



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
CONGRESS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

THIRTY-SECOND CONGRESS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

Assembly Meeting
February 19, 2024
6:30pm
Minutes

Call to Order: 6:38pm

Pledge of Allegiance: Rep. McCraney

Roll Call: Present: Alleyne, Balak, Balogun, Barber, Burns, Cyrille, Delva, Ebuara, Galeano, Hussain, McCraney, Medarev, Nord, Rogowski, Rowan, Siegel, Solmaz, Vaughn, Velez, Wardlow

Absent Excused: Pakdehi, Wesner, Wheeler

Reading and approval of the Minutes: Burns, 2nd - Rogowski

Petitions into the Assembly:

Elisabeth Schumm, Students with Disabilities Advocate

First year masters student in the Higher Education department. Got undergraduate degree at FSU. Has served as an officer within various RSOs. Works in Housing. Has seen the hurdles students with disabilities have at this institution. With ADHD, understands the struggle of where to start to access resources on campus. It can be different from student's undergrads. FSU has made positive strides, but there is room for more accessibility on campus. There are cramped classrooms and not enough signs. Wants to implement meaningful change for accessibility. Wants to work with those on campus to make change.

Jared Bethke, Social Sciences and Public Policy Seat 2

First year Masters student. Went to FSU for undergrad. Experience with Student Government through the Union Board. Has experience with budgeting and has experience with working with RSOs. Wants to continue to engage and give back to FSU. Always interested in serving as a public servant. Passionate to let students know about the resources that are on campus. Wants to spread the word about access to resources that can help them. Passionate about transportation and wages.

Q&A for both:

Rowan - What committee are you interested in joining? Schumm - Student Affairs;

Bethke - Student Affairs or Internal Affairs

Rowan - Would you be interested in joining the budget committee? Both - yes

Rogowski - Are you free on Mondays? Both- yes

Ebuara - How long will you be there? Both - a year and a half as they finish their program.

Rowan - Are you financially certified? Schumm - yes; Bethke - working on it.

Pros: Cyrille - They were both very prepared and I hope they put that same effort into COGS.

Balak - They both spoke well and had good plans. Schumm spoke about needing more visibilities for disability assistance which is good.

Solmaz - It is good that Bethke has experience with budget.

Burns - I am in the higher ed program with Liz and I think she will do a great job.

Galeano - They have very clear short term goals which is important.

Barber - I think both are wonderful and I would like someone else from my college.

Delva - They have previous experience on campus which is useful coming into COGS.

I'm positive they will be a good influence in COGS.

Rogowski - Call to Question; Solmaz - 2nd

Vote: Schumm - 20-0-0

Bethke - 20-0-0

Swearing in of new representatives.

Special Introductions and Student Comments: N/A

Messages from Student Government: N/A

Report from the Office of Governmental Affairs: N/A

Report of Officers:

- Report of the Speaker: Internal Affairs is working on a spring retreat. The preferred date was March 23rd, but we will put out a poll about that event. Staying in communication with the SGA Treasurer. The deal is still being worked on. This will not impact our budget process. You may have gotten an email about the childcare center over the past week or seen information on the GroupMe. Here is some information so that you know what is going on. I toured the childcare center back at the start of the semester. They mentioned that many students get work experience there. It is a huge part of the COGS budget and we wanted to try to decrease the burden on COGS and find other ways to help the childcare center get funding. We met with the DSA in late January for support in asking academic deans to help fund the center. DSA did not provide support during that meeting. Instead, we were asked to make a promise that the funds for the childcare center would not be cut. We could not make this promise because it is the budget committee who approves it. An email was sent to the parents suggesting that COGS might have zero funding. This is not true. We are trying to keep the funding the same and look for more stable funding to help the center. I am concerned by the response this has generated. They have the right to be concerned. We have tried to set the record state through an email response. I am concerned about this response from the DSA. During the budget process, many people will ask for things. It is the budget committee that sets the budget. We will have the budget process over the next few weeks. Even if you aren't on the committee, I encourage you to attend the deliberations on March 29th so that you know what the process is. If you have questions about the childcare center, please speak to myself or Josh.

