



74th Student Senate Internal Affairs Committee

September 12th, 2022 at 5:30pm | <https://fsu.zoom.us/j/95508946768>

Call to Order: 5:32 pm

Members Present: Chair Diaz, Vice Chair McMahon, Senators Anderson, Crocker, and Vollick

Members Tardy:

Members Absent: Senators Anand (U) and Roogow (U)

Guests: President Hunter, Senator Folwell, Candidates Press, Kelley, Mckown-Dawson, Aleman-Martinez, Fertil, Muniz, Hellman, Caldeo, Ventura

Land Acknowledgement – Senator Crocker

- The Student Government of Florida State University acknowledges that it is located on land that is the ancestral and traditional territory of the Apalachee Nation, the Miccosukee Tribe of Florida, the Muscogee Creek Nation, and the Seminole Tribe of Florida. We pay respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to their descendants and to all Indigenous people. We recognize this land remains scarred by the histories and ongoing legacies of settler colonial violence, dispossession, and removal. In spite of all this, and with tremendous resilience, these Indigenous Nations have remained deeply connected to this territory, to their families, to their communities, and to their cultural ways of life. We recognize the ongoing relationships of care that these Indigenous Nations maintain with this land and extend our gratitude as we live and work as humble and respectful guests upon their territory. We encourage all to learn about and educate others on the contemporary work of the Indigenous Nations whose land we are on and to endeavor to support Indigenous sovereignty in all the ways that we can.

Announcements:

- Chair Diaz: There was an inappropriate and derogatory comment made in our last IA meeting, which was unacceptable to be put in our Zoom chat. At the end of the day, this is a public meeting where every member of the student body is able to have access, but I and President Hunter will not tolerate abuses of that by having inappropriate language be shared.

Committee Business:

- Amanda Press – Jewish Student Union Secretary (1 applicant)
- Clark Kelley – VSU Secretary (1 applicant)
- Eli Mckown-Dawson - SCURC, Director (1 applicant)
- Maria Aleman-Martinez - SCURC, Assistant Director (1 applicant)
- Lydia Fertil – SCURC, Treasurer (1 applicant)
- Daniel Muniz – Director of Student Wellness (4 applicants)

- Hope Hellman – Women Student Union Director of Finance (1 applicant)
- Kenneth Caldeo – Asian American Student Union Treasurer (2 applicants)
- Remi Ventura – Jewish Student Union Treasurer (1 applicant)

Old Business:

- None

New Business:

- **Candidate for Confirmation:** Amanda Press – Jewish Student Union Secretary
 - Opening Statement:
 - Hi, for those of you who don't know me my name is Amanda press I'm a junior studying business management with a minor in Spanish. Back in 2020, I helped re-found the Jewish student and I was the vice president of outreach and last year and still currently I guess I've served as JSU secretary. So, I'm here today to hopefully get reconfirmed as secretary as the board and Advisory Council has decided that I was the candidate that they wanted to put through confirmation. I just wanted to share that I'm super passionate about JSU I have lots of events that I hope to plan throughout the semester in the course of the year, including events for our Jewish heritage month and some anti-Semitism awareness events. I've been a part of a lot of initiatives, such as expanding our outreach and also as secretary obviously my role includes taking minutes and supporting our Advisory Council and I hope to expand it and include more Jewish arts those that we have.
 - Rounds of Questioning:
 - **Chair Diaz:** Are you familiar with the statutes pertaining to public meetings and that the meetings from those minutes must be published to the website?
 - **Candidate Press:** Yes, I am aware. I have all the minutes from our previous meetings in a google drive, and the advisor has put them on our website.
 - Deliberations:
 - **Senator Crocker moves to call the question; Vice Chair McMahon seconds**
 - Closing Statement:
 - As I'm sure you saw my application, I am super passionate about JSU and I'm super passionate about the position of secretary. I hope that with all those things considered and everything that I said pray previously I hope that you consider confirming me for the position of JSU secretary and I thank you for all of your time and hope that I passed through, Thank you.
 - Vote:
 - Yes: 4 - Vice Chair McMahon, Senators Anderson, Crocker, and Vollick
 - No: 0
 - Abstain: 0
 - **RESULT: Candidate AMANDA PRESS PASSES**
- **Candidate for Confirmation:** Clark Kelley – VSU Secretary
 - Opening Statement:

science and philosophy with the minor in statistics. I am heavily involved with research on campus, I'm an undergraduate research fellow with Leroy Collins institute, research intern with the civic center, and fellow with FSU's institute of politics. I've published with these groups and then also presented my research both here on campus and at various conferences across the nation. Beyond research I have multiple leadership positions here on campus, I was the treasurer, and then president of the pre-Law Society at FSU, and then also was the director of operations for the torchlight campus policy center. I applied for skirt because I really think that research is one of the most beneficial and meaningful experiences that someone can engage in as an undergraduate student. I want to try and introduce more students to that, especially those who maybe weren't very familiar with it coming into college. I know that was kind of my experience, I really didn't know much about research coming into FSU but after engaging with it as much as I have over the past few years it's really something that I've developed passion for. Now, I actually want to pursue my PHD in political science after graduating and continue doing research full time and I hope to use this position to share that with other students. I'll reserve the rest of my time, thank you.

○ Rounds of Questioning:

- **Vice Chair McMahon:** In your goals you want to increase the number of academic speakers, do you know how many you typically have or have had in the past?

Candidate Mckown-Dawson: In the past we've had some round tables including with teachers from the Art and Sciences department. There have some internal issues that have stopped us from having speakers. My goal as director is to increase that number.

- **Senator Crocker:** Can you explain the extent that you have in experience in planning events, such as the outreach you're mentioning.

Candidate Mckown-Dawson: Yeah so as President of the Pre-Law Society, I arranged speakers from various different legal backgrounds to come out and talk to us.

- **Chair Diaz:** Have you had any outreach regarding with a golden torch series lecture?

Candidate Mckown-Dawson: I have not and I haven't reached out to them yet, only technically because I do not have any power to make any of the decisions.

○ Deliberations:

○ **Senator Vollick moves to call the question; Senator Crocker seconds**

○ Closing Statement:

- I would just like to thank you all again for listening to me speak tonight. If you have any more questions for me or think of anything else please feel free to reach out I'm always around to answer anything, thank you.

○ Vote:

- Yes: 4 - Vice Chair McMahon, Senators Anderson, Crocker, and Vollick
- No: 0
- Abstain: 0

○ **RESULT: Candidate ELI MCKOWN-DAWSON PASSES**

- **Candidate for Confirmation:** Maria Aleman-Martinez - SCURC, Assistant Director
 - Opening Statement:
 - Hi everyone. Thank you so much for taking the time to talk to us today and going through the motions. I will try to keep it relatively short I want to say, I involved in research since high school, I was really excited about the prospect then I finally came to college. I was able to get involved with UROP so they undergraduate research program, I did it last year I did it on gender bias and letters of recommendation and it was just such a tremendous and rewarding experience. I want to give other people the level of reward and just excitement that I got from performing research, and I also want to do any future research maybe hopefully, that's why I applied for my position. I want other undergraduates to know that those opportunities are available for all of us and I just want to also SCURC in particular to have a greater presence on campus so thank again.
 - Rounds of Questioning:
 - **Senator Crocker:** Do you mind expanding on your application when you said, "I think skill makes you a good leader and builds you up"?
Candidate Aleman-Martinez: Yes, to me I think leadership is about having enough skills and that trickle down to your members. I believe you can teach and communicate those to others.
 - **Vice Chair McMahon:** In your application you said "I believe in political advocacy and I try to advocate through volunteering." Can you expand on what you meant by that?
Candidate Aleman-Martinez: I do a particular large amount of canvassing because I am a political science research major. I want to focus on public policy so that relates to the volunteering part.
 - **Senator Crocker:** Is there a time you can think of where you had to be resilient, as stated in your application?
Candidate Aleman-Martinez: I had an internship over the summer that taught me that. It was intense and stressful, I was the intern leader so I felt a lot of pressure and learned to be resilient and not doubt myself.
 - **Chair Diaz:** You are applying for the assistant director position and may have to replace the director we interviewed earlier, have you met him before?
Candidate Aleman-Martinez: I have not met him in person, only in virtual meetings. However, we are in close communication and have discussed things in the beginning of the semester.
 - **Senator Vollick:** In your application it talks about your goals and expanding who knows about the organization and helping students of different fields, can you explain what you mean by that?
Candidate Aleman-Martinez: So, there are two assistant directors. What I will be focused on will getting people to come from different colleges. Most people are humanities based so we wanted to expand to STEM and those fields. Not a lot of people know about SCURC so I want to expand that knowledge.
 - Deliberations:
 - **Senator Crocker moves to call the question; Vice Chair McMahon seconds**
 - Closing Statement:
 - Yes, so hopefully we can get through this procedure relatively quickly. I am really passionate about research, I really want to start doing research even after I graduate in any capacity possible. I'm mainly doing this

