



**73<sup>rd</sup> Student Senate  
Internal Affairs Committee  
October 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM | <https://fsu.zoom.us/j/94723052898>**

**Call to Order: 6:30 PM**

**Members Present:** Chair Murray, Vice Chair Pfeuffer-Ferguson, Senators Russell, Lessard, West, Powell

**Members Tardy:** Senator Marcus (U)

**Members Absent:** Senators Thau (U), Barrett (U), Hitchcock (E)

**Guests:** Candidates Brandon Gabay, Ash Soto, Caroline Ball, Omer Turkomer, Khamare Garner, and OGA Director Rawan Abhari

**Land Acknowledgement**

**Announcements:**

- Chair:
  - Members, please have your cameras on.
- Vice Chair:
  - For the candidates, please speak at a regular pace and enunciate your words for my sake with minutes.
- Members:
  - None
- Guests:
  - Brandon Gabay: JSU has started doing internal interviews for the Assistant Director position.

**Committee Business:**

- **Candidate for Office of Governmental Affairs, Board of Directors Member –** Brandon Gabay
- **Candidate for Office of Governmental Affairs, Board of Directors Member –** Khamare Garner
- **Candidate for Office of Governmental Affairs, Board of Directors Member –** Ash Soto
- **Candidate for Office of Governmental Affairs, Board of Directors Member –** Omer Turkomer
- **Candidate for Student Council for Accessibility Advocacy, Director –** Caroline Ball
- **Bill 63 –** Nathaniel Tackett and Ashley Gonzalez (P) - A bill to update the list of major offices to protect the separation of powers; and for other purposes.

**Old Business:**

- None

**New Business:**

- **Candidate for Confirmation: Brandon Gabay – Office of Governmental Affairs, Board of Directors Member**
  - Opening Statement:
    - Uses he/him pronouns. Third year majoring in Media and Communications studies. Serves as the Jewish Student Union Director, on the Hillel Board and is a FLI mentor. Is financially certified. Wants to advocate for mental health policies for our students and wants to make mental health resources more accessible for students. The amount of work and involvement that many students are in mean that we need someone to talk to, and we can not adequately do this with our current resources.
    - Candidate yields with 1 minute and 47 seconds remaining.
  - Technical Non-Debatable Questions:
    - None
  - General Round of Questioning:
    - Senator Lessard: What do you think is the greatest State and local issue facing the student body today?
      - Candidate: HB 1, as a campus that is so politically involved, it is important to allow students to feel safe when voicing their opinions. On the local level, we need to focus on students' mental health and our resources for such.
    - Senator Lessard: How do you plan on managing your time?
      - Candidate: In regards to Hillel, it is a very small time commitment. FLI is more of a fun thing/social activity at this point. With JSU, they recently quit their job so they can focus on student life and getting involved on campus. This saves them about 20 hours a week to do so. Keeps a very organized calendar and has a shared TimeTree with JSU board so that they all know what's going on.
    - Vice Chair Pfeuffer-Ferguson: Seeing as you are so passionate about mental health resources, what are some ways you want to advocate for specifically out-of-state students receiving mental health resources?
      - Candidate: Since our therapists can only work with students in the state that they are certified in, I feel as though creating a network of therapists across the nation would be my biggest goal.
    - Senator Lessard: Do you consider yourself an ally of the LGBTQIA+ community?
      - Candidate: As someone who identifies with that community, yes.
    - Senator Lessard: How do you help this community?
      - Candidate: I work with the PSU Assistant Director, use my position as JSU Director, and work with local senators educating them about the sorts of issues that LGBT+ people face.
  - Closing Statement:
    - Thank you for hearing me out tonight, and I look forward to working with all of us and OGA.
  - **Senator Russell moves to enter round-table discussion; Senator Lessard seconds**
  - Round-Table Discussion:

- Vice Chair Pfeuffer-Ferguson: I will be voting yes, as his application wowed me with every response. As someone who advocates for mental health and wellness myself, I respect all of his work and goals.
    - Senator Russell: Knowing and working with the candidate myself, I respect everything he does and how he is able to make advocacy intersectional, so I will be voting yes.
    - Senator Lessard: Has had the distinct pleasure of knowing and working with the candidate. No matter what position he finds himself working for, he is beyond passionate and that is what we need on this campus.
  - **Senator Lessard moves to call the question; Senator Russell seconds**
  - Vote:
    - Yes: 4 - Senators West, Lessard, Russell, and Vice Chair Pfeuffer-Ferguson
    - No: 0
    - Abstain: 0
  - **RESULT: CANDIDATE GABAY PASSES**
- **Candidate for Confirmation: Khamare Garner – Office of Governmental Affairs, Board of Directors Member**
  - Opening Statement:
    - Candidate wants to thank everyone to have the time and privilege to speak with us. Is a senior studying Political Science and Music. Is involved with the Black Student Union and is a newly elected Senator. Wants to advocate against certain named buildings and locations. Wants to advocate for the construction of a Pride Student Union House as well as for general safety for students on campus.
    - Candidate yields with 1 minute and 44 seconds remaining.
  - Technical Non-Debatable Questions:
    - None
  - General Round of Questioning:
    - Senator Lessard: Are you financially certified?
      - Candidate: Yes
    - Senator Lessard: What do you think is the biggest current local and state issue for students on campus?
      - Candidate: The local government working with FSU and FAMU, as there are so many alumni that work with the government and could help the student body.
    - Vice Chair Pfeuffer-Ferguson: What is it looking like for your time commitment as you are in Marching Chiefs?
      - Candidate: I am really good at time management and have already spoken with Rawan about my abilities to serve in this position. I already have experience being involved in a variety of different areas that required time, and I have never had an issue.
    - Senator Lessard: Do you have any experience advocating at any level of our government?
      - Candidate: Absolutely, I have experience advocating at the local level dealing with food insecurity in the Tallahassee community, especially for the Black community. I also have experience advocating for safety on campus.
    - Senator Lessard: Would you consider yourself an ally of the LGBTQIA+ community?
      - Candidate: Absolutely.



- Senator Lessard: How do you plan on balancing your workload as PSU Assistant Director with this position?
        - Candidate: I have a calendar that has the dates for all of my classwork, meetings, and such. I am really good at communicating and balancing everything in my schedule.
    - Closing Statement:
      - Thank you for listening to me speak, and I hope you have a great rest of your night!
    - **Senator West moves to enter round-table discussion; Vice Chair Pfeuffer-Ferguson seconds**
    - Round-Table Discussion:
      - Vice Chair Pfeuffer-Ferguson: This candidate is the definition of a student leader. They constantly put the student body first and themselves second, so I am really excited to see them hopefully make it through IA.
      - Senator Lessard: I can also speak from experience, knowing this candidate, I can say they demonstrate the utmost of leadership. Points out their various experience.
      - Senator Powell: Knowing Ash, I can confidently say they will get this work done and are an amazing leader.
    - **Senator Lessard moves to call the question; Senator West seconds**
    - Vote:
      - Yes: 5 – Senators Russell, Lessard, Powell, West and Vice Chair Pfeuffer-Ferguson
      - No: 0
      - Abstain: 0
    - **RESULT: CANDIDATE SOTO PASSES**
    - **Senator Russell moves for a non-member to speak; Senator Lessard seconds**
      - OGA Director Rawan Abhari: I am here in support of these students that are the candidates for OGA's Board of Directors. I am also here to answer any questions. I will also be here to speak on the bill tonight, as it does affect OGA. We just want to hope that this bill will help OGA, instead of weaken it. Is in support of the bill, as long as there is a little amendment to go into effect after this legislative session.
- **Candidate for Confirmation: Omer Turkomer – Office of Governmental Affairs, Board of Directors Member**
  - Opening Statement:
    - Second-year student, and wants to advocate for students. Is looking at sexual discrimination, and points at specific examples of opportunities to advocate. Points to Bright Futures bill and discussion surrounding that
    - Candidate yields with 1 minute and 13 seconds remaining.
  - Technical Non-Debatable Questions:
    - Senator Lessard: Are you financially certified?
      - Candidate: Yes
  - General Round of Questioning:
    - Senator Lessard: What do you think is the greatest state and local issue facing the student body right now?
      - Candidate: The Bright Futures problem, as Bright Futures allows so many students from the state of Florida attend college and afford higher education.