- Report of the Deputy Speaker for Finance: Are there any questions about what Jack just said about the childcare center? Delva - thank you for sharing that because I had classmates come up to me about this. Vaughn - Point of information, the Childcare Center has gotten grants. Delva - Can we send all of the parents this correction email? Rowan - We do not have the list of who was sent this. We can share out the form letter with representatives so everyone knows what we are saying. Hussain - I also had those questions. I think having that statement will be good to have. Alleyne - Have you reached out to the College of Social Work and College of Ed? Rowan - We have only gotten a response and meeting with the College of Communications. Balak - What do next steps look like? Rowan - We will see if any colleges are willing to help, but otherwise it will go to the budget committee. Delva - How did the misunderstanding happen? Rowan - I can't speak for the motivations of administrators within DSA. Solmaz - Why can't we throw them under the fire? Why are we protecting these Deans? It feels horrible to be in this position. Rowan - I understand that and at this point, this issue is wrapped up in other financial issues. I will speak for myself, but I think right now we are trying to correct the record. We want to make sure that everyone has the correct information. Vaughn - We did not see the initial email and it took a long time for us to see it. Rowan - We started to see emails last week all at once. Nord - What did you say and how was it stated in the email? Burns - We could not make any promises about the budget because we do not have that power. We shared that the budget committee would be who makes that decision. Personally, I think it is a concerning place to be in. Rowan - It is the concern that this funding is part of the budget committee and that is why we are looking at other sources. Colleges have more stable positions and understanding. COGS changes every year. Nord - could this be put into code that the childcare center gets so much money? Rogowski - no line items are put into Code and this should not be because our allocation changes every year. Our amount goes up or down every year. Rowan - The instability of funds was talked about in a past task force because it is problematic for the Globe and Childcare to get so much money from COGS. Alleyne - How long have they been getting money from COGS? Rogowski - not long. It was because of amendment 10. There has been a lot of miscommunications between COGS and the center. We are giving them a lot of money per head to benefit some graduate students. Rowan - The funding is going to students using the center who are undergraduate as well. There is no funding on the Senate side. Solmaz - I'm confused about how many graduate students are using the center. Rogowski - We like to know how much money goes per person for events. Rowan - 70 children of graduate students are at the center at this moment. Rogowski - it's \$200,000 for 70 children of graduate

students. Balak - How did we start paying for this? Rogowski - We have always paid part of it. In order to pass amendment 10 which gave us more access to A&S fees, we took on the center and the Globe. Rowan - There was a net benefit at the time, but now wages have increased and problems has arisen. Delva - A few years back, there were talks about there needing to be 50% of those in the childcare center being children of graduate students. We did fund the center, but every time we talk about them, something happens. The conversations are always difficult. They always want the guarantee, but we can't do that. Alleyne - Their website doesn't say that tuition is free for students. Rowan - Every student gets free tuition. Vaughn - Lots of programs do not list that they have free things online to keep the amount of people going lower. Rowan - Please let us know if you have more questions later on. Burns - Our financial report is updated now. Our unallocated is higher due to sweepings funds. Our reimbursements for the grants is covered and the rest has been put into unallocated. This number might increase as well by the next meeting. Please share out funding with your RSOs. We will be approving the budget committee later on. We currently do not have an international student on the committee and we would like to if possible. Ebuara - I would like to be on the committee.

- Report of the Deputy Speaker for Communications: OGFA Event on February 29th - see email; name tags are in; making progress on our events for April

Advisor Announcements: Nothing currently that hasn't already been said. We are trying to support you about the emails.

