



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
CONGRESS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

THIRTY-SECOND CONGRESS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

Assembly Meeting
November 27, 2023
6:30pm
Agenda

First portion of the meeting conducted by Jack Hitchcock, Student Body President, until the election of a new Speaker.

Call to Order: 6:47pm

Pledge of Allegiance: Rep. Rivers

Roll Call:

Present - Balogun, Barber, Beavon, Bettley, Burns, Delva, Ebuara, Galeano, Joyner, Pakdehi, Rivers, Rogowski, Rowan, Siegel, Solmaz, Vaughn, Velez, Wardlow, Wheeler

Absent Excused - Hussain, Solmaz, Wesner

Reading and approval of the Minutes: Rep. Rogowski; 2nd - Joyner

Swearing in of Representatives

Motion to Adopt the Internal Rules of the 31st Congress to the 32nd Congress - Approved

Petitions into the Assembly:

Chris Cyrille, Jim Moran College of Entrepreneurship Seat 1 - Studies textiles and apparel; went to FSU for Undergraduate degree and was in the 50th SGA Board. Peers do not know the COGS opportunities and I want to share that information with them.

Steven Medarev, Graduate School and Special Student Advocate/At-Large Seat 2 - 2nd year Ph.D. in Biomedical Science and focuses on cardiovascular research. FSU undergrad alumni. Has gone to conferences and wants to share out funding. Is interested in Internal affairs. Has done financial certification before.

Felix Balak, College of Medicine Seat 1 - M1 first year med student. Elected by MSC to be one of the COGS liaisons. There are many subcommittees and I hope to provide information among organizations. Interested in public health. From UF and UCF. As part of time in COGS, hopes to open doors for his peers. Happy to support COGS.

Q&A:

Rivers - What committee are you interested in? Cyrille - Advocacy; Medarev - Internal Affairs; Balak - Advocacy or Internal Affairs

Rowan - What do you think will help COGS from your business background? I think putting the right people in the right positions are important.

Rogowski - Will you be free on Monday? Yes

Barber - Are you financially certified? Yes

Pros:

Joyner - I feel like we don't discuss this enough. I feel that all 3 are "we" driven so that we can move forward as a team. I like how they are focused as "we" and working to increase grants.

Burns - Pro for Chris - this seat has been hard to fill, so it is exciting to get to fill it. Also those with UG experience is great.

Rowan - In favor of all candidates and for Chris, he brings in great outside experience. Felix is great to add to COGS and I am excited to welcome Steven back to COGS.

Rivers - Call to question; Bettley - 2nd

Vote:

Chris Cyrille - 18-0-0

Steven Medarev - 18-0-0

Felix Balak - 18-0-0

Swearing In of the new Petitioners

Elections for Executive Board:

Speaker

Call for nominations

Bettley - nominate Erick Rivers; Joyner - 2nd; accepts

Wheeler - nominate Jack Rowan; Burns - 2nd; accepts

Rivers Opening Statement - Graduated with Bachelors in the spring. SGA experience was student senator, did class councils, and other positions. Came in as a transfer student. Saw the COGS Speaker and knew he wanted to join and take part. Has spoken with the previous Speaker and have an understanding of the position. Wants to work to make COGS better. SGA does not know much about COGS because Graduate students play a part in FSU. Wants to work to increase understanding and work with the departments on getting Grad voices in the room. Has already sent out communications to work on that process.

Questions -

Joyner - What is your mission for COGS? During my time in SGA, I have mentored senators and when you hear about the role, you pigeonhole yourself in ideas. I am from the College of Fine Arts and I talk with my Dean on how to improve our Colleges and what do they need. I know that grad students don't have as much time, but I have the time and experience to work on these items.

Balogun - Do you have one initiative you want to share with us? A big part of my undergrad experience was the social aspect of it. COGS used to have more social events and I want to improve that now. We all want to build more bonds.

Galeano - You mentioned that COGS isn't known in SGA, what is your plan to change that? I have many connections with SGA and I would like to pair Senators with each other so that there is a stronger connection. It can also work to provide mentorship between UG and Graduate students.

Bettley - How have your past experiences shaped what you are doing in this role? Has worked to get free menstrual products in bathrooms. Worked to have a free headshot booth. Likes to work on the big picture.

Rogowski - motion to extend by 1 min; Delva - 2nd.

Delva - What is one of the biggest differences between undergraduate and graduate student life? The graduate student life is disconnected. There have been blocks on campus as a graduate student. Conferences are huge for graduate students and it can be hard to get funding.

Joyner - Extend time for 1 min; 2nd - Delva

Rogowski - How long do you plan to stay in the role? I hope to stay the full term including summer.

Rowan Opening Statement - I am happy to be here with you guys. We have a big choice including making a path ahead. I believe that I am in the right spot to push us into the future. I have a plan to move forward and make an impact on graduate students. I want us to drive down on our advocacy - we need to have conversations on stipends and our budget. We need to get the best bang for our buck. We need to make sure that we are getting our full funding from the budget. There are conversations about COGS continuing and there are no graduate students in the room for those talks. I want to be Speaker in order to let this congress take the next steps.