- Senator Lessard: Are you currently involved with any other organizations or boards right now?
      - Candidate: Yes, I am the Vice Chair of PAC, serve in other leadership positions.
    - Senator Lessard: How do you plan on managing your time with all of those commitments?
      - Candidate: Time management skills and knowing your limitations. You need to be there for your commitments as well as when to be there for yourself. Keep a calendar and schedule out your days. Would not be applying for this position if they did not think they could commit all of the required time.
  - Closing Statement:
    - Wants to thank everyone and wants to be brief, as they need to be there for PAC since they are having quorum problems.
  - **Senator Lessard moves to enter round-table discussion; Senator Russell seconds**
  - Round-Table Discussion:
    - Vice Chair Pfeuffer-Ferguson: Even though time management may seem like an issue, I can speak from personal experience that it is possible. The candidate has the interest for this position, so I will be voting yes.
    - Senator Lessard: I have worked with this candidate on another project, and I know that they make themselves available so I know they can do this. They want to serve the student body.
  - **Senator Russell moves to call the question; Senator West seconds**
  - Vote:
    - Yes: 4 - Senators Lessard, Russell, West, and Vice Chair Pfeuffer-Ferguson
    - No: 0
    - Abstain: 0
  - **RESULT: CANDIDATE TURKOMER PASSES**
- **Candidate for Confirmation: Caroline Ball – Student Council for Accessibility Advocacy, Director**
  - Opening Statement:
    - Has been through IA before. Wants to move from the Assistant Director position to the Director position. Is currently the Acting Director. Is recruiting people that they know in order to widen the board. Is not financially certified, but will be before they go through all of the budgetary requirements. Wants to secure this position since they are already doing the work.
    - Candidate yields with 1 minute and 53 seconds remaining.
  - Technical Non-Debatable Questions:
    - None
  - General Round of Questioning:
    - Senator Lessard: When did you assume the Assistant Director position?
      - Candidate: About 2 or 3 weeks ago, does not know the exact date.
      - Chair Murray: Got the forwarding letter on September 10<sup>th</sup>
    - Vice Chair Pfeuffer-Ferguson: As someone who gives tours regularly, I would want to know what your current goals for more accessibility for transportation on campus?

- Candidate: I currently have plans in the works for next year and have been reaching out to various leaders on campus in order to have more people helping me. Has a movie night and a brunch planned with other organizations in order to raise awareness since this bureau is so new. Since they do not struggle with a physical disability, they want to reach out to that community to see what they want to be done for themselves.
      - Senator Lessard: Is there a specific time in your life that has made you particularly passionate about this community on campus?
        - Candidate: Since this bureau deals with both physical and mental disabilities, I myself have experience dealing with the second one. I have been working with OAS on campus, and had history in high school working with this sort of issue. Being surrounded by people in this community has made me so passionate.
    - Closing Statement:
      - Thanks everyone and wants to keep it short and sweet. There is nobody else in this bureau and is already working as the acting director. Is passionate for serving in this position.
    - **Senator Russell moves to enter round-table discussion; Vice Chair Pfeuffer-Ferguson seconds**
    - Round-Table Discussion:
      - Vice Chair Pfeuffer-Ferguson: Respects the work the candidate is already doing and points to their passion for this position. They have already been doing the work.
    - **Senator Russell moves to call the question; Senator Lessard seconds**
    - Vote:
      - Yes: 2 – Senator West, Vice Chair Pfeuffer-Ferguson
      - No: 0
      - Abstain: 2 – Senators Lessard and Russell
        - **REVOTE**
    - Vote:
      - Yes: 3 – Senator West, Vice Chair Pfeuffer-Ferguson, and Chair Murray
      - No: 2 – Senators Lessard and Russell
      - Abstain: 0
    - **RESULT: CANDIDATE BALL PASSES**
  - **Bill # 63 - Sponsored by Senators Tackett and Gonzalez**
    - **Senator Lessard moves to enter roundtable as a committee; Vice Chair Pfeuffer-Ferguson seconds**
      - Senator Lessard: Reached out to one of the Sponsors of the bill today. They would be ok with adding proviso language that would make this bill go into effect after the inauguration of the new Student Body President in the Spring. Will be making a motion to amend it.
      - Chair Murray: Would that mean that the people who are already in these positions would have to resign?
      - **Senator Lessard moves for a non-Senator to speak; Senator West seconds**
      - Brandon Gabay: So basically yes, which would mean that Director Abhari would be left without half of a Board of Directors. Thinks it would be smart to change some of the language to not leave these people high and dry.
      - Rawan Abhari: Asked Brandon to repeat himself.
      - Brandon Gabay: Repeated himself and brought up a specific statute.

