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**Chair:** Will Weiner: *wweiner*  
**Chair, Academic Affairs:** Bianka Roy: *sohinir*  
**Chair, Business Affairs:** Anshul Dhankher: *adhankhe*  
**Chair, Campus Life:** Rishi Patel: *rmpatel*  
**Chair, Communications:** Alyssa Danesh: *adanesh*  
**Chair, Finance:** Kyra Gold: *ktg*  
**Chair, Internal Dev.:** Ashley Reeder: *alreeder*

# Fall 2011 End of Semester Report

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## Chair Report

This was a challenging and ultimately very successful semester for the Undergraduate Student Senate. We entered the school year with a body comprised of mostly new senators. Out of our returning senators, most had only one year of experience under their belts. The youth of our body may best be exemplified by the fact that all of our committee chairs were first time chairs, and 4 of the 6 were sophomores. Despite this lack of experience, this senate has come together well as a group and pursued and completed as many meaningful projects as any senate in recent memory. Much of the work that was done this semester was ground work to prepare us to complete larger projects and initiatives, which you can see by reading through the individual committee reports.

As chair of the Senate, I had a vision to break the semester down into three components: the first was to shape the internal senate culture, making sure that our senators were not only well informed—but that they felt comfortable working and debating with one another. The second was to focus on senate week and try to boost our image on campus. The third was that once we had satisfactorily achieved these two goals would be to dive really strongly into our initiatives. Obviously, there was to be overlap within all three of these areas. The belief behind this was that I feel we cannot make large strides and grow as a body on campus unless our internal and external relations improve. This has been one of our best years both in terms of recruitment and retention, so I feel these efforts have payed off.

As with any semester we had some successes and some failures, but I think our failures have been extremely informative and will help us grow as a body and enable us to serve the campus more successfully in the future. A good example of an event that was both very successful for

senate and provided a lot of good lessons is Senate Week. This was the second year we carried out Senate Week and the event definitely grew. All of our individual events were more widely attended, there was definitely an increase in knowledge about senate on campus and all in all I think everyone involved with the event would qualify it as a success. However, there is still a lot of room to grow. We need to possibly determine new events to better engage the campus, come up with innovative ways to PR and more effectively sell the event. I have compiled thoughts on improving the event which will be passed on to the next chair. Our successes and difficulties in connecting with campus are presented in more detail in the communications report, but I think it is important to mention that there will be a strong Senate wide push to grow our image next semester. Much of this was waiting on a new logo and a well thought out PR plan and I was not comfortable pushing out something that was not complete. I think that better communication with campus is a key hurdle that must be overcome to allow student government to grow.

With these areas of growth in mind, I am very happy with where we are as a body and with the job my chairs have done. Each committee has completed initiatives that have made campus-wide impacts and look prepared to pick up right where they left off. This coming spring semester our policy oriented committees (Academic Affairs, Business Affairs and Campus Life) will be making strong pushes to complete initiatives, whereas our Communications committee will be making a very large effort to connect campus. Along with my work on Exec I will work to facilitate all of these efforts. I also plan to take a larger role communicating with campus media and making a bigger outreach to the campus on an individual level. This coming semester looks to be a very exciting one that holds lots of potential for Senate to accomplish very positive changes and have a larger on campus presence than we have had in some time.

The remainder of the report is comprised of detailed reports from each committee chair about the initiatives undertaken by their committees this semester. Please feel free to contact them or me with questions or refer to our minutes from this semester available at <http://www.cmu.edu/stugov/senate/meetings/minutes.html>.

--Will Weiner

# Academic Affairs

**Chair:**

Sohini Bianka Roy

**Committee Members:**

Brendan Badia

Nancy Brown

Neha Charasia

Nancy Brown

Vivek Nair

Abby Ondeck

Nikhil Sambamurthy

Andrew Schwartz

**Mission Statement**

We, the Academic Affairs Committee, work to promote and advocate the interests of the undergraduate student body in all academic matters. By acting as the liaison between the students and the administration, better lines of communication will be forged and maintained in order for efficient usage of the financial, physical and human resources of the University.

**Semester Goals**

1. Improve communication between administration and students while maintaining a positive relationship.
2. Find better means of surveying students of deficiencies in the academic arena as well as methods of data collection on how to address them within the administration.

**Semester Overview**

The nature of an Academic Affairs committee within a university is one that inherently has broad jurisdiction. Thus the first task proposed to the committee members was to decide what role to play to within senate. We chose to focus this semester on different methods of communication, not only between senate and our constituents, faculty, and staff, but also amongst the different sects of the administration.

As the chair of the committee, in accordance with precedence, I met regularly with the vice Provost of Education (Dr. Amy Burkert) as well as sat on the University Education Council, Faculty Senate, and occasionally, the Board of Trustees meetings. The primary objective was to stay in the loop of the occurrences and projects that the faculty was taking under, provide student support and feedback, as well as combine human and financial resources to complete projects on a timely manner (such as the progression of the Student Services Suite, which should be implemented by Spring 2012 to unite the non-Blackboard websites, an idea proposed in the Spring of 2010 by Undergraduate Student Senate).

For every initiative that was undertaken this semester, different forms of data collection were utilized. It is recommended that further analysis be carried out in following semesters to conclude more concrete information on proper communication and survey methods. Further

information of the different methods can be found below, within the details of each initiative's progression.

