

# CMU Student Senate

Minutes of January 22, 2009

## 5:08 Roll Call

**Senators Present:** Cassandra Abernathy (CIT, .5 absence), Mana Ameri (CIT, .5 proxy), Miriam Cha (CIT, 1 absence), Zexi Chen (SCS, 1.5 absence), Jason Deng (SCS), Jake Flittner (CIT), Aaron Gross (HSS), Michael He (CIT), Jayesh Kapoor (TSB, .75 absence), Barbara Kasbergen (CFA), Eunjin Kim (CFA, 1 absence, 1 proxy), Chansaly Ker (CIT), Diane Lee (CIT), Kush Mangal (MCS), Bassem Mikhael (BHA/BSA/SHS), Natalie Morris (SCS, .5 proxy), Daniel O'Toole (CIT, 1 absence), Stuti Pandey (HSS), Marcela Partida (CIT), Dina Patel (MCS, .5 absence), Robert Piston Jr. (MCS), Vivake Prasad (HSS), Sonali Shah (MCS, .5 absence), Prashanth Swamy (MCS), Benjamin Trump (BHA/BSA/SHS), Thomas Tuttle (SCS), Akshay Udiavar (CFA, 1 proxy), Carolina Velez (HSS, .5 absence), Eric Wu (SCS, .5 absence)

**Senators Absence:** Christopher Franzi (HSS, 1 absence), Brian Wade (TSB, 1 absence)

**Members-at-Large Present:** Jarett Adams, Toro Adeyemi, Amy Kao (1 absence), My Le, Zack Pierce, Keshav Raghavan, Stephanie Schneider, Zachary Stockwell, Krishan Taylor

**Members-at-Large Absent:** Urna Biswas (2 absence), Gurmukh Chabra (2 absence), Marcel Christian (2 absence), Peter Choi (2 absence), Meghan Nahass (1 absence), Will Zhang (2 absence)

## 5:08 Call to Order

## 5:08 Agenda Approved

## 5:08 Minutes Approved

## 5:09 Committee Reports

- **Academic Affairs (Brian Wade):** Unable to attend.
- **Business Affairs (Benjamin Trump):** Computers in UC are not permanent; they are just a pilot project. Working to change that.
- **Campus Life (Chansaly Ker):** Doing a campus gear sale beginning February 22, every other week. Ordering only sweatshirts.
  - (Krishan Taylor) Prices yet?
    - No.
- **Communications (Mana Ameri):** Had the activities fair and had “cookies for comments.” Putting up a poster in the UC.
- **Finance (Marcela Partida):** First funding meeting today. Remember that what we put is just a recommendation.
- **Internal Development (Cassandra Abernathy):** Valentines Dinner is Feb. 12 after the Senate meeting. Show the hand book again.
- **Member-at-Large Caucus:** No report.
- **Chair:** Thank you to the communications committee for the activities fair. Will be reading through the comments. Will make face book events to advertise the vacancies.

## 5:14 Ex-officio report: Jared and Pooja

- Meghan- chief of staff.
- Aneech-constitutional advisor. Working on digital copies of senate and government bylaws.
- Want initial feedback on initiatives.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Proposal: Loop bus, runs on Friday and Saturday nights.
  - Pilot a loop bus for students on our campus.
  - Test week after spring break through May.
  - Gives students a change to explore and engage in Pittsburgh.

- More concerned with the overall idea rather than the monetary costs of it.
- About 5 to 10 thousand to run for 8 weekends.