Questions -

Joyner - You were discussing things you want to do, but what are you trying to do more specifically? With the stipend, we need to be part of this discussion. We need to have these conversations around campus and be in the room. We need to have these talks in the committees and through work with the Union.

Siegel - Can you talk about your experience in SGA? I worked with all Senators to craft legislation. I have also done legal work outside of the university. When negotiations are done, it needs to be in writing.

Galeano - You said that you are looking for seats and tables, can you be more specific? We need to look at what is COGS's spot within SGA. There are spots in Senate, but it's hard to get involved there. We need to re-examine our role and the money that we are given to allocate.

Joyner - extend time by 2 minutes; Delva - 2nd

Ebuara - How you spoke gave me optimism, but for international students, legal services are needed. Is there a way to get legal help for international students? You are a law student, and that has a large time commitment, what is the benefit to being Speaker? Legal help for students is done at some schools, but that is a big expense for schools such as UF. Would need to make sure it doesn't break the bank. For the 2nd question, it's a part of service. FSU has given me a lot and I want to give back where I can and the best way is to fight for all grad students on this campus.

Delva - One of the challenges is that we want to have more impact and we have different needs from UG students. How do you see a better plan in tackling COGS and making it more impactful overall? I think the financial things and making an impact are one and the same. I would like to hypercharge the financial process and getting funding to help RSOs. We want to be intentional on how events impact UG students as well as Graduate students.

Joyner - Motion to extend time by 2 mins; Rogowski - 2nd

Rowan con't - The biggest problem we have is how much time it takes to figure out the ropes, but if we can work with UG students staying at FSU for grad school, it helps out ourselves and the student body as a whole.

Joyner - Motion to extend time by 1 min; Burns - 2nd.

Joyner - What are the next steps that you keep talk about and how will you use your outside perspective to impact graduate students who have a different perspective? I will listen and make sure that there are many voices in the room. I was glad to have your perspective on the A&S fees. I want to create more situations where we can talk about these issues and bring in many perspectives. As a Law student, while some things are different, there are things we have in common. I am living off loans without a stipend. There are things we all have in common and we can come together to tackle issues.

Joyner - motion to extend time by 1 min; 2nd - Delva.

Joyner - What about international students and students of color? With the recruiting side, I want to work with everyone to get people involved. I don't know all departments, but those in the congress do and we can work to make sure that everyone's idea is heard. I think we do a good job of this. I think we should have written reports that lays out everything that has been found during the committees.

Pro for Rivers:

Burns - His specific examples of what he has done in the past through SGA is great. He has clear plans on what he wants to do.

Galeano - His ideas are phenomenal with pairing UG and Graduate students.

Joyner - I agree with Jorge, and just talking to my students, a lot of them don't know their options with grad school. It is important to have those connections. Erick says "we" a lot and talks about those after him. It's great that he has SGA experience and can bring more SGA representatives in.

Bettley - I served with Erick in Senate, and he will bring his passion from the Senate to his work here. Seeing him take the lead and working across campus is important. He has so many connections across the university which is important. He can use his experience and passion for the role.

Rogowski - extend by 1 min; Delva - 2nd

Cyrille - I want to see more about COGS on campus and I think he touched on that a lot.

Rogowski - I think both candidates have a lot of passion. I think Erick can provide a lot of support for our minority and international students.

Delva - I like Erick's passion and he pays attention to what our needs are and pays attention to our needs and what to tackle as speaker.

Burns - Erick did reach out and talk about his goals.

Pro for Rowan:

Ebuara - Both candidates are good. I like both, but I have soft spot for lawyers. I like how they do things and I think that Jack has big ideas to come together and build something.

Siegel - I asked the question about professionalism and I think he carries himself in a very professional way. I wanted to hone in on the fact that in order to be a good leader that you need professional skills. He is good to pull himself back and be down to earth. He wants to listen. I have seen him be inclusive in working to get all of the Law school seats filled.

Balogun - Since the first day, he was very active and has sponsored bills and worked to change rules with the assembly. He has been working to make sure that COGS keeps progressing.

Galeano - I like that he was honest about not knowing about all issues and that he is willing to work with everyone to work towards that.

Burns - extend by 1 min; 2nd - Joyner

Delva - I enjoyed Jack's speech. I am impressed with what he accomplished with LSC in such a short time. Having a law background is good and the handbook rules can be daunting. He did good work with changing the code.

Medarev - He is very welcoming and has passion in everything. He has a detailed focus and was open to all questions we had. Was very open and honest.

Rogowski - Jack spoke with me about the role and he has experience with the Senate which is great.

Burns - Jack also spoke with me and I appreciate his willingness to talk to people within this room.