Additionally, this committee was extremely successful because we were comprised of vibrant, enthusiastic members representative of most colleges (CFA, CIT, MCS, Dietrich CH&SS) while working together towards the end of the semester with SCS member Amy Quispe. Each member's attendance and dedication allowed data collection amongst the schools to be exceptionally successful and has been unmatched in the previous semesters that I have observed from the last two years on AA.

## **Initiatives in Detail:**

### **Academic Advisor Survey Follow-up**

#### *Overview:*

The end of the previous semester, administration had sent out an online survey to each student, requesting to give feedback on any two advisors whom they wished to give feedback about. This was in hopes to collect information about not only the advisors the student was assigned to, but also who they go to for most of their advising needs. If an advisor received feedback from more than five different students, it was compiled and given to the advisor as well as the respective deans of the departments. This was a form of survey that was anonymous, yet if advisors show certain patterns of negative or positive traits, they can be made aware of them in a straightforward, factual form. An additional advantage was reporting issues to higher authorities who would have the power to enforce changes (as well as praise) where necessary.

*Initiative:* The privacy as well as the sensitivity of the issues posed limitations on what Senate can do to follow-up on these surveys. Though the advisors could not be addressed individually, individual issues were addressed. A prominent deficiency among the advisors was email responsiveness as well as availability.

#### *Solution Steps:*

The University solicited the use of scheduling software *Appointment-plus* (<http://www.appointment-plus.com/>) implemented in several different departments across the campus including Mechanical Engineering Dept. Economics Dept., in addition to advisors working separately from their department. The Academic Affairs committee, randomly selected students from all these tested departments inquiring about the new software. This change was extremely well received by the students who could now simply go online, see their advisors schedule and sign up for a time. The advisors availability would be easily accessible to other students, whereas the privacy of the students was kept. The advisors additionally could respond and view their schedule in a far more efficient fashion.

#### *Future:*

The University is pushing for this software to be spread to all departments in hopes the company owning the software can make a deal as far as finances are concerned.

### **Career Services**

## **BOC/TOC/EOC**

### *Overview:*

This year was the first time where the Business, Technical, and Employment Opportunities Conferences all occurred within the same week. This provided obvious convenience for companies that wanted to participate in more than one conference and reach all students, however provided a small struggle for students struggling to maintain class preparation and attendance.

### *Initiative:*

To begin a discussion with administration about why this schedule was chosen as it was and what difficulties the students had and what can be done to minimize struggle of students and staff.

### *Solution Steps:*

The issue was brought to the attention of the University Education Council. There, it was concluded that the root of the problem was many of the professors were not conscious of the week packed with job fairs and interviews. The solution the Council came to was to inform the professors and staff far in advance. Though we do not anticipate mass changes in syllabi and scheduling of major assignments, it is hoped that through the advanced notification, the students and faculty can warn students of assignments and extensive class preparation far in advance and students will be able to plan accordingly for a successful week. The methods of notification will be included in different emails and literature that are passed out to faculty. In addition career services will host seminars that will conjointly discuss how to address how to prepare for a career fair and time management.

## **Career and Academic Advisor Discrepancy**

### *Overview:*

For the years senators have heard many complaints about the discrepancies amongst advisors and career advisors. The issue is two-fold. The first is inconsistency lay in the inherent nature of a double major. If a student has an advisor for each major, there will be many situations where each advisor will tell the student opposing information (based on their respective majors preferences) and the student will have to make a choice. This situation is inevitable however, it would be beneficial if the advisors could be in communication between each other. Similarly, there is confusion between the students when to approach an academic advisor versus a career advisor. This confusion would ease if there was better communication between the two types of advisors so the student could be referred to the other when appropriate.

### *Initiative:*

To discover the root of the discrepancies students have been gauging from the Career Services faculty, as well as find better means of communication between advisors.

### *Solution Steps:*

The first step the committee took was to find the root of the issue. The Director of the Career and Professional Development Center, Farouk Dey, was first approached for a one-on-one discussion of how the career consultants work, what are their responsibilities, and what are the issues that he perceives to be present. Following, pairs of liaisons for each department/major were interviewed. Simple, more conversation based questions were asked to see if the ‘problem’ would naturally be illuminated through discussion of communication between the academic and career advisors. The data was collected and the following semester, these conversations and interviews will be analyzed. A meeting has been set up between myself, the head committee member on this project Andrew Schwartz ([andrew@cmu.edu](mailto:andrew@cmu.edu)), Mr. Dey and Dr. Burkert.

Additionally, the disconnect between advisors of majors that are commonly doubled was addressed during advisor’s meetings. The administration plans on statistically analyzing majors that are most commonly doubled and these advisors will have scheduled meetings/ forge communication bonds that are to their own preference.

Furthermore, a ‘Starfish’ software is being implemented by graduate students. This program will allow a student to share information (resume, major, advice, notes, aide etc) with whomever they selectively choose. This will ease the confusion and disconnect present among advisors for each student. This software will be implemented hopefully in the near future as it began production late this semester.

A similar format of this software will be applied for ‘Meaningful Engagement’ between students. This will work as essentially a simple onlineclassified posting site for student interdisciplinary projects, allowing us to connect to students throughout the university, on an easy, accessible medium.

## **Interpretation and Argument**

### **76-101 Honors Expansion**

#### *Overview:*

An introductory English course required by every student entering into the University. This semester, Professor Danielle Wetzel, director of First-Year Writing, approached senate to discuss possibilities of expanding on the 76-101 course.

#### *Initiative:*

Discovery and implementation of expansion of 76-101course for students who wish to get more from their introductory course.