### **5:18 Questions**

- (Carolina Velez) Will there be spots or signs?
  - There will be something at the UC. And then have a map to see destinations.
- (Marcela Partida) Why not align resources to make the loop with the waterfront?
  - They are looking to replace the shuttle system in the waterfront.
- (Mana Ameri) How much?
  - About 15 thousand a year.
- (Vivake Prasad) Where is the money coming from?
  - From the normal funds—student senate, campus life, etc.
- (Thomas Tuttle) Have you looked into using the same company so that it'd be cheaper?
  - We have Duquesne uses a private company.
- (Diane Lee) Do you know how many students ride the shuttle to the Waterfront? My concern is that people don't use their resources.
  - According to the Duquesne President it is one of their most successful things.
- (Marcela Partida) I think this a really good idea and I'm happy someone is taking the initiative to do it.
- (Thomas Tuttle) If it runs at later hours then I think it will be very useful.
- (Natalie Morris) As a freshman, Port Authority is really intimidating.
- (Zach Pierce) I feel like as college students, we can figure out the Port Authority schedule.
  - It's a reliable system.
- (Vivake Prasad) I agree with Zach but there's still no guarantee a bus will come.
- (Jared Itkowitz) Any other locations missing?
- (Stephanie Schneider) Probably don't want to many stops
- (Miriam Cha) Use weekends.
  - It runs 6pm to 3am on Friday and Saturday.
- (Thomas Tuttle) Add a 5<sup>th</sup> and Craig for the Oakland apartments.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Proposal: Operation Plaid**

- Make Carnegie Mellon more identifiable.
- Need a better sign.
- For more innovation, maybe a plaid crosswalk.
- Get the street flags on Forbes in front of the University.
- Increase campus identity.
- Perimeter flags--probably not much cost.
- Cross walk price pcan range from a few to 10 thousand.

### **5: 30 Questions/ Discussion**

- (Cassandra Abernathy) I think it's a good idea and will boost spirit.
- (Zach Stockwell) There are no fountains on Campus, and I find it a complete travesty. Most Universities have a sign fountain. I think that would look really sharp.
- (Stuti Pandey) I think it'll boost community spirit. However, did you consider other alternatives?
- (Natalie) I personally like the cross walk idea. Can you really paint it though?
  - We have a meeting this week
- (Marcela Partida) Have you talked yet with someone from FMS about their opinions?
  - Yes.
- (Thomas Tuttle) I think the perimeter flags are a great idea. I think the crosswalk would be harder than

it seems, not much better.

- (Vivake Prasad) What about around Margret Morrison Street since it is a less safe crosswalk. Universities master plan to make the campus more visible. Have you made sure you collaborated with their plan? Perhaps have this as a cheaper alternative.
- (Keshav Raghavan) How far?
  - If possible we would want to extend it father down Forbes.
- (Thomas Tuttle) Look at alternative, like flags with reflective ink.

#### **5:40 Special Business Bookstore Manager**

- Suggestions on the Bookstore.
- Speak about pricing issues from the Bookstore's perspective.
- Common perception is that it's trying to rip off students.
- It's a primary function is to serve students needs.
- Why it's so expensive?
  - Only 4% goes to income for the Bookstore. 75% goes to the publisher. 12% goes to the author of the book. Have to pay for operations, employees, freight, etc.
  - The 4% allows the Bookstore to stay on campus.
  - Helps the environment by reducing packaging.
  - Know what is asked by the professor.
  - Immediacy is another advantage.
- Specifics regarding pricing:
  - 4 major publishers. They increase their prices every year. They are the suppliers that set the prices.
  - Out margin is small compared to most retailers.
  - Trying to get more used copies. Have 8 used venders.
  - Looking into eTextbooks.

#### **5:50 Questions**

- (Michael He) I noticed with some online textbooks, like physics, they are sometimes half the price. Why?
  - We have to go through suppliers. It's most likely students.
    - What stops you from getting books at the same price?
      - We just don't have the means. We get books at the market value with a small discount.
- (Vivake Prasad) Return policy the first Friday of the semester. Many students don't have finalized schedules by that time.
  - Few years ago it was more lenient. Students would use the Bookstore as a lending library while they were waiting for their textbooks to arrive from online orders.
- (Keshav Raghavan) One is 160 in hardcover but the paperback was much cheaper. Why don't you order that one?
  - Paperbacks aren't usually available in the United States, usually only international copies have that option, which isn't available from domestic suppliers. Always get the cheapest option.
- (Benjamin Trump) Out of print books?
  - Very scarce.
- (Thomas) Do you get a higher markup on books?
  - Always sell 75% on the new price. There is always a ~25% markup for operational

costs.

