher system by April?
 - Decision: 13 in favor; 5 against; 1 abstention.
- EVP Machalow collected resumes for the USG Senate. President Maloof and PPT Simmons went through the applications. Since there were three positions open, seven were interviewed. Three Senators were recommended. I want to welcome Senator Sockin and Senator Umalie. *Applause*. New Senators are confirmed by a vote of the Executive Council.
- Senator Adams: Do you know if the Constitution specifies any qualities in Senators who are seeking appointment?
- Chair: Basically, that they fulfill all qualifications that other Senators have.
- Senator Simmons: Were all candidates picked by myself and President Maloof confirmed?
 - President Maloof: No. One candidate was not confirmed.
- Senator Adedapo: Can you explain why one of the candidates was not confirmed?
 - President Maloof: A two thirds majority of filled seats was needed to confirm the candidate. Can I also yield to EVP Machalow?
 - EVP Machalow recused herself from the Chair; PPT Simmons in the Chair.
 - EVP Machalow: Seven votes in the affirmative are required to confirm a candidate by the Executive Council. The argument in the minutes regarding the candidate was that the candidate was “overqualified.” There was some support amongst some members of the Executive Council, and there was a desire by some members to open the USG Senate vacancy to someone who was not in USG. The motion to confirm the candidate failed, by a vote of 3-0-4.
- Senator Williams: Why did EVP Machalow not vote?
 - EVP Machalow: The reason that the votes total seven instead of eight is that I believed that the Chair of the Executive Council (President) could not vote. This is not in fact the case.
 - PPT Simmons stood down from the Chair. EVP Machalow returned to the Chair.
- Senator Fanizza: I do not understand why Treasurer Kirnbauer abstained on the vote of the candidate who failed?
 - Treasurer Kirnbauer: I have stated my arguments in the meeting minutes. This is a vote for the Executive Council. I will not add further to my argument beyond that.

- Senator Tausz: Why did the Chair vote against moving into Executive Session?
 - Chair: I did not believe that we should go into Executive Session to discuss one candidate and not others. I believed it was of poor form.
- Proxy Jaeger: We are the representatives of the students. I believe we have a right to know why you voted how you did.
 - Treasurer Kirnbauer: I believe that we should open up Senate seats to members of the student body who were not involved previously in USG.
- Senator Bertrand: Were you part of USG prior to being Treasurer?
 - Treasurer Kirnbauer: Yes.
 - Senator Bertrand: Are not your actions hypocritical?
 - Treasurer Kirnbauer: I ran for an elected position and won. That is different from appointing someone.
 - Senator Bertrand: Is being a proxy considered having Senate experience?
 - Treasurer Kirnbauer: Not enough to be a full member of USG. Anyone could walk in and debate one topic without getting a full grasp of USG.
- Senator Adedapo: Now that the candidate was turned down, is the last spot closed?
 - President Maloof: PPT Simmons and I did not particularly feel that the other people who had applied had what we were looking for in a Senate candidate. We may have to reopen the position on ZebraNet.
- Senator Sockin: I believe that being a proxy is not equivalent to having significant Senate experience. You do not sit on a committee; you are not involved beyond those two hours.
- Senator Platt: I wish to concur with Senator Sockin's sentiments.
- Senator Simmons: Point of Inquiry: To what extent, if any, is a given Executive Council member required to explain their vote in the Executive Council?
 - Chair: There is nothing in Robert's Rules of Order which deals with this directly. The second answer is that the Senate has the right to ask any elected official any question they believe is pertinent to them. That would be in Title II, Chapter IV of the Code.
 - Senator Simmons: If at the next meeting, other Executive Council members showed up, how could we broach the subject with them?
 - Chair: The Senate could postpone the reports of absent EC members. In addition, they could put the matter on the Senate's agenda.
- Senator Williams: What do you expect President Maloof and PPT Simmons to do with the Senate vacancy?
 - Treasurer Kirnbauer: There were other candidates who could serve in that position.
 - Senator Williams: After hearing what the President said about the quality of the other candidates, how do you feel now?
 - Treasurer Kirnbauer: I voted at the time for the reason I did.
 - Senator Williams: Has your opinion now changed?
 - Treasurer Kirnbauer: I am not going to answer that question. I am not going to look back now that the decision has been made.