because in some way to help other people do it. I hope that we have just a lot of fun getting people involved in research undergrad research. Especially because one of its many people think of it as more like a graduate student thing or something that you do later on but we can really get involved in ways either now if you're passionate about the topic or the subject, thank you.

- Vote:
 - Yes: 3 - Chair Diaz, Senators Anderson and Vollick
 - No: 2 - Vice Chair McMahon, Senator Crocker
 - Abstain: 0
- **RESULT: Candidate MARIA ALEMAN-MARTINEZ PASSES**
- **Candidate for Confirmation:** Lydia Fertil – SCURC, Treasurer
 - Opening Statement:
 - Hello everyone, thank you for your time. My name is Lydia Fertil, and I am the candidate for SCURC treasurer. Coming to Florida State I was trying to find my passion, when I was trying to figure out what I wanted to do after my college career, I started by joining organizations that would allow me to do two things that I was already passionate about. In high school which were leadership in advancing my community and through that journey, I found research through the undergraduate research opportunity program, UROP. Research has become one of my passions and I want to give back to the Florida State community by not only diversifying research but also those that participate in research. I know for me when I was trying to find my project because I am a cyber-crime major, and I wanted to do something in stem I couldn't really find that. I had to go through so many different avenues to find a mentor that would essentially take me on and do some research with me. So, I want that to be easier for other people so that's why I decided to join skirt or that's why I want to join skirt yeah, thank you.
 - Rounds of Questioning:
 - **Vice Chair McMahon:** Are you financially certified?
Candidate Fertil: Yes, I was for the past year. I am waiting to get the new certification until I am confirmed.
 - **Chair Diaz:** Are you familiar with SCURC's role in giving away grants to individuals and maybe RSO's who want to do research on campus
Candidate Fertil: I am aware, I spoke to the advisor about this and the previous President. They told me about the role and that is why I want to diversify because research can be expensive.
 - **Chair Diaz:** Do you know how much money is allocated to the grant program, if so do you think its enough?
Candidate Fertil: I was in contact with the previous president, she said it was around \$1,500 but I am not sure of the exact number.
 - **Chair Diaz:** How do you plan to promote those opportunities and give that opportunity out?
Candidate Fertil: First and foremost, I want to promote SCURC as a whole because it is very important. I didn't know about SCURC at first either. We must promote outreach and research. I want to have my own committee that would go through applications and decide who should get the funds.

- Deliberations:
 - **Senator Crocker moves to call the question; Vice Chair McMahon seconds**
 - Closing Statement:
 - Thank you again for having me and thank you for the questions. I'm personally very passionate about research as I said before, I did it in the past as a sophomore and I want to do it past my college career in the future. So I think this is a great opportunity for me to give back to the Florida State community and thank you.
 - Vote:
 - Yes: 4 - Vice Chair McMahon, Senators Anderson, Crocker, and Vollick
 - No: 0
 - Abstain: 0
 - **RESULT: Candidate LYDIA FERTIL PASSES**
- **Candidate for Confirmation:** Daniel Muniz – Director of Student Wellness
 - Opening Statement:
 - Good evening members, I would first like to thank you for the time consideration and hard work you have all played into that making the student body are well represented organization. Allowing us candidates this unique opportunity to impact change on our campus as we all have shared as we all have a shared value mission and promoting a positive and inclusive atmosphere for our student body. I understand the importance of a carefully selected group of leaders to spearhead that campaign. Being a fourth-year senior with leadership experience in Greek life, military organizations, and the legislative process I believe I can offer a wide array of knowledge and value direction to student Wellness on our campus. Additionally, I believe my organized and charismatic leadership style would cultivate an efficient work environment focus on putting the needs of our community first. As director of student Wellness, I understand how the physical mental and emotional needs of our students of our fellow students actually create a culture of safety and inclusivity for everyone. Without these basic necessities, students can have a hard time navigating experience that's entirely new to them. With the power invested by the Senate hold aim to consistently question how we can improve Florida states culture of Wellness and implement programs and ideas that were promoting encouraging environment. I want to thank you again for this opportunity members as I conclude my opening statement and hope that my devotion to student leadership and positive change contingent continues to shine through this organization.
 - Rounds of Questioning:
 - **Senator Crocker:** You said your leadership style is loyal, can you think of a time when this leadership style wasn't beneficial.
Candidate Muniz: Yeah, I think if there are two conflicting agendas or ideas that could be an issue. I am loyal to the administration and legislation that you all pass. But, if there is something that is getting in the way of making progress, it could create an issue. I am very open minded, and I believe relationships are the core basis of my leadership style. I am open minded enough to realize the priority of the mission goes above my own.