#### *Solution Steps:*

Students were surveyed using email, one-on-one interviews, as well as Facebook polling. A small but significant group seemed interested and passionate, that if additional course work was offered conjointly with the 76-101 course as an honors course there would be interest. Let it be noted that interest was evenly spread through the DCH&SS, CIT, and MCS. A meeting with Prof. Wetzel was made and a conclusion was made. The additional course will be in the form of a mini for the second half of the semester that the student takes 76-101. It will be offered to those that received a 5 on the AP exam (or IB equivalent) or if during the first half of the semester, the

professor believes the student will enjoy and benefit from the additional honors work. There will be additional credits offered.

*Future:*

The syllabi is currently being created/reviewed, however future AA committees should follow-up.

**Right to choose the 76-101 section**

*Overview:*

Many students would like the right to choose the section of 76-101 that they study through the semester. However some classes are reserved for students who wouldn't be able to take that section due to known time conflicts (all freshmen architecture students have reserved seats in sections to which their schedules do not permit them to take), thus preventing other students from signing up for a topic of particular interest. This in the long run can prevent them from doing as well in the course as they might have studying a topic of curiosity.

*Solution Steps:*

The primary complaints of this were within the CFA and MCS. Committee member Neha Chaurasia met with Associate Dean Prof. Eric Grotzinger to discuss why MCS students do not get to choose, and what steps can students take to make this a possibility.

*Future:*

The committee members, over break have been setting up meetings with respective professors and deans to figure out the proper course of action to give these students the choice of 76-101 section.

**Future Work:**

Towards the end of the semester, several other projects were formulated and initiatives began to take shape however were unable to be finalized. The foundations for these projects have been set and will hopefully be further discussed in next semesters report.

First, a metric for final exam conflicts and decision on who will give the retake between three courses scheduled within 24 hours. This is to be further discussed within the University Education Council and integrated within the policy for next semester.

Another potential project is the Student College organization is barely run by students anymore. In order to regain control of the Student College by the students a meeting has been set with the current student organization leaders. It is possible that Stu-Cos will become part of Senate/Summit to organize and make it sustainable.

Along similar lines, the University is looking for ways to get better attendance at the University lecture series and ways for better publicity.

Working with Amy Quispe who held a caucus for those in the School of Computer Science, a series of data along with general concerns the students have were gathered. The future goal is to have a series of workshops both faculty and student run to increase proficiency indifferent

languages as well as application/software design. We hope to promote creativity, interdisciplinary projects, as well as student initiative. It is possible this program may also work with the Student College. Work over the winter break is being carried out and future developments will be reported.

Finally, creating a sustainable mentor program between graduate and undergraduate students was hoped to be created within the past semester. Unfortunately, no movement on this initiative had been made. For the following semester, the premier goal is to have a Senate run dinner uniting undergraduate and graduate students with faculty and staff, to discuss life after graduation.

# Business Affairs

## **Chair:**

Anshul Dhankher  
adhankhe@andrew.cmu.edu

## **Committee Members:**

Jon Mark - jemark@andrew.cmu.edu  
 Fermin Liang – ferminl@andrew.cmu.edu  
 Ashley Dickson – adickson@andrew.cmu.edu  
 Bryan Wade – bcwade@andrew.cmu.edu  
 Xunda Zhou – xundaz@andrew.cmu.edu  
 Travis Rozich – trozich@gmail.com  
 Shally Madhok – smadhok@andrew.cmu.edu  
 Andres Velez (first half of term only) – avelez@andrew.cmu.edu

## **Mission Statement:**

We, the Business Affairs Committee, operate in accordance with the values of fiscal responsibility, political honesty, and open communication. We ensure the beneficial appropriation of financial, physical, and human resources of the University through management and promotion. Finally, we act as a liaison between our constituents, the democratically elected undergraduate student senate, and the university administration.

## **Proactive Dialogue with Campus Services:**

Liaisons from the BA committee were assigned to the following services and departments at CMU:

Computing Services – Andres Velez  
 Housing and Dining Services (via Dining Student Advisory Council) – Ashley Dickson  
 Health Services (via Health Services Advisory Council) – Fermin Liang  
 Facilities Management Services – Jon Mark  
 Parking Services – Jon Mark

Meetings with individuals representing the departments were conducted at least once during the semester, either through Student Advisory Councils or heads of the departments. Next semester, a University Center liaison will also be assigned, as many initiatives this semester required communication with UC administration.

## **Initiatives in Detail:**

### **1. Magazines in the UC**

**Senator(s):** Jon Mark

**Status:** Complete

This initiative was a continuation of a project that had been started in Fall 2010. The goal of the project was to use the media fee that is assessed to each student, and order magazines to be placed in Kirr Commons in the UC Black Chairs area. The magazines had been decided upon last year to be The Economist, Time, Rolling Stone and Cosmopolitan. The magazines had been ordered and weekly subscriptions had been arriving in the Senate mailbox since before this semester.

All that was left this semester was to put the magazines inside the plastic covers and place them on the stands in the black chairs in the UC. Unfortunately, tables to place the magazines on had to be arranged for, delaying the completion of the project. Additionally, artwork and signs were created by a designer to put on the magazine stands and covers. By the end of the semester, the magazines had finally been placed in the UC area. Next semester, we will follow up on the project by readjusting the artwork and evaluating usage to see if we should expand the project to more magazines or more common areas around campus.

