

Minutes
General Body Meeting
Spring 2012
January 19, 2011



Senators Present:

CIT: Alyssa Danesh, Anshul Dhankher, Mala Shah, Sohini Roy, William Elmore, Joshua Yee, Bryan Spencer (0.5 absence)

MCS: Ashley Reeder (0.5 absence), Neha Chaurasia (0.5 absence), Rafael Segal

CFA: Jonathan Mark, Nikhil Sambamurthy, Travis Rozich

TSB: Rishi Patel, Dixon Liang

HSS: William Weiner, Andres Velez (0.5 absence), Bryan Wade (0.5 absence), Nancy Brown, Seth Vargo, Mike Shin

BHA/BSA/SHS: Joseph Vukovich

SCS: Daniel Pomeroy

Senators Absent:

Abigail Ondeck (1 absence), Ashley Dickson (1 absence), Christopher Jarrett (1 absence), Fermin Liang (1 absence), Aaron Chiu (1 absence), Andrew Biar (1 absence), Amy Quispe (1 absence), Peter Liang (1 absence)

5:04 - Approval of Agenda

- Motion to Approve Agenda and Minutes. Seconded by Anshul, Voice Vote. Motion Passed

5:04 – Initial Discussion

- [Rafael] Why did CMU shuttles to the airport disappear for breaks since CMU students make up 2/3 of the people on the bus?
- [Will] This is a legitimate point, we should investigate further
- [John] Point of information – the only reason 28x exists is due to the CMU student transportation fee

5:08 - Committee Reports

- **Academic Affairs**
 - Awesome assignments are coming up. Meetings are Tuesdays at 8pm
- **Business Affairs**
 - A lot more information coming up next week. Meetings are Mondays at 5pm or 5:30pm UC 320
- **Campus Life**
- **Communications**

- We have created a new Student Senate logo which needs to be put on everything including the Facebook group, table cloth, banners, and gavel. The website needs to be updated, let Alyssa know if anyone is interested in writing a blog entry. Meetings are on Tuesdays at 4:30pm or 5pm
- [John] The blog should contain a link towards funding instructions
- [Seth] Blog posts should be posted with information about special allocations, news regarding new officers etc.
- [Will] The goal of the blog is to act as an informal line of communication and to increase accessibility for Student Senate
- [Vivek]: Why is there a new logo?
 - It is part of a campus initiative for unified branding
- **Finance**
 - New finance philosophy and policy update which is outlined in the finance document emailed to all senators. I will also be asking trivia questions
- **Internal Development**
 - We are changing the task tree. I want to rekindle the bonding and friendship of Student Senate and easing the transition process at the end of semester for officers. If you any ideas, let Ashley know
- **Chair Report**
 - We are talking about raising the activities fee program. We will get a better idea of next numbers and change will start happening next year
 - CampusLink is a new orgtracker for the university with more features in the software package. Updates to come
 - The Tartan has transitioned leadership and the editor in chief is interested in working with us, potentially creating a Student Senate section of the Tartan. Relations are getting better – come to exec meetings to discuss
 - In terms of ExOfficios, who should we invite to meetings? Michael Murphy, Bob Reppy, other administrators?
 - [Anshul] Computing Services and Kim Abel
 - Culinar has delivered an information package. They are creating a social media push on sites like Facebook and Twitter. What about student exofficios?
 - [Seth] Get Jason to talk about what GSA is doing

5:16 - Fiscal Policy

- **Fiscal Policy Changes**
 - This is a very young senate and some of you have probably not read the bylaws, especially fiscal policy. Finance decisions have primarily been led by precedence as opposed to policy; therefore, we should become familiar with the special allocation policy, specifically Article 4