- **Senator Vollick:** Going through your application, I see you had an internship at the Florida House. You said you want to expand on concepts you've learned, can you expand on what those concepts look like?

Candidate Muniz: I know this an executive position and I learned a lot about the legislative process and I was able to learn how ideas turn into bills. I know student senate mimics that and I will use my knowledge from that to know how it works and how the executive branch can work together to achieve goals. The legislative intern allowed me to get a general grip on how that works.

- **Chair Diaz:** Do you have any goals that are related to your expertise specifically in mental or physical health of students?

Candidate Muniz: Being in my fraternity, I was the mental health chair. That allowed me to create new friendships and discover a new side of mental health. One of the biggest things we can work on is destigmatizing mental health among students. We need to do things that the student body can see. We need to create safe environments where students can talk to one another. We can do that with better communication between student government and the student body.

- **Senator Crocker:** You talked about continuing legislation to support FSU's Greek life and its future impact; can you talk about any ways you want to further that already more than it already is?

Candidate Muniz: That comes from a personal place in my life. When I came as a freshman, I didn't know anyone, Greek life was where I began my FSU career. It has allowed me to make connections and friends. It has a huge impact already, but I see and understand the values that come out of being in the Greek community.

- Deliberations:

- **Vice Chair McMahon moves to call the question; Senator Crocker seconds**

- Closing Statement:

- I just wanted to thank you all again for the time and consideration. For tonight I really hope that you guys decide to confirm me you know I'm very excited to go ahead and kick start this semester with some with some of my ideas, thank you.

- Vote:

- Yes: 4 - Vice Chair McMahon, Senators Anderson, Crocker, and Vollick
- No: 0
- Abstain: 0

- **RESULT: Candidate DANIEL MUNIZ PASSES**

- **Candidate for Confirmation:** Hope Hellman – WSU Director of Finance

- Opening Statement:

- I'm Hope, I'm from Tampa. I'm double majoring in accounting and finance. I'm here on behalf of the director of finance position for the woman student union. I believe that I'm best fit for this position due to my experience in student government and my expertise in finance. Last year I served as the Jewish student union director of programming, where I had the opportunity to learn how to utilize my voice on campus to advocate for the student body through my agency experience. I have learned that we are financed by the student body and that means that even if you don't participate on campus every student at this institution is

a part of every single agency. I will make sure that that idea drives every single decision that I make throughout my term. On top of my agency experience, I believe that my finance experience has prepared me for this role. I know that some of my duties are to prepare a breakdown of our budget and to complete purchase requests. I've previously served as my chapters director of finance, where I single handedly created and managed upwards of the \$2 million budget. I previously served as a hospitality chair relay for life, where I plan to share at nights with businesses around the Tallahassee community. I'm also currently working as a financial advisor assistant with Edward Jones investments here in Tallahassee, where I learn how to better plan for expenses. Due to that, the extent of my experiences, I believe that I am prepared to take on the role of director of finance the woman's union.

