



**73rd Student Senate
Judiciary Committee
Date: October 5, 2021**

Meeting Recording:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1C4BAoZamvnpj27KzhFG-P8Xde41F6pc/view?usp=sharing>

Call to Order:

Members Present: Chair Little, Vice Chair Guillamont, Senator(s) Rodgers, Linsky, Rossi, Stults, Myers, Pro Tempore Wang

Members Tardy: Senator(s)

Members Excused Absent: Senator(s) Arutt, Stewart

Members Absent: Senator(s) Reeves

Guests: Candidate Richard Sommers, Parliamentarian Rowan, Senators Randall, Tsouroukdissian

Announcements:

- Chair -
- Vice Chair -
- Members -
 - Linsky- Quorum is an issue in committee. If you see any senators in sweepings tell them to show up, this can have financial repercussions for RSOs.
- Guests -

Committee Business:

- **Supreme Court Candidate Confirmation**
- **Bill 50** - Description
- Bill 55
- Bill 56

Old Business:

Supreme Court Candidate Confirmation -

- Opening Statement:
 - Sommers: Thanks committee for presence. 3L at FSULAW, did undergrad at FSU. Has been interested in Supreme Court position since first year at FSU. Lists qualification as having previously worked on the elections commission, an extern with Supreme Court Justice Lawson.
- Technical non-debatable:
 - Senator Randall: Are you financially certified?
 - Sommers: Yes

- Senator Randall: Have you been to any greendot, bystander intervention trainings, any of other trainings of similar nature?
 - Sommers: Yes, did some during undergrad, did hazing and harassment modules three days ago.
- **Senator Linsky moves to open general questioning**
 - General Questioning
 - Sen. Linsky: How has working at the Supreme Court of Florida influenced judicial philosophy?
 - Sommers: Work has not influenced judicial philosophy, but rather has altered his writing and research style. Did not go to Supreme Court to get indoctrinated but to expand research and writing skills.
 - Pro-Tempore Wang: What do you believe to be the most significant challenge posing court and how do you believe it can be addressed?
 - Sommers: Elections code, the elections commission demonstrated a lot of problems embedded within the code. It is his understanding that the Supreme Court has a larger capacity to propose/suggest changes.
 - Sen. Linsky: What year were you on the elections commission?
 - Sommers: Last year, entire year.
 - Sen. Slinky: I reached out multiple times to vice chair of commission and never received an answer, have altered code significantly but bills have not been incorporated yet.
 - Little: We are in questioning, will keep it to questions.
 - Sen. Randall: point of clarification, statutes are being updated, se parliamentary rowan for questions regarding statutes.
 - Sen. Randall: How/If you would try to collaborate with other branches?
 - Meet with other associate justices and chief justice to brainstorm ideas and propose initiatives.
 - Pro-Tempore Wang: Most challenging ethical dilemma faced and how you handled it?
 - Sommers: In high school, best friend cheated on a test (from 5 years of age), Sommers knew about this and notified the relevant person of someone having cheated so that no one get hurt by a lower curve.
 - Wang: Have you ever had to support a legal position that is contrary to personal moral belief?
 - Sommers: No, have not been put in the position.
 - Sen. Randall: Any conflicts of interest that would inhibit ability to carry out positions responsibilities?
 - Sommers: No, Florida Supreme Court also gave him the go ahead for taking on position if approved.
 - Randall: What is your approach when interpreting law?
 - Sommers: Quotes Justice Kagan "Always look at the text first", I would look at the text first, then look at interpretations by drafters when statute was first drafted.
 - Randall: Can you give example of time when you had a respectful debate with someone you did not agree with?
 - Sommers: Significant other is on the opposite end of the spectrum of beliefs. There is no winning in convincing another but

understanding the motivations and experiences that lead another person to think a certain way.

- Wang: How would you react if two justices were being disrespectful towards each other?
 - Sommers: Commission taught me how to handle those situations, decorum was often missing. If disagreement occurs, have two parties come to bench to attempt to mediate disagreement before bringing it to court.
- Little: What are the duties of the supreme court within SGA?
 - Sommers: Hear disputes between students and RSOs regarding alleged statute violations.
- Randall: What is your opinion on advisory opinions, advising legislators on advising legislators on how to best incorporate or write legislation?
 - Sommers: Can be very beneficial. Worked on an agency where he was researching advisory opinions, thorough questions return through and helpful answers when requested.
 - Randall: Will you commit to hearing or considering hearing any advisory opinion requested to the court?
 - Sommers: Is there an issue where you are not getting advisory opinions returned?
 - Randall: Last year yes.
 - Sommers: Will have to check with elections commission, but as long as it is something related to something related to something the court is allowed to rule on, yes.
- Randall: Should Life experiences factor into statutory interpretation?
 - Sommers: Are you asking if life experiences should be inserted into the process of statutory interpretation?
 - Randall: Yes
 - Sommers: Resounding no. No one has elected me, not my place to put beliefs in courtroom.
- Little: Student advocates being undergraduates vs law students and does that make a difference in hearings?
 - Sommers: Personally, everyone has right to advocate for themselves. It is beneficial if you are a law student, but it does not remove the right for someone who is not a law school student to advocate for themselves.
- Randall: Would you work with fellow justices and sga parties to ensure that positions are filled for the 2021-2022 academic year, positions that defend all students?
 - Sommers: Notes having to do research, does not want to make decision without the facts
- Linsky: Point- Chief Justice has been trying to fill seats. There is no interest. Notes qualifications needed for statutory defender.
- **Linsky: Moves to go into deliberations**
 - **Rodgers seconds**
- Deliberations:
 - Linsky: Vote yes unless there's a reason not to. There are many reasons to vote yes.
 - Stults: Moves to call the question
 - Little denies
 - Rodgers: Sommers answered questions diligently. Committed to knowing facts.

