

MINUTES¹

USG Senate Meeting
Thursday, March 24th, 2011

Meeting called to order at 7:13 pm. Meeting held in SAC Ballroom A.

Agenda item 1.0: Attendance

The roll was called:

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Senator Allen Abraham | Present |
| Senator Tahir Ahmad | Present |
| Senator Ory Baum | Present |
| Senator Spenser Cushing | Present |
| Senator Samuel Cushner | Present |
| Senator Ray Fan | Present |
| Senator Frank Fanizza | Present; Left early (approximately 8:30 pm) |
| Senator Christian Giraldo | Present |
| Senator Gary Hagan | Present |
| Senator Mahyar Kashan | Present |
| Senator Sidrah Khan | Present |
| Senator Thomas Kirnbauer | Present |
| Senator Yan Leyfman | Present |
| Senator Kirin Mahmud | Late (approximately 8:30 pm) |
| Senator Kenneth Myers | Present |
| Senator Shivani Rampersad | Absent |
| Senator Masood Rustemi | Present |
| Senator Safeer ² | Present |
| Senator Najee Simmons | Present |
| Senator Priya Sohi | Present |
| Senator Peter Stratoudakis | Present |
| Senator Russell Williams | Late (approximately 7:30 pm) |

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| President Matthew Graham | Present |
| Executive Vice President (EVP) Deborah Machalow (Chair) | Present |
| Treasurer Jackie Mark | Absent |
| Vice President of Academic Affairs Forbes | Absent |
| Vice President of Clubs and Organizations Jennifer Chan | Absent |
| Vice President of Communications David Mazza | Present |
| Vice President of Student Life Peter Molloy | Absent |
| Senior Class Representative Dexter Daniel | Late (7:34 pm) |

¹ Typically, minutes should only contain the essentials of a meeting. This includes the meeting time and location, a list of those who attended, as well as a record of all motions made and their outcome. Debate or even a summary of debate is usually not included. I include it here at the request of the Chair. Mistakes and omissions are likely, so Senators are encouraged to e-mail the Secretary with corrections prior to the next Senate meeting, so that the record reflects what was actually said at the meeting and so corrections can be made efficiently.

² Ms. Safeer is a newly appointed USG Senator. Her GPA has not been checked yet for compliance to the USG Constitution's mandate that USG Senators maintain a minimum GPA of 2.5 or above. As such, by order of the Chair and without objection, she shall be afforded full speaking privileges but will not be allowed to vote.

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| Junior Class Representative Emilissa Trotman | Absent |
| Sophomore Class Representative Neville Hall Jr. | Present |
| Freshman Class Representative Rodriguez | Absent |

Quorum established.

Agenda item 2.0: Announcements

The Chair announced that the GPA check for Senator Hagan and Senator Myers has been completed, and that the duly appointed Senators now have full voting rights.

The Chair announced the appointment of Ms. Safeer, who will have full speaking privileges but no voting rights, until the required GPA check is complete.

The Chair announced that Senators are honor bound not to discuss with members outside of the organization any proceedings undertaken in Executive Session.

The Chair struck "Craft Club" and replaced with "Business Leaders, Math Club, and Young Americans for Freedom" under item 8.0 in the agenda, without objection.

Agenda item 3.0: Approval of the Minutes from 3/17/2011

- Senator Abraham moved to approve the 3/17/2011 meeting minutes.
 - The motion was approved without objection.

Agenda item 4.0: Belly Dancers Contract

- Senator Kirnbauer presented the Belly Dancers Contract.
- Senator Rustemi moved to approve the Belly Dancers Contract:
 - Motion approved by a vote of 18-0-0. (Roll Call #1).

Agenda item 5.0: Cheerleading Contract

- Senator Kirnbauer presented the Cheerleading Contract.
 - Grand total of \$2500.
 - Approved by Campus Recreation.
- Senator Fanizza moved to approve the Cheerleading Contract.
 - Motion approved by a vote of 18-0-0. (Roll Call #2).