Committee Introductions and Reports:

- Internal Affairs: Balak - we talked about the spring retreat. We have a bill tonight that is an addendum to the last meeting.
- Student Advocacy: Hussain - We talked about how to split up issues. I had collected signatures for the GAU and invited them to come to COGS. We should also pick up former issues. Our pending tasks have been listed and we will collect graduate student needs - will go out in a Qualtrics survey. We will meet the last Monday of the month.
- Student Affairs: Vaughn - We are continuing to work on events for April like the food trucks and bowling event.

Funding Requests:

Bill #15: Iranian Student Association

This is a little different type of bill. They are requesting funding for an event, but plan to refund this amount back to COGS through tickets being sold to non-student attendees. The event is Nowruz which is the Iranian New Year and first day of Spring. They will be sharing cultural history and they hope to unite students, faculty, and the community together. They will showcase arts like music and poetry. The event will be in the Student Union. The attachment has all the details.

Questions:

Balogun - I have a lot of questions because this is a huge funding. Have you organized this in the past and how many people attended? Is COGS giving this out as a loan?

What if you do not have enough tickets sold? Rowan - There are provisions that A&S fees can be used to fundraise and then be reimbursed. This is what will happen here. If funded, the logistics will be discussed. Balogun - What about past events attendance? In the previous year, we had similar numbers. More graduate students came this year. We had Yalda Night and that helped us come up with the Nowruz number. Past events also helped come up with number. Past tickets have been higher and with the COGS funding, the tickets can be lower.

Motion to extend time by 5 min - Rogowski; Delva - 2nd.

This event was held outside the campus in the past. It's not just for Iranians. There are other countries that share in this celebration.

Hussain - I see things about fish tanks, is this part of the culture? Yes.

Rogowski - I'm still confused about the fundraising portion. Rowan - they estimate that they will make around \$3,000 that will go back into Unallocated. I almost think about it as an advance where they will pay some of it back. Rogowski - Why bother and just not ask for the money back, and have the event be free? Rowan - We can discuss this.

Rogowski - Would you be comfortable having the event free for all? We would like to, but we also know that there will be many community members attend.

Balogun - I agree with Susan, but if we are expecting something back, will we get it back and will this add pressure?

Solmaz - How many graduate students will attend? Around 100.

Pros:

Rogowski - We have \$27,000 in Unallocated. We will have more going in. I'm all for big ticket items and I don't want money to go to sweepings. This is cross cultural. I want to sponsor the whole thing.

Galeano - This will benefit graduate students and we don't want orgs to worry about graduate student families. We should just fund everything and not worry about them collecting money. This is their New Year holiday.

Delva - I agree with both of them. It seems like at least 50% will be graduate students there, so it should follow the code. It's a great way for graduate students to learn.

Balogun - We need more students organizing programs like this. We want students to have fun. We should support the whole bill.

Con:

Galeano - if tickets are sold, then some people might not go.

Rowan - we can add a proviso that no tickets will be sold.

Pro:

Rogowski - motion to amend to add proviso language that says "The Iranian Student Association will not sell tickets for the event"; 2nd - Galeano.

Motion passes.

Hussain - Why is the RSO paying the student union? It's because of the ballroom being used.

Con: Rogowski - call to question; Hussain - 2nd.

Vote: 21-0-1

Unfinished Business:

Deputy Speaker for Judicial Affairs - call for nominees: N/A

New Business:

Approval of the Budget Committee

Joshua Burns, Chris Cyrill, Jack Rowan, Maddie Siegel, Frank Velez, Francis Ebuara, Elisabeth Schumm, Jared Bethke

Motion to Approve - Rogowski; 2nd - Hussain

Committee will meet at the end of the meeting.

Bill #16: C-SAC Glitch Fix

Remember last week's bill? We didn't delete everything about C-SAC and this fixes it.

Questions: None

Pros: None

Cons: Call to Question - Galeano; 2nd - Alleyne

Vote: 21-0-0

Round Table:

Adjournment: 7:59pm

Next Meeting: **March 4, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. Senate Chambers (3rd floor Student Union)**