- I would like to establish some guiding principles to special allocations.
- In the past, I believe we react too harshly towards groups who don't have JFC funding; however, these types of groups rely on us more heavily for funding
- I am making a large procedural change. For future allocations, groups will deficit spend on their accounts and submit receipts to us for reimbursement. This will insure that groups only get what they spend and we will have better control of where money's going
- **Questions/Discussion:**
 - [Seth] I really like the idea. Are you receiving the receipts? It seems like a lot of work for finance chair
 - I don't anticipate a huge audit. I will simply look at a receipt and make sure it is consistent with approved items. Right now receipts are collected and filed, but are not checked
 - [Ashley] I like the idea as well. How will you handle organizations that are not allowed to spend in deficit due to financial restrictions?
 - [Casey] The groups will need to manage their accounts and bring this up to the finance committee if it is a problem
 - [Alyssa] You should set up some type of standard format for groups to submit receipts
 - [Dan] You should get help from other people in the finance committee
 - I don't see this as a huge burden. 2-3 receipts per event will take about 45 seconds. I am of course always willing to delegate
 - [Seth] A follow-up to Ashley's question, what if the group is not JFC funded and does not have an oracle account
 - Every group seeking funding has to have an oracle account or a group willing to sponsor them with an oracle account
 - [Seth] is this documented anywhere?
 - I am not sure
 - [Vivek] How do you deal with groups that underspend on the allocation?
 - [Casey] In DoSA, we only fund up to the money spent
 - In the past, we only fund up to the money spent
 - [Alyssa] What if a group doesn't submit receipts?
 - I am not sure, but we will most likely not fund them
- **New Funding Application**
 - [Ashley] It might be a good idea to update the website with the new funding forms
 - Forms for special allocation are self-generating and won't be too much work on my part. Hopefully this can be passed on to benefit Senate in years to come with minimal transition effort

- [Rafael] The requirement of receipts should be in big bold letters on the application
- It is very clear in the email sent to group that seek allocations and groups are usually very careful when asking for funding so this is most likely not a problem
- I'm now going to show you the new special allocation form. Let me know if you have any feedback
- [Seth] You should edit the padding to form a bit
 - I will still be working on the colors and design of the form
- **Further Fiscal Policy Changes**
 - The finance committee will be sending a survey in the future to determine how much responsibility the finance committee should take so that certain groups don't need to come to general body for allocations
 - I'd like to return to fiscal policy discussion and determine our guiding principles for allocations. What are things we cannot fund, what is ¾'s, what must be on posters, what are disciplines that should be more heavily enforced and where should our funding go? I'm curious for feedback
 - [Seth] What bothered me about mock trial was that it was an example of fiscal irresponsibility that opens doors for any group that is frivolous with money due to transition. This will affect future decisions
 - [Rishi] This should be determined on a case-by-case basis
 - There have been continuity issues for our special allocation decisions. Year-by-year there are big changes for senate allocations. We should set down some rules so that we're not partial or biased
 - [Alyssa] There's something to be said about a group that is recognized, but it's also important to look at groups not recognized, not JFC funded on a case-by-case basis.
 - All groups should be JFC-recognized
 - [Dan] What about Greek Life? They can only raise money through fundraising and SDC
 - Greeks are allowed to come to student senate for funding in order to receive their student activities fee
 - [Casey] We wouldn't want them to double-dip in the student activities fee
 - How will that apply for Spring Break trips?
 - [Casey] Either JFC didn't fund them or unexpected costs. We should bridge that gap
 - Although it is great that we are filling this gap, nothing in the bylaws would support doing so, is this something you want to see continue?
 - [Bianca] Can we define fiscal responsibility?

- [Nancy] The group that did Iron Chef last year was an example of fiscal irresponsibility
- [Seth] The Quidditch competition missed deadlines and had to pay late fees/penalties –this is an unexpected cost that could have been avoided
- [Rafael] I think if the group made a reasonable effort pursuing the obvious resources and there are still unexpected costs, we should support them
- Irresponsibility is determined on a case-by-case basis. It is most important to look at precedence of what's been irresponsible in the past
- Ashley: I agree Fiscal irresponsibility is case-by-case such as ski club working out of their debt. For spring break trips I believe metrics been working out pretty well
 - The spring break metric is dead, we adhere to the travel metric
- [Anshul] I am hesitant to blame current leadership on inherited problems, we should help out these groups. Another point I'd like to stress is what impact the group benefits to campus
- As long as the group is benefiting the undergraduate student population. Spring Break groups such as the Global Medical Brigade give back after spring break, provide important experience to students on the trips
- [Seth:] We should discuss JFC vs. Senate. Spring break trips can get JFC funding but Greeks cannot; however, Senate treats both groups the same
- Greeks cannot get JFC funding because not everyone is eligible to join. I don't think we treat them the same. Are you interested in talking with Monica/Ariel about how Greeks are funded?
- Bryan: IFC, Panhel, and MGC are creating a Greek accounting board and it wants to work with Student Senate
- Dan: Sometimes we should provide higher funding when the group has high impact
- An example of a good allocation was a group that wasn't aware of emergency vaccinations needed to go to a country
- [Andy] One problem I see is that people who tend to run organizations also tend to leave soon. Outgoing officers must understand on their impact on their groups
- [Rishi] why don't we fund Greek Sing?
 - [Will] We actually do fund Greek Sing. We will talk about these topics further when Spring Break Trips start coming to us