**Contacts:** Marcia Gerwig, Director of University Center,  
mgerwig@cmu.edu  
Chris Coleman, Trade Book and Clothing Sales Associate  
ccoleman@andrew.cmu.edu

## **2. Lighting in Upperclassman Housing**

**Senator(s):** Ashley Dickson, Shally Madhok  
**Status:** Complete

Poor Lighting in campus housing was a common complaint from many residents in Fairfax Apartments. To begin addressing this problem, surveys were sent out to the residents of The Fairfax, where lighting complaints have been received. The results were compiled and sent to Louis McCauley, the Director of Facilities for Housing and Dining Services. It turns out they were a step ahead of us and had already purchased new upright lights. The plan was to switch out bad lamps over break, but since we would like improved lighting now, Housing offered to switch out lights earlier if students submitted work orders. They have also decided to host sleep-in work sessions over the summer where members from housing will actually spend the night in each of the various housing communities in order to see what light levels are like during the non-normal work hours, when in-room lighting is needed the most.

**Contacts:** Louis McCauley, Director of Facilities in Housing & Dining,  
mccauley@andrew.cmu.edu

## **3. Reserve Textbooks in Library**

**Senator(s):** Ashley Dickson, Shally Madhok  
**Status:** Pilot under way

Students have large textbooks in many classes. In order to do homework in each of these classes requires them to carry multiple textbooks to campus, which can be difficult on a daily

basis. An expanded reserve system in the library would make life easier for a lot of students who wish to work on homework during the day on campus.

The goal is to get one copy of each textbook from high enrollment classes (classification of high enrollment has not yet been decided) on reserve in the library. The textbooks would be able to be signed out and used in the library for a maximum of 2 hours. Both the Engineering and Sciences Library and Hunt support this initiative and are willing to help us. They cannot help with funding, however, due to an agreement with the bookstore. The funding for this project has not yet been sorted out. We are waiting for results from a pilot we have set up with MCS. The 5 largest enrolled classes (21-122, 21-259, 33-106, 33-107, 03-121) in MCS will have textbooks on reserve in the library during the Spring 2012 semester. These books will be tracked using the Library's check-out system. Depending on the success (calculated based on the number of times each book has been used) of the program, we will decide whether it is in the best interest of the students to put the time and money into continuing with this initiative.

**Contacts:** Glorianna St. Clair, Dean of University Libraries,  
gstclair@andrew.cmu.edu  
Matthew Marsteller, Head of Science Libraries,  
matthewm@andrew.cmu.edu  
Eric Grotzinger, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Affairs MCS,  
eg1b@andrew.cmu.edu

#### **4. Campus Wide Bike Sharing System**

**Senator(s):** Andres Velez (no longer on project), Travis Rozich, Anshul Dhankher

**Status:** Planning and Gathering information about possible systems

Andres Velez originally headed this initiative to provide the student body with a free or low-cost bike sharing system that would allow them to explore Pittsburgh and run errands quickly and effectively. Additionally, a Bike Sharing system would also promote student exercise, as well as provide an environmentally friendly means of transportation.

Multiple universities that already have in place an effective bike sharing system were contacted for further information. NYU provides one such system, and they were very instrumental in bringing us new ideas and alternatives. Bike Pittsburgh was also contacted, and they cautioned us against this idea because they claimed that they would be setting up a Downtown and Oakland based bike sharing system with stations in all the major universities in the next two to three years. We also learned that there was a similar Bike Sharing initiative at CMU a few years back that was aborted due largely to a supposed disinterest by the student body. We also discovered recent ideas in FMS that would significantly change the bike culture on campus.

We have concluded that the best course of action going forward is to create a joint Biking Committee that would include members of the Business Affairs and Campus Life committees from Undergraduate Student Senate, members of the Graduate Student Senate, as well as representatives from FMS, Campus Design, and some of the Heinz students and professors that worked on the Bike sharing initiative previously at CMU. We will be looking into how to acquire the bikes, the maintenance and insurance of the bikes and equipment, as well as other general logistics of the new Bike Sharing system. The joint campus biking committee will be set up the beginning of the Spring Semester and meet on a monthly basis.

**Contacts:** Brian Cappo, Director, CMU Risk Management,  
bcappo@andrew.cmu.edu  
Michelle Porter, Manager of CMU Parking Services,  
mporter@andrew.cmu.edu  
Robert Hampshire, Assistant Professor, Heinz College,  
hamp@cmu.edu  
Scott Bricker, Bike Pittsburgh,  
scott@bike-pgh.org  
Michael Sandmel, NYU project cofounder,  
sandmel@nyu.edu  
Vanessa Smith, Dickinson College,  
smithva@dickinson.edu

## 5. UC Game Room Improvements

**Senator(s):** Bryan Wade

**Status:** Seeking funds from the University Center and UCAB to pay for part of the improvements.

This is an ongoing initiative to gather feedback from students so as to make capital improvements to the Scotland Game Yard. The current projects that we are trying to implement are a speaker system so as to play music or WRCT throughout the game room, as well as replacing the underutilized shuffleboard table with an air hockey table. We will also be creating a system for game room users to provide feedback to the UC administration on a regular basis.

contact: Marcia Gerwig, Director of University Center,  
mgerwig@cmu.edu

Judy Ghogomu, Information Desk/facilities Manager,  
[ghogomu@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:ghogomu@andrew.cmu.edu)

## 6. Table Sharing Signs

**Senator(s):** Xunda Zhou

**Status:** Pilot of larger initiative launched in The Exchange

Acting off of an idea from a local coffee shop (Commonplace Coffee in Squirrel Hill), BA decided to pursue this initiative at the very end of the semester. Basically, signs would be placed in high traffic eating areas, with friendly messages encouraging people to share their tables with strangers. This would avoid one person using a large table to themselves during crowded lunch hours, as is seen often in places like The Exchange or Tazza D'Oro Café.

