

Carnegie Mellon University

Undergraduate Student Senate

Unofficial Minutes of September 7, 2006

Senators Present: Joel Bergstein (CIT), Justin Berka (BHA), Gerrit Betz (HSS), Virginia Case (CFA), Byron Chou (TSB), Jarrod Coleman (CFA), Phillip Croul (HSS), Kelly Duncan (MCS), Kate Eckerle (MCS), Danielle Griswold (HSS), Jared Itkowitz (TSB), Courtney Kochuba (HSS), Emily Leathers (SCS), Elizabeth Mullen (HSS), Evan Osheroff (CIT), Frederico Pineda (MCS), Colin Sternhell (HSS), Krishan Taylor (SCS), Ray Wong (CIT)

Senators Absent: Matthew Adams (TSB), Keith Aziz (CIT), Robert Bethea (CIT), Alan Eaton (CIT), Matthew Erhard (CIT), Robert Gimson (CIT), Samantha Simmons (CFA), Julia Stein (BHA), Justin Van Denend (MCS), Evan Whitmer (SCS), Bradley Yates (CIT)

5:08 pm Call to Order

5:08 pm Approval of Minutes from 8/31/06

- Correct printed date
- Add committee chair names
- Add attendance
- Correct UDC to UEC

5:10 pm Committee Reports

Academic Affairs

- This morning was UEC: a lot happened there. Middle States accreditation is responsible for CMU federal aid, which we never get. Final decision is coming in March of 08. They have to write many long documents on the university, and we have to meet fourteen standards. A new English course, 76-100, for non-native English speakers, is a big success and they're looking to expand it next semester. Bad news from Academic Development budgetwise: might be losing SI's, walk-in tutoring. They plan to cut walk-in tutoring by half an hour every night, where the biggest

request has been for longer hours. Currently they have 10-12 SI's; next spring there'll be 5. They're looking into that, we'll see what feedback we get. They're trying to focus on freshman courses now. They'll decrease the study skills workshops. There's a new initiative on fundraising for Academic Development, not sure about format yet, might be going to alumni as well. Next week, Indira, the Dean, and the heads of the Library will be meeting on the ILI. And I've lost a committee member, so there's another spot open if anyone's interested.

Questions

- What times will the walk-ins be going?
- They're 8-11 now, so they'll take half an hour off the end of that. One professor found that his students were going to SI's more than to their lectures. There've been many requests for more hours, which they just can't do.

5:16 pm Business Affairs

- We didn't have a committee meeting, which was my fault. The printer. Last year we installed a printer in Donner Hall, and it was a big step to try to get printers in dormitories across campus. The pilot was successful over the summer. Cluster is happy with how many jobs were printed, but not with the reduction of jobs printed in other places: there wasn't one. The Hill dorms need to advertise this better, so we'll work on that. SDC put funding into getting a new printer in Donner Hall, thinking it would be a one-time purchase which Cluster Services would then take over. Apparently there was a miscommunication, because Cluster Services is now requesting that SDC be the ones to purchase the new printers from here on out, which is a precedent SDC doesn't want to set. Meeting next week to sort this out.

Questions

- Is there anything written down about SDC's involvement?
- We had an SLA which I thought was pretty clear on this, but apparently it wasn't clear enough.

- Also, smoking on the Hill and smoking on campus in general is turning into an issue. I'm an RA in Hamerschlag, we've had a problem not as much this year but in the past. It's supposed to be 20 feet from the building, but we haven't cracked down enough yet. The other RAs on the hill agree this is a problem, and SDC and Will Forest and I are going to be meeting on this. We're considering an educational campaign to get on top of this. Instead of just disciplining people, we're thinking of also funding covered benches, for example, at the right distance from the dorms.
- Is there any punishment for people who don't obey the 20-foot rule?
 - For now, I've just been asking them to move.
- It's available on the website.
- Is a potential solution to have a sign that says what 20 feet away is?
 - Maybe, but that can be hard to judge in front of some of the buildings.
- There've been signs before, but over the years some of them have disappeared.

5:23 pm Campus Life

- The big thing this week is, hopefully we'll have another campus gear sale at Homecoming, which is where we sell stuff from the bookstore at cost, which is a lot less than what the bookstore sells it for. We'll do this the same way we did last year, everyone gets an hour, no getting out of it. Homecoming weekend is the 14th of October, and I'll have a lot more information in the coming weeks.