- Senator Williams: Can I pose this question to VP Cohen?
- VP Cohen: I abstained because I was the candidate's RA. I did not feel it a good idea to vote "Yes" or "No."
- Senator Williams: Given that there were only eight EC members present, one of whom had to abstain, is there any way that this candidate could have been voted in?
- President Maloof: At that particular moment, it was not possible to get other members present, but we could schedule a meeting to get more Executive Council members present.
- Senator Fanizza: Should the candidate have even been discussed, given that there were too few members present who could vote on the candidate, given that at least one member had to abstain?
 - Chair: Legally, it was permissible to vote, but I understand and agree that it might not have been prudent to do so.
- Senator Adams: Given what has come to light during the questioning. I would like to ask that the Senate take a straw poll, requesting that the Executive Council reexamine this matter at their next meeting.
 - Senator Tausz: I object to having such a straw poll.
- On the motion to take a straw poll on Senator Adams' question:
 - Motion approved by a vote of 14-2-3. (Roll Call #1)
- Senator Adams' straw poll question: Who is in favor of having the Executive Council revisit the matter of the candidate who was not confirmed to the Senate?
 - 13 in favor; 4 against; 2 abstentions.
- Chair: I would like to recommend to the Senate that in Article IV, Section 1, c., 6, b. of the USG Constitution, the USG Senate can pass a "force resolution" outlining its opinion on the vote of the Executive Council. Furthermore, all members of the Executive Council are required to attend Senate meetings, unless they have valid reasons to be absent.
- Treasurer Kirnbauer: I just want Senators to consider the effects of being hounded because of their votes. How would Senators like it if they were asked to explain every vote they casted. I just want Senators to keep that in mind.
- Senator Williams moved to postpone the report of VP Hussain until next meeting.
 - Motion approved by unanimous consent.
- Senator Adams moved to postpone the report of Freshman Class Representative Jiang until the next meeting.
 - Motion approved by unanimous consent.
- Senator Williams moved to amend the agenda, by moving the remaining EC reports as item 5.1.
 - Motion approved by unanimous consent.

Agenda item 5.0: Revision #2 to the Financial Bylaws Act

- Treasurer Kirnbauer led the discussion on Revision #2 to the Financial Bylaws Act.

- Treasurer Kirnbauer: There are representatives of the club whom this revision is affecting. We believe that we should increase the limit from \$6,000 to \$10,000, because we feel that it is crippling the ability of clubs to invite guest speakers.
- Senator Sohi moved to suspend the rules in order to allow club representatives to address the Senate on item #5.0.
 - Sumaiya Iqbal (President of the Muslim Student Association): One of our clubs' main objectives is to invite speakers to our campus. These are people who are learned in their field and have an in-depth understanding. Our club members request information on important topics and we believe that we can serve their needs and improve campus diversity by having these discussions.
- Senator Adams moved to approve "revision #2 to the financial bylaws act."
 - Senator Adams: I am very much in favor of the intent of this legislation and I spoke on this topic at the time that the Financial Bylaws were considered.
 - Senator Adams: Rather than raising the cap, however, I believe that we should change the rules in a more meaningful way.
- Senator Sockin: Can you describe what the IA event is?
 - Ms. Iqbal described the Islam Awareness week event.
- Senator Adams: How would you feel about the recommendation that I made? Would it be easy for you to prove how much the speaker's rate would have been in the past?
 - Ms. Iqbal: I believe that could be done.
- Senator Simmons: Is Senator Adams suggesting that we strike down the proposed legislation?
 - Senator Adams: I believe that a simple amendment would suffice.
- Aqsa Junaid (MSA club representative): How exactly could a club prove that the speaker has been paid a certain amount in the past?
 - Senator Adams: I would assume that with Speakers who give enough talks that they have a set honorarium, that all would be needed for the club is to submit an invoice and contact information.
- President Maloof: MSA came to the town hall meeting!
- Senator Adams moved that the Senate stand at ease, in order to draft the amendment and confer with interested parties?
 - Motion approved without objection.
- Senator Adams moved to amend by:
 - Amend Section #3 of the act before the Senate, striking the text, and inserting:
 - Section 118, Line 3, Part 1 shall read: "1. Spend more than \$2000 on any individual speaker without either:
 - 1. Providing evidence that they are paying no greater than 10% of what any other entity has paid the speaker in the past.
 - 2. The approval of the budget committee.
 - Strike line 2.
 - Senator Simmons: While I like the intent of the amendment, I think it would be a lot of trouble to institute this. I would hate for a club, not having heard of this bill, be turned down because of our new regulation.