After researching possible signs to be used, the idea was brought to the Dining Student Advisory Council, where Housing and Dining Services fully supported the project. Shortly after the DSAC meetings and communicating with Housing and Dining, a pilot project was set up in The Exchange for most of finals week. Tasks early next semester will involve evaluating the pilot, readjusting the type of signs used for the tables, and deciding on an appropriate expansion of the project.

**Contacts:** Kim Abel, Director, CMU Housing and Dining Services,  
kimabel@cmu.edu

## 7. UC Space Concerns

**Senator(s):** Shally Madhok

**Status:** Meeting with UC contacts, planning ideas

The idea for this project came about from a student email concerning the lack of seating space during lunchtime peak hours around the second floor of the UC. From there we decided as a committee to pursue the project. So far, we have spoken with Marcia Gerwig and informed her of student concerns and complaints regarding lack of seating in the UC especially during peak breakfast and lunch hours. She was really receptive to the idea and offered to provide permission to changes that will be done if the students are fine with it. A few ideas were built around adding more tables to the Alumni Lounge on the first floor. This might interfere with the current quiet atmosphere in this lounge hence once the spring semester starts a feedback system to the students will be implemented to see if this would be ok for the general student body. An additional suggestion was also removing the round tables from the pool-side area on the second floor and adding smaller tables that could accommodate more students. These ideas will be taken further in the spring semester.

**Contacts:** Marcia Gerwig, Director of University Center,  
[mgerwig@cmu.edu](mailto:mgerwig@cmu.edu)

## 8. Collegiate Readership Program (CRP)

**Senator(s):** Jon Mark (CRP Liaison)

**Status:** Evaluation and improvement of current program

The Collegiate Readership Program, which provides students with free newspapers on a daily basis, had to be re-evaluated and adjusted to address new challenges. Most notably, the CMU Graduate Student Assembly pulled out of funding CRP in Spring 2011. As a result, access was reduced to undergraduates to the extent we could restrict it. A lot of the newspaper bins were moved away from mostly graduate student areas like Heinz College. Also, several open air bins were replaced by more card reader bins. As of right now, these bins restrict access to students, but we could explore restricting ID access only to undergraduates. Additionally, USA Today featured CMU's CRP in an article, following an interview with CRP Liaison Jon Mark. Other improvements include a Sunday New York Times pilot, as well as talks in moving the program towards digital subscriptions.

Note: Travis Rozich will be taking over as CRP Liaison starting next semester.

**Contacts:** Kaycee Palko, Coordinator of Student Activities,  
kpalko@andrew.cmu.edu  
Ian Dryburgh, USAToday CRP Representative,  
idryburg@usatoday.com  
Kandace Rusnak, NYTimes CRP Representative,  
kandace.rusnak@pcfcorp.com

Jim Skees, Director of Building Facilities, CMU,  
skees@cs.cmu.edu

### **Chair Reflections:**

The Business Affairs committee of Fall 2011 accomplished an incredible amount in just one semester, setting new standards for success for future committees. My job as chair was made very easy due to a dedicated committee of senators, who focused on efficiency and completion of initiatives. Having a diverse group in my committee helped a great deal. We had an excellent mix of senate experience and academic backgrounds. Additionally, with a senior, three juniors, two sophomores, and three freshmen, we had a mix of ages as well, which helped with easing freshmen into the senate process.

In terms of logistics, giving each initiative one or two point people was how we ran the committee. Overall, individual point people operated more effectively than teams, however that all depended on the type of initiative. For example, a large long-term project like bike sharing requires several people to share the workload, but a small project like table sharing signs required only a few meetings and one person to handle it. Overall, however, I would like to see more collaboration in the committee, so that there isn't entire separation between projects. This way, individuals aren't strapped to one or two projects alone for the whole semester. Additionally, this creates a feeling of the committee working as a team, besides just a group of individuals.

Lastly, I want to stress to future chairs the importance of involving newcomers into Senate through committee work. The committee we started with had four returning senators (including me) and five new senators, including three freshmen. By immediately involving them in Senate during first semester, they can really begin to understand the process of Senate's work, as well as gather confidence going forward in their abilities as a senator. Involvement this semester came in the form of assigning projects to newcomers as well as encouraging them (especially freshmen) to attend DSAC and HSAC, and other advisory committees to gain basic experience.

Specific to the Fall 2011 BA Committee, I was impressed to see how so much was completed by such a new and fairly young group of senators. This speaks to their commitment and dedication to senate from start to finish. Given what has already been accomplished, I am very excited to see what new levels of progress can be reached by our committee. In a year where Senate as a whole is working to improve our visibility on campus, I'm very proud to say the BA committee has done its part in furthering that goal.

- Anshul Dhankher

# Campus Life

*Rishi Patel, Fall 2011*

## Chair:

Rishi Patel

## Members:

Mala Shah

Dan Pomeroy

Aaron Chiu

Peter Liang

Dixon Liang

David Zhou

David Isenberg

Jalen Williams

## Overview

The goal of the Campus Life Committee was to tackle small initiatives that would improve students' daily lives. In addition, we decided to bring Campus Gear sales back and have a large initiative per every two committee members. Most of the small initiatives were easily accomplished by simply emailing the administration. The large initiatives proved a challenge because many of them moved beyond Campus Life and became a concern of the administration, Facilities Management Services, Design Review Committee, Graduate Student Assembly, Environmental Health and Safety, and the Health Center.