Questions

- How many did we sell last time?
 - It rained on Saturday, so not nearly as much.
- Do we make much profit on this?
 - No, we don't make any at all.
- If we sell them at the same price at which we buy them, and we don't sell them all, aren't we losing money?
 - Yes. But we're out, by now, of everything we had my freshman year. Over time, it does get sold.

- The stuff we got for Carnival I thought we were going to get bought back. Are we buying new gear for this fall?
- No, we're going to sell what we didn't last year.
- This semester, two things we're really focusing on are school spirit: it's one of the biggest problems we have here; and the escort shuttle, which we're hoping to make 24-hour. The Doherty bottleneck problem will hopefully get solved, since they're planning to put in double doors over winter break.
- What is the Doherty bottleneck problem?
- You have to wait in line to get in or out of the building at peak times, it's really bad, at 10:30, 11:30.
- And I'll be talking about postering again later on.

5:28 pm Chair

- We have a COSO chair, his name is Frankie, he'll be along to say hi at some point. We'll be confirming their bylaws later.

5:29 pm Communications

- Communications exists to try to get feedback from the student body and to make them aware we exist. This year, I want to get PR out there every week, and start tabling. Especially for vacancies, but we'll be tabling for upcoming meetings as possible. I have posters, and I'd like to get you one at a time, I'll check you off, you get a stack of posters and a copy of the postering policy. This whole thing will take you maybe twenty minutes. Our next meeting is Tuesday at 9:45. Later, we'll take pictures. We will set the elections for two weeks from today, since some of these posters are going up tonight.

5:33 pm Special Business

Justin Berka: Presentation on Robert's Rules of Order

5:42 pm Finance Policy Discussion

- Things to consider: should organization size be considered? Recognition status: organizations will have to provide an Oracle string, but that doesn't mean people coming to see us will have full recognition. How close to the

event date is okay to come asking for money? Preplanned events: to what extent should JFC things be funded? And, capital investments vs. one-shot expenditures.

- Last year, we spent \$73,027. This year we have approximately \$76,000 after our operating costs. We need to decide if we need to put money into our reserves after what we put into the UC renovations last year. \$12,750 went into our operating costs this year out of the 89,000 we got from student activities fees.
- The \$20,000 that we're supposed to put into reserves every year comes from JFC and goes straight to the deep, "in case the UC blows up" reserves, normally we don't touch that and can't.
- We dug into two operating reserves last year that we had to give permission for. One was Senate's own, the other was the fund for the whole student government. That's the one that gets automatically put back up.
- We're not really in a bad position right now, so replenishing that account is not necessarily a major priority.
- Charity events: It's still hazy. Right now we don't fund charity events. Dance Marathon is in the JFC process, and so's Greek Sing, but that doesn't mean they won't come to us again this year.
- For Greek Sing, money goes to charities, but that comes from the Greek organizations. The money we got from Senate went towards paying for the venue rental, AB tech, and event costs. But we sold more tickets than we expected to, so we ended up giving back the extra money.
- Why don't we fund charity events?
- Because the allocation pool comes straight from Student Activities fees, and we don't want to make students basically give money to charity whether they want to or not.
- The clarification we ended up making was that if the operating costs of an event and the money that goes to the charity are completely separate, then we don't have to worry about it, the two never touch.

- Is Summit an academic event?
- It's not considered one, but it's also not JFC.
- When you say academic event, what about lectures, visiting speakers: do we fund those?
- Yes. Last year we had a bunch of honorariums, to something like six different organizations.
- The general spirit of the activities fee is to fund things that tuition doesn't cover, things that aren't related immediately to academic goals.
- Some events are purely academic: we sent some architecture kids to a conference last year, and I was really mad that I missed that. But other things, the blitz booth money for example, that gives back to the rest of campus, it's not purely academic, and that I'm comfortable with funding.
- I don't understand why it's bad to fund the archie kids...?
- A lot of people thought it was fine, a lot of others thought it wasn't.
- What about people who don't benefit at all from the money they pay?
- I'd say, get involved.
- You'd be surprised how many events and activities around this school depend, at least partly, on student activities fee money. I'd be stunned if someone goes a whole year without doing something that the fee helped pay for.

Motion to end discussion

- There's a lot more to get through, and the new senators still need to learn a lot of it. Maybe we should end this current point of discussion, but not the discussion as a whole.
- I haven't heard any discussion about the finance policy. If this is going to be three people talking about what we did in the past, call it that.