- Stults: Supports Sommers fully.
- Pro-Tempore Wang: Enjoyed candidate's answer on relations between senate-judiciary.
- Myers- Appreciates background of candidate
- Randall: Supreme Court opinions are used to guide decisions in judiciary, notes that Sommers has formidable experience in Florida Supreme Court. Important to have a justice who has background knowledge on issues that pertain to FSU SGA court.
- **Stults moves to call the question, Rogers seconds**
 - Closing:
 - Sommers: Also on the law school trial team, notes that IM has given him opportunities for seeing both sides. Thanks committee for time.
 - Vote:
 - Y(Rogers, Linsky, Myers, Stults, Rossi) N (x) A (Wang)
 - RESULT: Forwarded to Senate for Confirmation.

New Business:

Bill 50 -

- Round Table:
 - Randall: Point of information, asks question regarding SBP power over transfers of money.
 - Linsky: Bill does have sufficient clauses to enhance Senate's discretion over resource allocation.
 - Randall: Point of Information, VP of student affairs being addressed (Hecht)?
 - Linsky: Yes
 - Stults: Alternative could be giving ability to override veto.
 - Stults: Notes he cannot make amendment since he is in a car.
 - Myers: Moves to amend to make it a 2/3rds veto override power.
 - Little: Need statute.
 - Linsky: Can be amended on floor of senate.
 - Myers: Additional information added or parts of bill stricken?
 - Linsky: Strike parts out cancelling veto, add subsection.
 - **Stults: Moves to table**
 - **Rodgers: Seconds**
- **Bill 50 is tabled for next meeting.**

Bill 55 - Sponsored by Randall

- Opening Statement:
 - Randall:
 - BSU Elections bill, collaborative effort between Randall and Gonzalez based on recs by supervisor of elections. Variety of changes need to be made regarding BSU debate, deadlines for elections.
 - Election date was moved inadvertently. Dates for form submissions relevant to elections are unclear.
- Technical non-debatable:
 - X: Senator Stults- Who did you reach out to in the BSU regarding bill?
 - Senator Randall- BSU president.
- **Senator Stults moves to enter roundtable, Senator Rodgers seconds**
- Round table:

- Senator Stults- Expresses supports for bill, mentions desire to ensure that proper contacts are spoken to regarding Bill.
- Senator Myers- Why additional debate?
 - Senator Randall: Add another debate to mirror how the spring debate is carried out.
- Senator Rodgers
- **Myers moves to call the question, Rodgers seconds**
- Closing:
 - Randall- Bill has been in the works since april. First round of edits based off of SOE.
- Vote:
 - Y(Rodgers, Myers, Stults, Rossi, Guillamont) N (x) A (x)
- **RESULT: Bill goes to Senate floor.**

Bill 56 -Randall

- Opening Statement:
 - Redundancy and Bureaucracy, as well as formatting errors, disliked.
 - Bill had all three issues present. Time required for work to get done is too long. Bill mentions several statutes twice, Randall notes that it is unnecessary.
- Technical non-debatable:
 - X:
- **Myers moves to enter roundtable, Stults seconds**
- Round table:
 - Little- Could you outline major substantive changes made by bill?
 - Randall- Bills would be sent to SLAA and Finance committees from hereafter. Formatting changes are also noted.
 - Little- Reason is sending bills to finance instead of budget
 - Randall- Finance frequently deals with requests from RSOs, which is why these bills need to go there.
 - Senator Stults- Negative consequences if bill is not approved?
 - Randall- Bureaucracy, more time required to deal with bills. Takes out redundancy issues.
 - Senator Myers- Expresses appreciation for readability of changes.
- **Myers moves to call the question, Stults seconds**
- Closing:
 - Randall- Appreciation expressed. Senate funding processes are hindered by bureaucratic nonsense. Expresses gratitude.
- Vote:
 - Y(Myers, Stults, Rodgers, Rossi, Guillamont) N (x) A (x)
- **RESULT: Bill passes to floor.**

Unfinished Business:

Committee Legislative Round Table:

Final Announcements:

- Chair: Notes that there are not enough senators on the call, we should be reaching out to our fellow senators for attendance. Encourages senators to be active during debate and to read legislation beforehand. Will be holding committee to a higher standard before reviewing legislature.

- Committee will not meet on Tuesday. Next meeting: October 12th, we will be having impeachment hearings for two senators regarding absences.
- Vice Chair: Apologizes for coming late, notes personal matters. Mentions that he is certain committee carried out business diligently.
- Members:
- Guests:
 - Randall- RTAC members needed. 0 applications received.
 - Sults- Asks if they can be senators.
 - Randall-No

Date and Time of Next Meeting: October 12th, 1800
Adjourned:1:14 PM.

Gabrielle Little

Signature of Chair