

CMU Student Senate

Minutes of October 16, 2008

5:08 Roll Call

Senators Present: Cassandra Abernathy (CIT, 2 proxies, .5 absences), Dorian Adeyemi (HSS, .5 absence), Mana Ameri (CIT), Miriam Cha (CIT, 2 absences), Zexi Chen (SCS, 1 absence), Jason Deng (SCS, 2 absences), Christopher Franzi (HSS, 2 proxy), Aaron Gross (HSS, 1 proxy), Michael He (CIT), Jayesh Kapoor (TSB, 1 proxy), Barbara Kasbergen (CFA), Chansaly Ker (CIT, 1 proxy), Eunjin Kim (CFA), Diane Lee (CIT, 1 proxy), Kush Mangal (MCS), Bassem Mikhael (BHA/BSA/SHS, 1 proxy), Natalie Morris (SCS), Daniel O'Toole (CIT, 1 proxy, 1.5 absences), Stuti Pandey (HSS), Marcela Partida (CIT, 1 absence), Dina Patel (MCS, 1 absence), Robert Piston Jr. (MCS, .5 absences), Vivake Prasad (HSS, 1 proxy), Sonali Shah (MCS), Benjamin Trump (BHA/BSA/SHS, 1 absence), Thomas Tuttle (SCS, .5 absences), Carolina Velez, (HSS, 2 proxies), Lingshui Wang (CFA, 1 absence), Nik White (CIT, .5 absences)

Senators Absent: Prashanth Swamy (MCS, 1 proxy, 1 absence), Damian Valdes (TSB, 1 proxy, 2 absences) Brian Wade (TSB, 1 absence)

Members-at Large Present: Jarett Adams, Mariluz Orbay Cerrato, Gurmukh Chabra (2 absences), Jake Flittner, Amy Kao (1 absence), Keshav Raghavan (1 proxy, 1 absence), Zachary Stockwell, Krishan Taylor

Members-at-Large Absent: Urna Biswas (1 absence), Katie Chong (1 absence), Meghan Nahass (1 absence), Zack Pierce (1 absence), Stephan Schneider (2 absences), Eric Wu (2 absences)

5:06 Call to Order

5:09 Agenda Approved

5:09 Minutes Approved

5:12 Committee Reports

- **Academic Affairs (Brian Wade):** No report.
- **Business Affairs (Benjamin Trump):** Natalie met with the statistics department to get help with the interpretation of the raw data. Also sent out survey to members-at-large to get feedback for statistical and demographic issues before sending survey to constituents.
- **Campus Life (Dorian Adeyemi):** Housing and dining will have recycling in the quad; each house will receive a large recycling bin. There will be a meeting with David Chickering regarding the Beeler house incident.
- **Communications (Nara Kasbergen):** Issue 2 of *The Gavel* is out; it was distributed along with readme. Putting stacks of *The Gavel* in student activities, student life and student development. So far production has been going well. Communications will put out another issue in two weeks. Talk to Stuti, Diane or Rob if you have article ideas. Please be prompt and responsive to emails about posterings.
- **Finance (Marcela Partida):** Have three funding motions today and there is currently \$64,600.00 left in the budget. Remember to ask questions. Calendar of funded events on poster in the Senate office. Will also be posting times of when committees meet. Keep in mind that finance meetings are the only closed meetings.
- **Internal Development (Vivake Prasad):** No report.

5:16 Special Business from Committee

5:16 Funding Motion 08-0912 Allocation of \$450.00 for Tartan Feud Sig Tau Gamma

- Sig Tau Gama wants to expand to other groups on campus.
- Allocated money will fund operating costs.
- Initially asked for \$600.00 but committee decided that they could find other sources of funding.

- Sig Tau Gamma is willing to contribute \$ 500.00 of own money.
- Revenue for entry fees will go to charity of winning team.

5: 19 Questions

- (Nike White) How many ppl last year.
- (Vivake Prasad) Wining teams give money to charity, how does that work?
 - Teams that participate pay an entry fee. We use that money.
- (Jake Flittner) How much do you think you can raise?
 - Out projected goal is \$ 400.00.
- (Benjamin Trump) Does the event have spectators?
 - Not so much however fraternities come.
- (Daniel O'Toole) Why is there a different price for Greek organizations?
 - It's to encourage people to come.