- Senator Adams: This will not impact the vast majority of clubs, as it would not affect any club requiring more than \$2000 for a guest speaker.
- Senator Fanizza: We made this change to the Financial Bylaws, because some clubs wanted to spend their budgets on one or two speakers. It was our intent, at least then, that USG be responsible for big name events, while clubs would spend their money on funding their meetings and events.
- Senator Simmons: Would this amendment be against the spirit of what you want?
 - MSA representative: It is largely all right, although it might be difficult to get the paper work.
- On the motion: The amendment passed by a vote of 10-9-0. (Roll Call #3).
- Senator Adams: I feel that we should pass this bill.
 - Senator Bertrand: What is your take on the amendment?
 - Treasurer Kirnbauer: I plead the fifth.
 - Senator Williams: I do not see any negative to this bill.
 - Senator Gunther moved to end the debate.
 - Motion approved by a vote of 19-0-0. (Roll Call #4).
 - On the main question, to approve revision #2 of the Financial Bylaws Act (as amended): Motion passed by a vote of 13-6-0. (Roll Call #5).

Agenda item 5.1: (Executive Council Reports)

- Vice President of Clubs and Organizations Cohen
 - I have been bringing the recommendations of the SSC to you for action. I have also been working closely with clubs and organizations to make sure their constitutions are within the established guidelines. I have been working hard!
 - No questions.
- Vice President of Communications and Public Relations Berlin
 - Submitted written report last week.
- Vice President of Student Life Hill
 - No report submitted.
- Senior Class Representative Trotman
 - No report submitted.
- Junior Class Representative Nmecha
 - No report submitted.
- Sophomore Class Representative Priore
 - No report submitted.

Agenda item 6.0: Amendment to the Temporary SSC Funding Adjustment Act

- EVP Machalow recused herself from the Chair. PPT Simmons in the Chair.
- EVP Machalow presented the “Amendment to the Temporary SSC Funding Adjustment Act.”
 - The temporary bill addresses the issue of clubs generating and raising revenues.
 - The amendment is in Section #5. There is a clearly delineated algorithm.
- Senator Bertrand moved to approve the “Amendment to the Temporary SSC Funding Adjustment Act.”

- No debate.
- The motion was approved with a vote of 18-0-0. (Roll Call #6).

Agenda item 7.0: USG Bookkeeping Act

- EVP Machalow presented the USG Bookkeeping Act.
 - This is basically to update the USG Code further.
 - There are some sections that need to be removed because they are not being used.
 - The Office of the Vice President of Student Life language would be removed.
 - Human Resources and the Office of Web Technologies positions eliminated.
 - The wage scale that deals with the repealed positions would also be eliminated.
 - The requirement for a legislative summary would also be eliminated.
 - It is a waste of trees and time.
 - President Maloof: If Section 2.1.3. “The Office of Web Technologies” was repealed, how would we put money into the website or negotiate with outside companies regarding our technology needs?
 - EVP Machalow: The budget for that item would not be affected. This would just repeal the language in the Code.
 - Senator Williams: Aren’t members of the student body, in theory, allowed to present legislation?
 - EVP Machalow: The Constitution details how this can be done. Briefly, 1% of the student body would have to sign a petition demanding the item to be brought to the floor. There is then an administrative process where the signatures are validated.
 - Senator Adedapo moved to approve the USG Bookkeeping Act.
 - No debate.
 - Approved by a vote of 18-0-0. (Roll Call #7).

Agenda item 8.0: Open Agenda

- Meeting adjourned at 9:12 pm.