Call question

Hand vote: 6-16, motion fails

- Trips. We sent a lot of people on trips to conferences and things: do we still want to do that?

- I think we should, just not send 60 or 70 people.
- Especially if they learn something and bring it back.
- It's a hard choice to just send a few people somewhere, but it does benefit everyone.
- Depends largely on the size of the trip. We had an organization ask for something like \$15,000 for 5 people last year, that's too much.
- Are people's grades checked when they ask for this?
- No, we've never done that.
- I think people's grades shouldn't be looked at by other students except in special circumstances. It's not a precedent that we should be setting, it's a privacy policy issue – and it might be incredibly hard to start it.
- We could at any rate approach the department for a recommendation on whether the trip should go, but not on individual students.
- Last year, the largest thing we funded was \$6000 and the smallest was \$50. What's too big an allocation, and what's too small?
- I'd recommend a \$100 minimum.
- We had 3 out of 66 allocations less than \$100 last year: Big Straw, MAPS, and Photography Club (?)
- I don't think we want to have a minimum or maximum, just to allow flexibility.
- I feel that if someone comes asking for \$50,000 – if it's a sufficiently big need, or a great idea, maybe we want to be able to do that.
- We do have a limited amount of money, and we do want it to be able to go around. The biggest allocations tend to take the longest to get through the general body meetings.
- Are we going to split the total between semesters?
- We did end up spending more last year first semester than second.
- Normally, for big allocations we have the reserve fund to go into, but we have to remember that our reserve isn't as big as it has been in past year.

6:12 pm Recess

6:19 pm Order

6:20 pm Approval of COSO Bylaws

- Article II section D para 7 was changed, then changed back. II.C.4 can be overridden, but as a general practice they shouldn't be there. Slight rearrangements were made to some of the segments, but no actual wording changes. Informing the COSO chair was changed to updating OrgTracker, which was changed to updating the database designated by the COSO chair, which made GSA happier than saying OrgTracker. Quorum was made three-fourths, which is what we had for a working quorum last year. The override was updated so that GSA or Senate can be approached after a body has been turned down twice by COSO with a petition and a written reason why COSO denied them both times. Whichever body comes first needs a two-thirds vote, the other one needs a majority to confirm it. Derecognition runs the same way in reverse.

Questions

- Does it specify when COSO has to meet at the beginning of the year?
 - Yep. II.D.4.
- What about II.E?
 - That shouldn't be there, that's straight out of the JFC bylaws.

Motion to strike II.E

Call question

Voice vote: ayes have it

Discussion

- Instead of COSO reps appointed the last week of the semester, we need to do it the meeting before that, because it drags those meetings on forever and we'll keep having seven-hour meetings.
- We have our elections to fill vacancies and deal with contests, and there are people on the list who can't serve, or who have conflicts with possible Senate posts.
- Does this directly affect the COSO bylaws in front of us?
- It could, yes. II.D.2.

Call question

Voice vote: ayes have it, passed

6:30 pm New Business from the Floor

Election of Members-at-Large

Motion to slate candidates

Introductory speeches

Paris (CIT '09)

Raisa (MCS '10)

Greg (CIT '10)

Megan (TSB '10)

Dylan (TSB '10)

Damian (TSB '10)

Timi (HSS '10)

6:51 pm Slate passed by acclamation

6:52 pm Points of Discussion

- What does the general body think about finding ways to be proactive, to not just point out problems but to look at how to fix them?
- We want to hold forums: not to ask people what they don't like, but what they do like and how to make things better.
- If we did something positive, instead of getting rid of negatives, we might do a lot for Senate's reputation.
- We should look into Senate doing a UC Late Night event.

- How many of you introduced yourselves to your classes? . . . All right.
Next week: Introduce yourselves to your classes. And members-at-large.
Talk to your professors, see about introducing yourselves as well.
- 6:55 pm Announcements
- If you're assigned posters, get them from Communications.
- If you know anyone interested in being CTO, or in being Poster Policy administrator, talk to me or to Kelly, respectively.
- We have seats on the CS-SAC to fill, and on Fowler's SAC.

- ECE's SAC meeting is next Thursday, if you go to that, Senate will not mind.
- Academic Affairs meets Mondays at 7:30 in 318G.

6:57 pm Adjournment