- (Stuti Pandey) Paper binding books?
  - A lot goes into the binding and copyrights. Has to do with it being a small run but lots of costs involved.
- (Aaron Gross) Would it be possible to make the search easier on the bookstore website?
  - The software on the website is associated with all the software they use. May be able to add the title of the class in the database.
- (Cassandra) Office supplies prices are much higher in the Bookstore?
  - We are not able to buy it in the same bulk. Probably paying for the convenience.
- (Jared Itkowitz) Regarding return policy, what about getting a reduced amount for a book return if it's after the deadline?
- (Kush) Princeton uses the Kindel.
  - Could look into that if that's what students are interested in reading. Don't have a way of integrating that yet.
- (Thomas Tuttle) Do a pilot of the e book first.
- (Paul Combe) Regarding returns, what about having a store credit system?
  - Still not feasible because of the costs.
  - Digital rights management—using more than one computer.
- (Chansaly Ker) Do you have the data on how much money you are losing?
  - We don't have the figures from the most recent book run. What to make sure what we are doing is what the campus wants. We are not going out of business anytime soon.
- (Stuti Pandey) New vs. used?
  - Publisher sometimes put out new editions to get more money. In that case the Bookstore cannot purchase any more used copies. Could have better luck if professors put in their textbooks on a timelier basis.
- (Zach Stockwell) Online personal ordering went bankrupt because a clothing vender went out of business. Are you finding another supplier?
  - There shouldn't be problems from companies that are still in business.
- (Kush Mangal) Book rental. Has the Bookstore ever tried book rentals?
  - We haven't tried that here. The professor would have to agree on a certain edition of a textbook that they would use over several years. Otherwise money is lost.
- (Zach Pierce) Regarding book buy back. Can you buy/ sell back books according to their condition?
  - Logistically might be difficult.
- (Vivake Prasad) Managing supplies. Has the store ever considered collaborating with other Universities on supplies?
  - UPitt and Carnegie Mellon are the only independent stores. In terms of used books supplies, there really is a limited supply.
- (Miriam Cha) Inter-library loan. Can we utilize something like that, a book lending system?
  - It would have to be a different model here. We would have to buy all of the books.
- (Timi) Put constraints on professors.
  - Deadline for this semester was November 10<sup>th</sup>.
- (Krishan Taylor) Return policies: any chance of those being implanted next semester of year.
  - Probably not this semester but possibly next year.
- (Stuti Pandey) Show a slip with a dropped class to get a full refund.
- Closing remarks: Office in Bookstore on lower level.

#### **6:24 0809-031: Approval of Resolution in Support of the Web Stations Project**

- Data overwhelmingly positive.

##### **6:25 Questions**

- (Vivake Prasad) I think we should mention how successful they are. We should be more concrete.
- (Daniel O'Toole) Is there talk of discontinuing it?
  - It's a pilot. It could stop or continue on. Sending it to the campus faculty regarding student support.
- (Natalie Morris) We are student representative to speak on behalf of the UC stations success.
- (Jared Itkowitz) It's hard to vote on something without the rationale to vote on it.
- (Thomas Tuttle) Is it a privacy issue?
  - She said that the papers cannot be removed from her office.
- Wants some visibility.
- (Aaron Gross) I definitely agree with the resolution, just wants to know why we are resolving.
- (Daniel O'Toole) Still can add more to say why we support it.
- (Zach Pierce) Can we amend?
- (Chair) Take time to amend and get more data.

#### **6:34 0809-032: Special Allocation of \$900 to The Impact Movement for "Redefined" Concert**

- Concert to bring new perspective to hip hop music.
- Money for cost of advertising and AB Tech.
- Look at power of music in our culture as a whole.
- Redefine the manner in which people see music.
- Gospel rap music.

##### **6:37 Questions**

- (Vivake Prasad) What's committee opinion on the religious aspect of it.
- We determined that they are not trying to put out a Christian message, but rather music.
- (Daniel O'Toole) Attendance?
- Rangos 1-3 Get funding from local places. Fill that entire space.
- (Stuti Pandey) Advertising to people outside of CMU—are you working with another outside organization?
  - It's cosponsored by local campuses and radio hosts. Also the artist. Also circulate on other campuses.

##### **6:40 Discussion**

##### **6:40 Move to vote. Simple Majority. Passed**

#### **6:41 0809-033: Special Allocation of \$ 500 to AB Special Events for Stringfever**

- Cover costs of and travel costs.