Bettley - Call to Question; Joyner - 2nd

Vote:

Jack Rowan: 12

Erick Rivers: 8

Abstain: 1

Election of Jack Rowan for Speaker

Swearing in

Bettley - Move for a 10 min recess; 2nd - Vaughn

Resuming the Meeting at 8:04pm

Deputy Speaker for Finance

Call for Nominations

Rogowski - Nomination for Josh Burns; 2nd Balogun

Burns - Thank you for being here tonight. I joined COGS over a year ago and I was interested in being more connected with FSU and with other graduate students. We can get very siloed in our departments and it is important to join entities and get involved. Joining COGS was big for me and being in the Deputy Speaker role has been an honor. I am grateful for being able to work with conference grants. It has been meaningful. Giving more outreach concerning funding is important and continuing this work is important. We hope to retroactively give funding to students who missed out last year due to technical errors. Also looking forward to the budget process. Will be graduating in May and would be happy to work with that transition.

Josh Burns elected unopposed as Deputy Speaker for Finance.

Swearing in.

Deputy Speaker for Judicial Affairs

Call for Nominations: None

Moved to Unfinished business for December 4th

Deputy Speaker for Communication

Call for Nominations: Susan Rogowski nominates Laura Vaughn, Nell Delva seconds, Laura Vaughn accepts

Speech: It has been over a year that I have been in this role. I'm excited to continuing working in this role and am opening to improve any of my work. Feel free to reach out to me if you think I can improve in any way. I'm working to have more social events for COGS.

Laura Vaughn elected unopposed as Deputy Speaker for Communication

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: I have nothing. Thank you for the honor and I hope to have time to sit down and talk with everyone. I hope to get my office hours set soon. Please reach out to me with any comments or questions. Secondly, I plan to send out a form for committee preferences. Before our next meeting, we will send out the new committee assignments. For our new members, remember to get financially certified.
- Report of the Deputy Speaker for Finance: Thank you for the election. I look forward to working with everyone. The financial report has updated numbers and with the presentation and attendance grants, we are in good shape. If you have any conferences, please spread the word. We got \$45,000 from sweepings and we will try to reach out to the students who missed the conference grants to try to give them retroactive funding.
- Report of the Deputy Speaker for Judicial Affairs:

- Report of the Deputy Speaker for Communications: Nothing for today, but we will meet again next week.

Committee Report: No reports this week.

Funding Requests:

Bill #1: Iranian Student Association

Rogowski - ISA is coming to us for funding for their Yalda Night celebration. They have reserved Club Downunder and planning is underway. Pakdehi - This is the biggest night for Iranian students to celebrate. It's an old tradition. Thank you for past COGS support for other events.

Question:

Galeano - the amount is \$21 per person, is this allowed? This will need to be checked. The COGS code limit states catering fees. This can be overwritten by the assembly.

Ebuara - motion to extinguish time; 2nd - Delva

Pros:

Galeano - this kind of cultural celebration is good to have on campus.

Burns - Having it in Club Downunder makes it very accessible for students.

Rowan - ISA has done many great events with COGS this semester.

Motion to extinguish - Balogun; Pakdehi - 2nd.

Cons:

Burns - Call to question; Delva - 2nd.

Closing Statement - I think it is a good idea to continue to support the ISA. It's a great way to use our money and I am excited about this event.

Pakdehi - It's open to all students and families, so please come and join us.

Rogowski - Motion to waive COGS Code 201.7 for this bill; Delva - 2nd

Vote to override COGS Code 201.7: 16-0-0

Vote: 15-0-1

Bill #2: Mechanical Graduate Student Association (MEGSA)

Opening Statement - Galeano: This is a new organization requesting funds. They are requesting money for t-shirts for the last event of the semester. I hope that this is the first of many Engineering RSOs that request money from COGS. There are many mechanical engineering students who have gotten COGS grants and look forward to getting funding for RSOs.

Questions -

Rogowski - Does your organization need XXL shirts? No. Do you already have a design? Yes, we will have a small logo on the front and a big logo on the back that includes the COGS logo.

Rogowski - Point of information - you will need to upload the design when it is ready

Burns - For the event itself, do you have an estimated attendance? Yes, we are expecting around 40 people who are active members.

Rowan - When is this event? 2nd week of December. We can extend the time because most students will still be on campus after classes are over.

Burns - extinguish time; 2nd - Pakdehi

Pros:

Rogowski - I think it's great for a new organization to test the waters with COGS funding. We are excited because they attended the funding workshop. Happy to support them and get money.

Pakdehi - Because we are engineers, we don't know a lot about COGS. If they have t-shirts with the COGS logo, more engineers will understand what COGS does.

Balogun - motion to extinguish time; 2nd - Burns

Con:

Rogowski - motion to call to question; Delva - 2nd

Closing - Thank you for your time and hopefully this is the first of many requests from engineering RSOs.

Vote: 15-0-1

Unfinished Business: N/A

New Business: N/A

Round Table:

Adjournment: 8:35pm

Next Meeting: December 4, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. Senate Chambers (3rd floor New Student Union)