## *Small Initiatives*

<i>Initiative</i>	<i>Committee Member</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Contacted</i>	<i>Description</i>
<b><i>Get a condom dispenser in the girl's bathroom in Morewood Gardens</i></b>	<i>Mala Shah</i>	<i>Completed</i>	<i>Director of Facilities for Housing and Dining Services</i>	<i>"There was a machine there until a year ago. This machine was never used and it was decided to remove it" - Louis McCauley (Director of Facilities for Housing and Dining Services)</i>
Automatic Stapler in West Wing cluster is loud. Disrupts the cluster environment.	Dan Pomeroy	Completed	Cluster Services	"Cluster will swap out this stapler by the end of the week" – Richard Bryan (Cluster Services)
Backdoor staircase in West Wing has a	Aaron Chiu	Ongoing	Cleaning Staff	"Talked to cleaning staff in WW/Resnik about the issue, hasn't been resolved yet" –

peculiar smell				Aaron Chiu
Water fountain in Skibo Gym is defective	Aaron Chiu	Completed	Facilities Management Services	“Contacted FMS, Water Fountain is fixed” –Aaron Chiu
Hand sanitizers are not refilled in Resnik Café/UC	Peter Liang	Completed	Director of Facilities Management Services	“I’ve asked the supervisors in Gates and Resnik to address this concern. I will remind the other supervisors to attend to their dispensers as well” –Don Coffelt (Director of FMS)
Common room for business organizations	Rishi Patel	Ongoing	SBVPO	“Contacted Will Zhang. Said they can apply as a group in the spring” – Rishi Patel
Increase Pool time hours for GSA	Rishi Patel	Ongoing	Assistant Athletic Director	“I discussed with Pattye, if we implement any changes, it would happen in the spring semester. It isn't a matter of funding, but allotting time for recreation, clubs, physical education classes, fitness classes, swim team and also having "down time" in the pool for it to recover. The pool is open most days from 7 am until 11 pm straight.” – Sara Gauntner (Assistant Athletic Director)
Wean Stapler is really loud	Dan Pomeroy	Completed	Facilities Management Services	“Contacted FMS” – Dan Pomeroy
Residence on Fifth water fountain is defective	Jalen Williams	Completed	Facilities Management Services	“FMS fixed the water fountain the next day” – Rishi Patel
Clocks in Doherty are slow	David Zhou	Completed	Facilities Management Services	

### ***Large Initiatives***

#### **Improve Skibo Gym (Dixon Liang, Dan Pomeroy)**

##### **Status: Ongoing**

Dixon and Dan wanted to improve the quality of equipment at Skibo by purchasing new weights. In addition, they wanted to find out which equipment students wanted the most that was not already available at Skibo. While they were planning on improving Skibo Gym I attended a Design Review Committee meeting and discovered that in the next five years the University is

planning on remodeling and expanding the University Center Gym. In addition to this remodel, the University is also revamping Skibo Gym. We decided that it was best for Senate to not make a large capital purchase on expensive equipment when the University is planning on improving both Carnegie Mellon Gyms in a few years. However, we decided that we will hold a survey in the spring and ask students what equipment they would like to see in Skibo. If possible, we would like to add one or two machines to Skibo Gym.

### **Cover smoking areas on campus (David Zhou, Peter Liang)**

#### **Status: Ongoing**

When it rains students don't utilize designated smoking areas and instead smoke outside of entrances to university buildings. Peter and David originally contacted Don Coffelt asking him if it was possible to cover smoking areas on campus.

*Don Coffelt responded, "In general, changes involving the university smoking policy are under the purview of Madelyn Miller (Director of Environmental, Health and Safety) and Anita Barkin (Director of the Health Center). Making the sort of change you suggest would require their support. In addition, you would need agreement from the academic/administrative department affected by the change (i.e., Housing and Dining Services for the smoking area at Morewood Gardens, the University Library for the smoking area at Hunt, etc.)"*

I contacted Don Coffelt, Madelyn Miller, and Anita Barkin and they agree that this is an issue that needs to be concerned. They asked that I contact the Design Review Committee first and see if covering smoking areas is a possibility. I brought up my concern with the DRC and they are on board so I will be holding a meeting addressing this issue next semester with Don Coffelt, Madelyn Miller, Anita Barkin, Kim Abel, and Bob Reppe.

### **Cover bike racks (Jalen Williams, Aaron Chiu)**

#### **Status: Ongoing**

Jalen and Aaron first contacted Don Coffelt about the possibility of covering bike racks on campus. However, the administration is against having bike racks on campus. Instead, they would rather have bike racks on the edges on campus to prevent pedestrian accidents.

*Don Coffelt replied, "The general sense is that we want to make getting to and from campus by bike as safe and secure as possible and then discourage people from using bikes to move around campus (i.e., between buildings). Our campus is too compact for bikes and pedestrians to safely share internal sidewalks. There have been many close calls and a few bike-pedestrian accidents. The net result being that most of our covered bike parking tends to be around the perimeter of off campus buildings"*

I disagree that this is a reason for our campus to not have covered bike racks. After meeting a GSA representative at December's Design Review Committee meeting I learned that GSA is trying to purchase covered bike racks for campus. I am meeting with the GSA rep and Bob

Reppe next semester to decide on possible locations. In addition, I will bring up this issue with the new Campus Ground & Landscaping Group that Don Coffelt is starting next semester.