Agenda item 6.0: 2011 Senate Resolution Condemning State Budget Cuts to Stony Brook University

- President Graham made the presentation.
 - It is our job as representatives to take a strong stance on the budget issue.
 - 786 students were surveyed.
 - The survey collected a variety of information on survey takers, and features students from myriad majors, living situations, and circumstances.
 - The survey asked participants a wide range of questions, gathering information on student financial situations, hours worked during the summer or academic year, whether or not they received need-based aid, etc.
 - A large majority of students are in debt and receive state and/or federal support for their education.
 - With \$400 dollar tuition increase, 7% of survey respondents said they would be forced to leave Stony Brook.

- With a \$1000 increase, 15% of respondents indicated they would be forced to leave Stony Brook.
- 215 students (out of 786 surveyed) said they have had to delay graduation because they were unable to get into a class they needed.
- Students indicated that they would be willing to pay more to prevent certain items, such as “discontinuing your own major” and “delaying your graduation” by larger margins than “fewer campus events” or “elimination of your favorite athletic team.”
- Survey collected 46 pages of students who left written feedback.
- President Graham presented the resolution, entitled: “2011 Senate Resolution Condemning State Budget Cuts to Stony Brook University.”
 - The resolution condemns diminishing state support for SUNY and to Stony Brook University in particular.
 - The President read the “resolved” section of the resolution.
- Senator Abraham moved that the USG Senate adopt the “2011 Senate Resolution Condemning State Budget Cuts to Stony Brook University.”
 - Motion approved by a vote of 19-0-0. (Roll Call #3).

Agenda item 7.0: Men’s Rugby Contract for Amanda Jones

- Senator Kirnbauer presented the contract for Amanda Jones.
 - Senator Ahmad: I do not believe that we should fund contracts for undergraduate students participating in campus clubs.
 - I do not think it is okay for us to redistribute Student Activity Fee funds to undergraduate students. We should also write amendments in the future preventing this from happening.
 - Senator Khan: Members of the Budget Committee agreed with Senator Ahmad’s thinking in terms of future policy. In this instance, however, I believe we should pay the student, because the services were already rendered in the fall.
 - Senator Kirnbauer: I wish to emphasize that this students has already done these services. I would be happy to look at legislation that prevents this situation in the future.
 - Senator Ahmad: I believe this student should be paid, because she has already rendered services, but I am strongly opposed to this happening in the future.
 - Senator Cushing: In the future, perhaps we can look at amending our financial rules, but I see no problem in funding her now.
- Senator Khan moved to approve the contract for Amanda Jones.
 - Motion approved by a vote of 18-0-1. (Roll Call #4).

**Agenda item 8.0: Special Services Council Recommendation
Business Leaders**

- Senator Giraldo presented the SSC Recommendation for “Business Leaders.”

- The purpose is to create a more general business club, which might appeal to anyone with a general business interest, including entrepreneurs, without having to be business majors.
- Senator Khan: Point of inquiry: Are we not approving all clubs at this point?
 - EVP: That is up to the Senate and the SSC.
- Senator Fanizza moved to approve the “Business Leaders of Stony Brook.”
 - Motion approved by a vote of 18-0-1. (Roll Call #5).

Math Club

- Senator Abraham presented the SSC Recommendation for “Math Club.”
 - Senator Hagan: What exactly do they do?
 - In the long term, they would compete with other schools in math “Olympiads.”
- Senator Fanizza moved to approve the “Math Club.”
 - Motion approved by a vote of 19-0-0. (Roll Call #6).

Young Americans for Freedom

- Senator Abraham presented the SSC Recommendation for “Young Americans for Freedom.”
 - The club’s mission statement is the “Sharon Statement.”
- Senator Ahmad moved to approve the “Young Americans for Freedom.”
 - Motion approved by a vote of 9-6-4. (Roll Call #7).