5:22 Discussion

- (Benjamin Trump) Seems like a legitimate event worth funding.
- (Nik White) There should be encouragement for other fraternities to participate.
- (Mana Ameri) I don't think it's right that they are charging Greek versus non-Greek members different prices, however, I still think it's a good event.
- (Dorian Adeyemi) I can see why Greeks might get charged more considering they can afford those type of expenditures.
- (Daniel O'Toole) Senate should follow precedence. With the MCS ball last year, we had them make it a flat fee for MCS versus non-MCS students.

5:25 Hand Vote Allocate \$450.00 to Tartan Feud

5:27 Begin Spotlight Series (President Cohen)

- Touch on a few major issues:
- State of the global economy
 - Every organization is touched by the economy.
 - Markets have plummeted and credit markets have sized.
- There are short, medium and long term impacts.
 - Short term: high interest rates.
 - CMU is \$400 million in debt in the forms of bonds. \$375 million is in the form of variable rate demand notes (VRDN)—traded everyday and demand sets interest rates. Recently went from 1.5 to 9.5 percent which means bonds might not trade however we have bond insurance.
 - Second short term is losing access to your cash.
 - Not an issue until banks fail, like recently. Some have seized up.
 - Medium: our endowment.
 - Our endowment is \$1 billion. Plus \$1.2 billion is invested.
 - The investments are greatly diversified—small fraction in US stocks, most in international stocks. Also in non liquid investments, like venture investment.
 - Operate on a fiscal year, beginning July 1.
 - Endowment is down 12-14 percent which is 20 percent lower than from July 1.
 - We're long term investing—thus, we are not reliant on the money to operate. The money we do take out is set by policy. Amount is based on endowments of previous years, not what it is at the moment.
 - One benefit is that that our operating budget is not as affected. If 20% goes down, it's only a 1% drop in the operating budget.

- Fluctuations of the economy will not affect operations this year, but it will next.
- Our endowment is comparatively less than other peer institutions.
- Fundraising, especially private universities, goes into endowment.
 - Long term approach to fundraising is the Billion Dollar Campaign. Have already raised \$550 million.
- Long term impacts:
 - CMU sponsor research support by the federal government and corporations. Government support is iffy for the future. Budget for research will be constrained.
 - Families and the burden of paying for tuition. It's an important revenue source for Universities. Also, CMU is dependent on student loan credit markets however CMU students have a historically low default rate.
- Bottom-line: has survived the economic storm so far because of good management and financial position. We are not sanguine for a contingency plan. There could be salary freezes for faculty and staff, or there could be freezing or deferring of major projects.
- CMU has to go through reaccreditation. The process is very lengthy, takes about two years. The study team is made up of faculty.
 - The process this year went particularly well. Emphasis on student outcomes.
 - CMU is known for the college process where students have more focus on majors but can then take additional non-major classes through GenEds. GenEd is important, thus, for accreditation.
 - Carnegie Mellon "achieves breadth through more depth."
 - Creditors were impressed with the unique double majors.
 - Don't have to make an interim report for 5 years (the max).
 - Our interdisciplinary collaboration is better than most universities,
- CMU is ranked 22 in the nation according to US News and have even higher sub ratings, such as, Engineering 9, and business 6. Times of London, rates CMU 21 in the world.

5:56 Questions

- (Thomas Tuttle) What does it mean for students for families whose financial positions have changed? Like when they are reapplying for financial aid?
 - Out posture has always been to try to accommodate for students. If you have financial aid questions, contact Michael Murphy.
- (Gurmukh Chabra) Can you delve more into financial aid for international students?
 - There is none for international students. It's because we don't have enough money and we're already stretching limited resources. Wish we could treat all students equally but it will only happen when financial resources get larger.
- (Benjamin Trump) Are there any other major fundraising activities that are going to take place besides capital projects?
 - Capital campaign is used to embrace all form of fundraising. 90 percent is for university operation. Priority is scholarships and increasing financial aid. Underlying purpose is to raise giving sites of alumni. Alumni giving rate is a major focus.
 - Invest in Alumni relations and marketing staff to reengage alumni with the University.
- (Nik White) Some of the buildings on Panther Hollow on up for sale; what is the University's plan for expansion?
 - Our stance is that when a building becomes available, we'll buy it.
- (Daniel O'Toole) Can you comment on the search for Dean Church's successor?
 - Dick tucker is the interim dean.
- (Steven Burton) How practical is it for us to improve our ranking; what steps can we take?