6:02 - Special Allocations

- **Special Allocation to Film Club**
 - **Finance**

- The International Film Festival is an annual event that brings a huge set of films to campus – other Pittsburgh schools fund the event but never as much as CMU
- **Film Club**
 - A lot of CMU students are on the board and it is a CMU-based organization
- **Questions:**
 - [Nancy] Is the event run out of the humanities center?
 - Yes, the list of affiliates is provided
 - [Bryan] What is your expected attendance and do people outside of CMU attend this?
 - People all over Pittsburgh attend the event. The majority of films are screened at UC McConomy. Movies are also shown at Pittsburgh Filmmakers. Better attendance is expected this year over last year.
 - [Seth] How do ticket sales work?
 - Tickets may be subsidized for CMU students if SDC funding is obtained
 - [Sohini] Why is there twice as much funding as last year?
 - There are more films and we are reaching out bigger and broader
 - [Rishi] how many out of the 3000 expected attendees are students
 - About 300 – 500 students
 - [Ashley] Is there transportation provided for off-campus locations?
 - Pittsburgh Filmmakers is within walking distance. There is no shuttle
 - [John] Most films screened at other sites will also be shown at CMU in UC McConomy
- **Discussion:**
 - [Alyssa] Seems like they've really expanded. I don't see why we shouldn't fund this
 - Motion to vote. Hand Vote. 19-0-3. Passed.
- **Special Allocation to TEDX**
 - **Finance**
 - We are the principle funding source for this great event. We have decided to fund the most essential parts which is travel and hotel fees for speakers
 - **TEDX**
 - This is the 3rd year hosting this event. Ticket applications doubled between 1st and 2nd year. The current amount is \$200 less than last year and we are asking if it would be possible to allocate the same amount as last year. This will cover an additional hotel.
 - [John] The funding amount was calculated based on \$300 per flight

- Two more speakers have confirmed since the last meeting with the finance committee
- **Questions**
 - [Sohini] who are the speakers and audience?
 - Speakers from are diverse disciplines such as technology, business, art, music (2 performers) and science
 - Attendees are CMU graduate and undergraduate students as well as and people in the area
 - [Willie] How many speakers? 13 expected
 - [Rishi] what are we funding?
 - Airfare and hotels, as of now 9 speakers need airfare while the other speakers are local
 - [Dan] where else can TEDX get money?
 - TEDX is currently receiving \$4000 from corporate sponsorship, \$700 from Project Olympus and \$500 from Heinz College
- **Discussion**
 - [Andy] The event definitely is something that affects more than just the college
 - Motion to raise allocation to \$4050. Seconded by Anshul
 - [Seth] Call to Question. Hand Vote. 19-1-2. Passed
 - Motion to pass \$4050. Hand Vote. 20-0-2. Passed
- **Special Allocation to Game Creation Society**
 - **Finance**
 - Organization cannot be represented due to a time conflict with a conference. The organization requires \$450 for a new server quickly. This is an unforeseen cost. Other sources of funding include fundraising, JFC budget, and dues
 - They make games, have 40 active members, and many use the creations for portfolios
 - **Discussion**
 - [Seth] Is this group open to anyone? Yes
 - They have a very small budget, built server with garbage out of Cyert Hall and they are trying to fundraise
 - [Joe] the code is available for people to see and they also document the process of creating their games
 - [Andy] the total group size is actually larger than 70 and they do other things on-campus including showcasing games

- [Seth] Motion to approve with unanimous consent. Seconded by Bryan.
Passed

6:25 - Elections

- **Campus Life Chair**
 - Nominations: Rishi Patel, Bryan Wade
 - Elected: Rishi Patel
- **Sergeant at Arms**
 - Nominations: Vivek, Alyssa & Seth (co-running)
 - Elected: Alyssa & Seth

7:15 –Final Points of Discussion

- [Casey] Winter Gala
- [Will] ExCom is cleaning office
- [Seth] Computing Services has Info Exchange

7:27 - Adjourn