**Disposable Ear Plugs in Hunt (Mala Shah, David Isenberg)**

**Status: Ongoing**

Mala and David are working on getting Disposable Ear Plugs in Hunt with the Student Senate Logo on them. They contacted the Library SAC and are willing to distribute the ear plugs if we purchase them.

*Gloriana responded, "They kind of think that ear plugs are personal, but if your group wants to provide some, then we would be glad to pass them out from the circ desk and also to put out some signs on the third floor so that folks will know they are available. Let me know what you decide so that I can tell folks in circ and on the third floor"*

We have everything we need to complete this initiative except for the new Student Senate Logo. Once the logo is completed we will put in the order for the ear plugs

# Communications

**Chair:** Alyssa Danesh

**Members:**

Rafael Segal

Andy Biar

Seth Vargo

Joshua Yee

Jing Jing Li

Nikhil Sambamurthy (honorary)

## *Mission Statement*

The Communications Committee serves as the link between the Undergraduate Student Senate and the Undergraduate Student Body, by means including, but not limited to, distributing posters, e-mails, updating the website, tabling, advertising in school media etc. In doing so, the Communications Committee helps keep the student body updated on the actions of the Undergraduate Student Senate especially with regard to completed, ongoing and future initiatives, and seeks feedback for these actions. This helps the Student Senate to better serve its constituents and continue to work on implementing positive changes on campus.

## **Overview**

This semester, the Communications Committee worked extensively to determine efficient methods in order to open communication with student body. Our goal was to improve Senate's visibility on campus, open communication with the student body and keep students informed on the actions of the Student Senate. We focused on ways in which we could promote events supported by senate and inform students of changes made by senate each week. We researched methods to improve communication with the student body and piloted a few events both during and after Senate Week. Generally, this semester provided many important changes to the attitude of the committee and will be essential in the further development of the goals on the Communications Committee. Many initiatives this semester will launch at or near the beginning of the upcoming semester.

## *Initiatives and Projects*

### *1. New Logo for Student Senate*

The branding of the Undergraduate Student Senate has yet to be updated. In order to improve visibility it is important that the Senate brand be official and up-to-date.

This semester we worked on rebranding the Undergraduate Student Senate. Many of the logos on the letterheads, tablecloths etc were outdated and inconsistent. We aimed to create a new logo that would serve as the official Undergraduate Student Senate logo. We could then use this logo to rebrand all merchandise, signage and any other official Student Senate documents.

Throughout the semester we worked with a student on creating the design. Though it has not yet been released, a new logo has been created.

## 2. *Tumblr*

There have been many requests for an easier way for students to keep up-to-date on senate events and give feedback to student senate. Though we encourage students to email chairs, no other forum exists. We researched other forums to be used for this purpose and determined that a Tumblr would be the best option. We purchased the domain (cmusenate.org) and created the site.

The Tumblr was created towards the end of the semester with the goal of providing a more casual summary of the minutes, updates on initiatives, as well as a forum for feedback from students. This initiative is intended to be launched at the start of the upcoming semester.

## 3. *Doherty Printer Sign*

The printer in Doherty Hall was installed last year. However, very few students are aware of its existence since its location is semi-remote. The printer itself is located outside of the Chemical Engineering Cluster on the first floor of Doherty Hall. Since this is a low traffic area, a need for a sign indicating the location of the printer was necessary.

There will be a plaque at the location of the printer as well as a sign on the main hall. The plaque will accredit the departments that funded the printer and the sign on the main hall will direct students to the location of the printer itself.

We worked with Kimberly Hennessey to determine the appropriate size and content of the signs. Though fully funded by Student Senate, the plaque at the printer will include the names of the other departments that funded the Doherty printer: Chemical Engineering Department and Computing Services.

The sign has been created and approved. The sign should be ordered and installed during the first few weeks of the upcoming semester.

## 4. *Hot Chocolate*

The hot chocolate initiative was an effort to more proactively reach out to constituents. We came up with the concept of passing out free hot chocolate with quick senate facts on the cups as well as any other merchandise that we could give away.

The event was piloted the last Friday of classes and was generally successful. In the future we hope to come up with an efficient way to not only communicate to the student body, but also to receive feedback as well.

## 5. *Twitter*

This semester there was a lot of feedback indicating that the Student Senate needed to communicate with campus better. We, as a committee, felt as though a twitter was one of the new ways in which we could do this.

The twitter was another outlet we used to update campus on senate events/big changes made in meetings. It was difficult to truly assess the success of the twitter. However, we plan to post on the twitter more regularly by assigning someone that job specifically.

## 6. *The Gavel*

The Gavel was one of our most difficult projects this semester. We determined that the Gavel as we knew it was not an effective method of communicating to campus.

The previous Gavel attempts were heavy with committee materials and official reports. We decided that a better approach with the Gavel was to make it a bit more casual and offer a raffle along with it. The reports from each committee would be rather short and a senator would be featured with each issue in effort for students to know who their senators are. This way we hoped to grab the attention of the student body.

The Gavel will be launched with the new logo at the start of next semester.

# Finance

**Chair:** Kyra Gould

**Members:** Willy Elmore, Joe Vukovich, DongJin (Mike) Shin

## Mission Statement

The Finance Committee exists to encourage campus involvement by supporting worthy groups and the events that they host on campus through special allocations. We strive to promote a diversity of programming that engages the student population and brings the campus closer together. We encourage fiscal responsibility, both of Student Government and campus organizations, through proper budgeting and exploration of alternative funding sources.

## Overview

This semester, the committee focused on the goal of reviewing special allocations in timely, effective and consistent manner.