- We've done thing to improve Carnegie Mellon but we haven't done it to improve our rankings. We have conducted a cost effective analysis on things that can affect our ranking. Example, having classes under 50 improves ranking, but it's an expensive endeavor.
 - We deserve to be 15th or 16th.
 - "We're definitely better than Notre Dame and Vanderbilt." [applause]
- (Nara Kasbergen) What is your position using Randy Pausch as good PR for the University?
 - We're not doing that. Randy is using Randy as good PR for the University. It was him who decided to go on national programs. We in no way exploited him. It was positive name recognition.
- (Jared Itkowitz) Can you speak about collaboration with the Qatar campus?
 - Programs are going very well. First class graduated in May. How to take as much advantage as possible for the students in Pittsburgh and Qatar. Qatar students are traveling to Pittsburgh and interacting. However, there needs to be development in electronic connections.
- (Stuti Pandey) I read that CMU is expanding to Rwanda? Is that overstressing our resources?
 - The places are because the countries have found us. We want an arrangement that doesn't cost us anything. Rwanda found us. We wanted a presence in Africa, so we were open to being in Africa. Rwandan wants to focus on information technology to increase economic development.
 - We'll have some of their engineering students come here. Or set up something there so there would be less reliance. Technology based economic development.
- (Vivake Prasad) The Tartan published an article about student evictions because of too many people in one house. Now that there's a potential crackdown, how willing is the University to provide legislative support to help advocate students in this issue?
 - We have a good government relations office. We are very capable in affecting policy, especially if there is high university need. Student Affairs can access the situation and see if change of law is called for.
- (Zexi Chen) What is your opinion on moving away from the SATs?
 - We have no intention of doing that; they are valuable in predicting students' performance at Carnegie Mellon.
- (Thomas Tuttle) What is the affect in a change in rankings for Carnegie Mellon?
 - We study what Universities students attend instead of Carnegie Mellon and why. It's not necessarily correlated with ranking.
- (Nik White) I agree that with the research programs and double majors, there are a lot of opportunities, but my impression is that there aren't many opportunities to take interdisciplinary classes.
 - Problem is resource levitation—run into capacity limits.
- (Jared Itkowitz) How often do you get to attend student organization events?
 - I don't attend that many events. My interaction with students is with students coming to me (usually for money).
- (Kush Mangal) To encourage students to become more aware about the other campus, do you think we should have a day were we talk about our global campuses?
 - I think it would be a benefit to everyone involved.
- (Vivake Prasad) What is the likelihood of a president candidate coming before the election?
 - Obama or Biden may happen.

6:45 Special Business form Committee (continued)

Funding Motion 08-0913 Kappa Phi Lambda for Cathy Bao Lecture Reimbursement

- Thought the lecture was useful for students on campus.

- Student life game money and we fund the rest.
- Integrate American culture with Chinese culture.
- (Jake Flittner) How many people showed up?
 - About 20 to 30.
- (Vivake Prasad) How many were not in your organization? And how did you advertise?
 - We tabled and made posters.

6:55 Discussion

- (Zexi Chen) I went and it was a good lecture. It targeted Asian Americans.
- (Sky Kim) It was definitely advertised well.

6:56 Move to Vote ($\frac{3}{4}$ super majority). Passed. \$297.25 for reimbursement.

6:58 Funding Motion 08-09014 Screen on the Green \$450.00

- Goal to have 200 students.
- Had 60 people.
- Had only 48 hours to publicize.
- (Miriam Cha) What will happen with the movie that wasn't shown?
 - Nothing, for legality reasons we can't show it.
- (Jarett Adams) Are you considering doing another?
 - I personally think that a movie on the cut could get a lot of students.
- (Jerry) How come the movies were \$300.00?
 - Royalties.
- (Natalie Morris) If we don't reimburse, do you have a way to cover the money?
 - We have a budget, it'll just take away from other activities.

7:04 Discussion

- (Dorian Adeyemi) I think this event is a great idea and should start on a semi regular basis. I think we should fund the full amount.
- (Daniel O'Toole) They were trying to be flexible to help the student body, which is their role.
- (Gurmukh Chabra) The fact that they got 60 students to show up given the certain conditions shows that their event had a lot of potential.
- (Nik White) What happened?
 - Lack of manpower by AB.
- (Steve Burton) If we don't fund them, it'll come out of their budget.

7:08 Move to Vote ($\frac{3}{4}$ majority, roll call vote). Passed. \$ 450.00 as reimbursement to Screen on the Green.

7:10 Chair report

- Start Senate Stamp on things we fund. It'll be catchy and show that it has Senate support.
- Send out an email to finalize SAC process.
- Task forces convene next week.

7:12 Points of Discussion

7:19 Second Roll Call

7:20 Adjourn