Agenda item 9.0: Nomination of SUNY Assembly Voting Delegate from the Executive Council

- President Graham nominated David Mazza.
- David Mazza approved, by unanimous consent, as the SUNY Assembly Voting Delegate from the Executive Council.

Agenda item 10.0: Nomination of SUNY Assembly Voting Delegate from the Senate

- President Graham nominated Senator Sohi as the Senate’s voting delegate.
- Senator Sohi was approved, by unanimous consent, as the SUNY Assembly Voting Delegate from the Senate.

Agenda item 11.0: Nomination of SUNY Assembly Voting Delegate from the Judiciary

- President Graham nominated Senator Giraldo as the voting delegate to represent the Judiciary.
 - EVP: The Judiciary did not care who would serve as their representative.
- Senator Giraldo was approved, by unanimous consent, as the SUNY Assembly Voting Delegate representing the Judiciary.

Agenda item 12.0: Senate Proxy Reform Law

- Senator Fanizza presented the “Proxy Reform Law.”
 - Restrictions: The proxy must be a full-time matriculated undergraduate student at Stony Brook University.
 - The proxy must be of the same constituency as the absent Senator.
 - Further restrictions are included in the legislation.

- Senator Abraham: I believe that the 12-hour restriction is unnecessary.
- Senator Giraldo: I was under the impression that Executive Council members are considered non-voting members of the Senate. Would a rule including them be necessary?
 - EVP: Yes, but as the rules stand now, they could proxy for a USG Senator and have voting rights in that capacity.
- Senator Ahmad: This piece of legislation is a huge disservice to Senators. Who gives us a right to designate who should serve as a proxy? It is already hard enough for a Senator to find a proxy. We should be able to pick whomever we like and is best able to present our views and interests. I propose that we strike out the second line of section 4, line 1. I think it is good enough that the designated proxy is an undergraduate student. At the end of the day, we should only consider undergraduate students as a whole as our constituency.
- Senator Fanizza: To respond to Senator Ahmad's statement. How many Senators are commuters? At least 9,000.
- Senator Cushing moved to amend the agenda to immediately consider item 13.0, by designating it as item 11.9.
 - Motion was approved by a vote of 16-1-3. (Roll Call #8)

Agenda item 11.9: Election of a President Pro-Tempore

- Senator Kirnbauer and Senator Abraham were nominated.
- Senator Cushing moved to close nominations and vote.
 - The motion was approved without objection.
- Motion to take the PPT vote by roll call vote.
 - Motion fails by a vote of 9-9-2 (Chair voted No, bringing the final tally to 9-10-2; Roll Call #9.)
 - Vote was taken by recorded, non-secret ballot.
- PPT Election:

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| ○ Votes for Senator Kirnbauer: | 11 |
| ○ Votes for Senator Abraham: | 5 |
| ○ Abstentions: | 4 |
| ○ Total Filled Seats: | 21 |
| ○ Votes required to be elected PPT: | 11 |
| ○ Senator Kirnbauer elected as PPT. | |

 (Breakdown of votes recorded under #10).
- Motion by Senator Kirnbauer to amend the agenda, to insert item 11.9.1, HSO Grant.
 - Motion approved by a vote of 19-0-0. (Roll Call #11).

Agenda item 11.9.1: Haitian Student Organization (HSO) Grant

- Senior Class Representative Daniel presented the grant request.
- Senator Ahmad moved to approve the HSO grant request for \$1041.73.

- Decision: Motion approved by a vote of 19-0-0. (Roll Call #12).