This goal inspired the introduction of a budget template available to and encouraged for use by all organizations requesting funds. This helped the committee in our efforts to address the same sets of issues in each allocation, and to compare group requests to other similar requests and JFC budgets for the group and for similar events.

I felt confident by the end of the semester that each committee member understood the issues at stake, put in the time and effort necessary to make informed decisions, and was invested in the process. Committee members asked insightful questions, brought up good connections, and always came ready to work.

## Completed Projects:

### 1. Model Budget

We have put together a model budget that illustrates what we expect from groups that submit for a Special Allocation. It is available on the Senate Funding website.

### 2. Special Allocations Accountability Project

The Finance Committee encourages groups to be more accountable to Senate for the Special Allocations spending. In efforts to accomplish that, within a month of an event or group being funded by Senate the Finance committee asks that groups turn in receipt copies to Senate. Failure to do is noted and should be taken into account in further allocation funding.

## Special Allocations:

**Total Requested Amount: \$63413.98**

**Total Recommended Amount: \$34280.82**

**Total Allocated Amount: \$36721.32**

## Senate Body Heard and Granted Recommendations:

- Mock Trial
- SEDS
- CMU Unicef

- Computer Club
- International Relations Organization
- Drama
- Quidditch Club
- OM
- CMU EMS
- ASLC
- Stever House
- CWCC
- International Conference for Arts and Humanities
- Habitat for Humanity
- ASCE
- Filmmaking Club
- AB Concerts
- Dancer's Symposium
- APEX
- Veritas Forums

**Senate Body Heard and Reduced Recommendations:**

- Pi Delta Psi

**Senate Body Heard and Increased Recommendations:**

- Delta Delta Delta
- ISU
- Bhangra in the Burgh
- CSA

# Internal Development

**Chair:** Ashley Reeder [alreeder@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:alreeder@andrew.cmu.edu)

**Committee Members:**

*Bryan Spencer* (Senior, CIT)

-bryan.r.spencer@gmail.com

*Amy Quispe* (Junior, CS)

- amq@cmu.edu

**Mission Statement:**

The duties of the internal development committee stand as follows. It is to plan and coordinate educational workshops and seminars for Student Senate and its standing internal committees, and the Member-at-Large Caucus. The committee maintains records of Student Senate transactions over the course of each session. It acts to ensure that the Sergeant at Arms maintains the Student Senate office in a clean and orderly condition. It ensures that each Student Senator is provided with the most up to-date version of these bylaws, the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution*, and other rules of Student Senate and Student Government. It is to consider legislation, petitions, and other matters relating to these bylaws, the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution*, and other issues pertaining to Student Senate and Student Government. It works with the objective of promoting effectiveness and morale within Student Senate. Finally it is to take responsibility for any business charged to the committee by Student Senate.

**Detail of Semester Initiatives:**

- **Senate Bonding Retreat at Linsly Ropes Course**

**Status: Complete**

- Attended by 18 senators, it was the purpose of the retreat to establish bonds between members of a senate body which consisted largely of members without any previous experience with senate. Through participation in a variety of physical ropes courses and outdoor activities, it was the goal to facilitate discussion about effective strategies for working as a team to accomplish individual and group goals while allowing both returning and new senators to interact with each other. A brief presentation accompanied by powerpoint was given at the following senate general body meeting to convey the valuable lessons discovered and discussed in depth during the retreat with the rest of the body. This presentation was created and given jointly by myself and Anshul Dhanker.

*Logistics:*

-Coordinated with director Jeff Hasis (email: loc1@zoominternet.net)

-Required to fill out LOC contract with Kaycee Palko

-Required Senators to sign both a CMU and LOC waiver

-Coordinated bus with Abigail Fasulo

- **New Senator Training**

**Status: Complete**

- I held a one hour session required of all new senators to attend to present an overview of the Undergraduate Student Senate bylaws and constitution, explain parliamentary procedure and its place in Senate meetings, and provide an overview of the larger student government process at CMU. Because there is a steep learning curve with senate, it was intended to lessen preliminary confusion, promote new senate participation, and educated senators as to our mission and purpose, as well as the way in which we act to accomplish tasks and carry out business.

- **Set up the New-Senate Mentee Program-**

- **Status: Complete**

- Paired all new senators and members-at-large with a mentor. The mentor and new senator were then to have a brief meeting on their own time to discuss and answer any questions about senate. It is the purpose of this mentee program to welcome new senators and to allow them to discuss senate on a more individual basis. It is the hope that they walk away from the mentee get-together with a better understanding of senate and a strong connection to a more experienced member. Ultimately, it assists in retaining senators and sparking interest while serving as an informative experience.

- **Created and employed The Task list for use by all committees**

- **Status: Ongoing**

- It was the hope of the shared task list to encourage committee chairs to stay on top of what initiatives all members of the committee were currently pursuing. It was also meant to hold those Senators completing the initiatives accountable to their objectives and to encourage their accomplishment in a timely fashion by adhering to tentative deadlines. As well, it was meant to be used as a tool for the chairs and committee members to identify in what areas they needed assistance and where collaboration with other committees might prove beneficial. I would like to encourage better use of this model in the upcoming semester.

- **Employed bi-weekly check-in's:**

- **Status: Ongoing**

- Assigned ID committee members to other committees to serves as points of contact to ensure all resources are being used properly. It was the hope that they would reference the task sheet and email the appropriate senators to ask about the progress of initiatives and determine where assistance could be directed and in what fashion.