##### **6:45 Questions**

- (Thomas Tuttle) What other funding sources?
  - School of music declined. JSA. Could use JFC budget but will affect other events in the future.
- (Miriam Cha) When?
- Feb. 27 McConomy 3/5 \$

##### **6:47 Discussion**

- (Thomas Tuttle) Perhaps reconsider funding more.
  - They can fund the entire event already. In the future they can come for funding for events they

need money for.

- (Daniel O'Toole) It's unique

**6:49 Motion to increase amount from \$500 to \$1000.**

**6:50 Discussion**

- (Kush Mangal) Give an appreciable amount. And the event looks promising.
- (Jay Kapoor) The fact is they can fund this on their own so they should come back when they need.
- (Nara Kasbergen) Emphasize that they haven't found other funding sources.
- (Marcela Partida) They shouldn't be funded at all. Special allocation is for unforeseen expenses. But we thought it was a good event.
- (Aaron Gross) Use JFC budget for special events so keep amount to a minimum.
- (Vivake Prasad) The event as a whole is an unforeseen costs. It's a great event they'll be other events that might actually need the money. I strongly support the finance committee's decision.

**6:56 Vote to raise allocation. Hand vote. Failed.**

**6:57 Discussion on allocating \$500.**

**6:58 Call to Question**

**6:58 Move to Vote. Hand vote. Passed.**

**6:56 0809 -034: Special Allocation of \$5,000 to AB Concerts for Spring Show (Carnival '09)**

- Asked for 10,000, but didn't justify depleting a 4<sup>th</sup> of our budget.
- Had an unrealistic income expectation.

**7:01 Questions**

- (Mike He) Other sources of funding?
  - Talked to other sources of funding from AB chairs.
- (Vivake Prasad) Difference between show and income.
  - About 5,000.
    - What's the total budget?
    - 75,000, costs more for bigger name artists.
- (Toro Adeyemi) Who do you collaborate with to decide which bands to bring?
  - 50 people approx.
- Looking more toward a rock option.
- (Keshav Raghavan) Can't you compare it to last year. Why not use that as a model?
  - Roots was 40 thousand, however there are more variables.
  - 10 thousand need it standard in our budget.
- (Robert Piston) Timeline for a bid?
  - Need to do this proactively.
  - ABs job has the interest in serving the student body.
- (Daniel O'Toole) 5thousand and booking?
  - Yes, it depends on the 5000.
- (Diane Lee) Great event and a lot of people from the Pittsburgh community attend. I think we should definitely find it,

**7:17 Call to question**

**7:17 Move to Vote. Simple Majority. Passed.**

**7:19 Points of Discussion**

- Will be meeting with the director of enrollment services.
- Outside scholarship policy.

- CMU will deduct half over six thousand received
- (Vivake Prasad) Rationale is that other people news it. Have you considered that resending this rule would have other people losing their potential need based grant?
- Call other schools with similar population sizes or endowments.
- (Zach Pierce) Do you want to eliminate it completely or just up the amount?
- (Daniel O'Toole) Who are you trying to benefit?
  - Speaking on behalf of people affected.
  - Serves as an invisible barrier.
- (Benjamin Trump) Speak with Deb Moon, our CFO.
- (Jarret Adams) CMU has monetary issues.
- (Krishan Taylor) That money goes back to other students who need the money; it could potentially need the money but would not receive it.
  - Students earned the scholarships. With a need based system, it doesn't make sense.
- (Vivake Prasad) Look into why the number 6. Instead of looking into the 6, look into what the exact person needs. Scholarship is an income and thus counts against your need. There's a distinction between the two. Might want to suggest moving to a system as much as you need, rather than using the arbitrary 6 thousand dollars. The system is blind to the merit.

#### **7:35 Poll—Discussion on the Student Activities Fee.**

#### **7:37 SAC Follow-up**

- Email red flags about SACs.
- (Daniel O'Toole) Should have a discussion. People should not look at the interest of time. Here to make smart intelligent decisions.
- (Vivake Prasad) Current status of policy: confusion. Will have a school wide survey. Want feedback. Senate plays a role in publicizing it to students. Can schedule a meeting with her.
- Kim Abel working with new vendors. Relay message that if Parkhurst stays, they need to change. No other option.

#### **7:45 Adjourn**