Agenda item 12.0: Senate Proxy Reform Law (continued)

- Senator Ahmad moved to postpone indefinitely the legislation entitled “Senate Proxy Reform Law.”
 - I believe that by postponing indefinitely, this allows us to include proxy reform language in any future reform of the Senate Bylaws, where proxy reform would be more appropriate.
- EVP stood down from Chair. PPT Kirnbauer assumed the Chair.
 - EVP: Numerous attempts at USG Senate by-law reform have floundered in committee.
 - Senator Ahmad: It would be more proper to have the proxy reform in the bylaws. Bylaw reforms will hopefully be completed this month.
 - Senator Fan: I strongly agree with Senator Fanizza and EVP Machalow. I believe this is a good piece of legislation and I believe we should reform the proxy process so as to avoid abuse. Proxies should be students of Stony Brook. I think we should vote on this right now.
 - Senator Ahmad moved to end debate.
 - Motion approved by a vote of 18-0-0. (Roll Call #13).
 - On the main motion (to postpone indefinitely the Senate Proxy Reform Law):
 - Motion approved by a vote of 14-3-1. (Roll Call #14).
- PPT Kirnbauer relinquished the Chair. EVP Machalow assumed the Chair.

Agenda item 14.0: Open Agenda

- Senator Rustemi: The budget crisis is a major issue. I am disappointed that the Senate was less efficient today and wasted a lot of time on the Proxy Reform legislation.
- Senator Ahmad: I have a friend who works 15 hours every week just so he can have enough money to attend Stony Brook full time. It is not right that people lose need-based assistance, nor is it right that the University cut classes forcing people to spend more than four years to complete their undergraduate degree. I believe we should brainstorm more ways than the survey and the resolution to fight this issue and support our students.
- Aarti (NYPIRG):
 - NYPIRG Straphanger’s campaign is a public transportation campaign.
 - There are severe bus cuts proposed to Nassau County buses, which affect many SUNY students. Over 25 out of 40 bus routes in Nassau County might be cut.
 - NYPIRG has organized petitions in order to speak out against this.
- Meeting adjourned at 9:04 pm.

| | Attendance | Roll Call #1 | #2 | #3 | #4 | #5 | #6 | #7 | #8 | #9 | #10 | #11 | #12 | #13 | #14 |
|--------------|------------|--------------|--------|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|-------------|-----------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| Abraham | P | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | N | Abstain | Abstain | Abstain | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Ahmad | P | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Abstain | Y | Abstain | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Baum | P | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | N | Y | Y | Kirnbauer | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Cushing | P | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | N | Y | N | Abraham | Y | Y | Y | N |
| Cushner | P | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Kirnbauer | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Fan | P | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | N | Abraham | Y | Y | Y | N |
| Fanizza | P | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Abraham | Absent | | | |
| Giraldo | P | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Abstain | Y | N | Abraham | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Hagan | P | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | N | Y | N | Kirnbauer | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Kashan | P | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Kirnbauer | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Khan | P | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | N | Kirnbauer | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Kirnbauer | P | Y | Y | Y | Abstain | Abstain | Y | N | Abstain | Abstain | Abstain | Y | Y | Chair | Chair |
| Leyfman | P | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | N | Kirnbauer | Y | Y | Y | Abstain |
| Mahmud | Absent | | | | | | | | Y | N | Kirnbauer | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Myers | P | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Abstain | Y | N | Abstain | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Rampersad | Absent | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rustemi | P | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Kirnbauer | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Simmons | P | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Kirnbauer | Y | Y | Y | N |
| Sohi | P | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Abstain | Y | N | Kirnbauer | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Stratoudakis | P | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | N | N | Y | Kirnbauer | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Williams | Absent | | | Y | Y | Y | Y | Abstain | Y | Y | Abraham | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Total: | | 18-0-0 | 18-0-0 | 19-0-0 | 18-0-1 | 18-0-1 | 19-0-0 | 9-6-4 | 16-1-3 | 9-10-2 | 11-5-4 | 19-0-0 | 19-0-0 | 18-0-0 | 14-3-1 |
| Decision: | | Passes | Passes | Passes | Passes | Passes | Passes | Passes | Passes | Chair NO | Kirnbauer | Passes | Passes | Passes | Passes |

Y = Yes; N = No; A = Abstain; Ab = Absent

Total is in Y-N-A format.

Roll Call votes for 24-Mar-2011 USG Senate Meeting