- Rawan Abhari: Explains the process as to why making it be at the end of a term would be better because of how legislative sessions work. OGA should never be done.
  - Chair Murray: It would be cutting it short if we did not put this sort of proviso.
  - Rawan Abhari: Explains the process once again in a more specified manner, and explains how OGA would hate if 4 of the 9 board members would have to lead. The session ends on March 11<sup>th</sup>, which should run close to when the new SGA President would be. Supports the bill, as OGA should be held at the standard of a major office. But they cannot do the work if it gets cut short because of this bill.
  - **Vice Chair Pfeuffer-Ferguson moves to take an 8 minute recess; Senator West seconds and we will resume at 8:01 PM.**
  - **Present:** Chair Murray, Vice Chair Pfeuffer-Ferguson, Senators Russell, Lessard, Powell, West
  - **Absent:** Senators Marcus, Hitchcock, Thau and Barrett
- Opening Statement:
  - Senator Tackett: Two quick fixes and nothing too crazy. Adding members of OGA to major offices, as well as COGs representatives. Makes it to where if people try to change the name of that office, they are still deemed major offices. Holding an OGA position as well as another office in SGA would prove to be a conflict of interest.
  - Senator Gonzalez: Agrees with Tackett and points out because of Covid and a lack of engagement with SGA in general, OGA has been lacking in membership. This needs to be someone's major focus, if they hold an OGA position.
  - Sponsors yield 2 minutes and 43 seconds to their closing.
- Technical Non-Debatable Questions:
  - Senator Marcus: Was OGA Director Abhari included in communication about this?
    - Sponsor Gonzalez: Yes, we have been talking for the past couple of days.
- General Round of Questioning:
  - None
- **Senator Lessard moves to enter roundtable discussion; Senator Marcus seconds**
- **Senator Lessard moves to amend; Senator Marcus seconds**
  - Add proviso language at the top: "This change would take effect on March 11, 2022."
  - **Sponsor finds amendment friendly and Amendment is adopted**
- Senator Lessard: My motivation behind this amendment is that we have several people up for confirmation and who have already been confirmed who already hold major offices and were not aware of this change. This would not be fair to them, and we need to respect their time and dedication to this university.
- Senator Marcus: One qualm with this bill is that there are some individuals who hold major positions that would be able to be experts in this sort of work.
- Vice Chair Pfeuffer-Ferguson: It is the job of OGA to reach out to these sorts of people. We do not want to spread these people out too thin and need to make sure that they spend an adequate amount of time in their positions.



- Senator Marcus: Still has the qualm from past experience looking at how some people were left in the dark. These people should still have spots at the table instead of not being included.
- Senator Lessard: Points out how OGA should have agency representatives within a committee that would include people appointed by the agency directors in order to help the Board of Directors.
- **Senator Marcus calls for a Point of Information:** Has the committee met this year?
- Rawan Abhari: They have been reached out to, but they have not met yet because nobody except for the Asian American Student Union has responded.
- **Senator Marcus moves to call the question; Senator Lessard seconds**
- Closing Statement:
  - Senator Tackett: We need to make sure there are no conflicts of interest.
  - Senator Gonzalez: This will allow for a diversity of thought at the table because we tend to see people that already have experience and positions. We need to give students a chance to have lobbying experiences.
- Vote:
  - Yes: 5 – Senators Lessard, Russell, Marcus, West, and Vice Chair Pfeuffer-Ferguson
  - No: 0
  - Abstain: 0
- **RESULT: BILL # 63 PASSES**
- Rawan Abhari: Wants to thank both of the senators from Budget for taking their time. OGA supports this bill to ensure that they can work at their best capacity. Requests that anyone in Senate next semester should hold the Executive Branch accountable. There was a huge time discrepancy this year, which caused many problems and costed OGA precious time. Agencies turn themselves over very quickly, and OGA should be similar. Make sure that OGA is held to the high standard it should be. Discussed the various goals and such of OGA to showcase its high standards.

**Unfinished Business:**


- None

**Closing Announcements:**

- Senator Marcus: Please go do the survey that was sent out in the Senate GroupMe.
- Senator Lessard: Wear your costumes to Senate on Wednesday.

**Next Meeting: Monday, November 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:30 PM**

**Adjourned: 8:27 PM**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trevor Murray'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the letters and several diagonal strokes extending downwards from the letters.

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**Signature of Chair Trevor Murray**