- Rounds of Questioning:
 - **Senator Crocker:** Do you have any experiences of dealing with inefficiency in a setting like this?
Candidate Hellman: Yes, being in charge of our budget in my sorority, I needed feedback from every single member. There were tight deadlines, and it was hard to get everything done. People would always try to push things back and I had to keep things on track and being proactive.
 - **Chair Diaz:** Do you know how much money the Women's Student Union was given for this previous fiscal year?
Candidate Hellman: Yes, I already have the breakdown and I have talked to the director.
- Deliberations:
- **Vice Chair McMahon moves to call the question; Senator Crocker seconds**
- Closing Statement:
 - I just appreciate everyone listening to me today and of course I look forward to hopefully working with everyone in the future because I will be giving a breakdown of the finances so just thank you.
- Vote:
 - Yes: 4 - Vice Chair McMahon, Senators Anderson, Crocker, and Vollick
 - No: 0
 - Abstain: 0
- **RESULT: Candidate HOPE HELLMAN PASSES**

- **Candidate for Confirmation:** Kenneth Caldeo – Asian American Student Union Treasurer

- Opening Statement:
 - Hi guys, my name is Kenneth Caldeo, I'm a third-year chemical engineering major. I was born in Manila; I was raised in Jacksonville and I'm here for the Asian American student union. The primary experience that I'm involved with Asian Americans student union was a number of direct aid projects I did with their affiliates. The first one I did was around freshman year, my hometown was hit by a hurricane and someone that I knew from the ground was simply asking for help and I forwarded their call to the states. During that, I helped with advocating for them and eventually facilitating the means to get contributions in the States and from Florida State students through the ground. The Southern Philippines, around November the following year, in the latest project I did

for those of you who did not know a hurricane, one of the worst we've had in recent years, hit the Philippines and killed around 300 people. Right now I have more experiences I've had my second year of interning at this manufacturing plant as a quality assurance intern and I've done a presentation on ethics on fundraising at Florida ASU summit that occurred this past summer.

○ Rounds of Questioning:

- **Senator Crocker:** In your application you talked about how a leader must act first. Have you ever been in a position that you had to act first?

Candidate Caldeo: Yes, the latest direct aid project I did back in December. In that, I acted as the coordinator. What happened was that my contact in the Southern Philippines showed me the horrors of a hurricane that had no attention from anyone here or in the news. I couldn't step back and let someone else handle this, I had to take the first step and when I did that I was able to raise awareness and contribute.

- **Chair Diaz:** Do you have any specific experience working as treasurer?

Candidate Caldeo: Yes, I worked last year with ASU affiliates as the fundraising chair. That was a complicated situation because of the way it was step up. I had to step up as treasurer in a lot of times. With direct aid, I was in charge of the money to make sure that money being spent was going to the correct thing. The information for that needed to be clear because of a language barrier.

- **Chair Diaz:** Have you been financially certified?

Candidate Caldeo: Yes, I took it mid to end July. It was after the end of the previous fiscal year.

- **Vice Chair McMahon:** Reading your application, you talk about direct aid relief projects, is there any other projects you would like to see accomplished?

Candidate Caldeo: I would reference some of the projects I've done in the past. As an engineering intern with a smaller intern, I worked with the quality department, and we were able to create proper training to ensure quality results. I also helped with documentation of financial results that also dealt with aerospace regulations.

○ Deliberations:

- **Senator Crocker moves to call the question; Senator Vollick seconds**

○ Closing Statement:

- Thank you guys for your time in trying to get me confirmed. If confirmed, I will be a treasurer who is timely and efficient, thank you.

○ Vote:

- Yes: 4 - Vice Chair McMahon, Senators Anderson, Crocker, and Vollick
- No: 0
- Abstain: 0

○ **RESULT: Candidate KENNETH CALDEO PASSES**

● **Candidate for Confirmation:** Remi Ventura – Jewish Student Union Treasurer

○ Opening Statement:

- Hi, my name is Ronnie Ventura and I am a sophomore in the honors program. As was said, I am applying for JC treasure once again. I am financially certified for this fiscal year. For the past year I have been financial assistant to the treasurer of my sorority. During this time, I have

helped with the making of financial decisions in chapter responsibilities. Overall, I collaborate with all chair and executive positions as well as the chapter advisor to develop a well-rounded budget for the school year. This includes attending in depth meetings with chapters leadership to determine what is necessary for their positions and the events that they plan to coordinate. I have become well versed in budgeting itself as well as ensuring that purchases are financially smart and worth it in the long run. Throughout my time at JSU, I've worked hard to collaborate with my fellow board members to make sure that we are financially responsible in our decisions and ensuring that our purchases benefit not just the organization but the student body overall. Our events are geared towards the benefit of Jewish students and non-Jewish students and the overall education of Jewish heritage to all members of our community responsible purchases for these events are crucial to provide the best events that we can throughout the entirety of the year. It's my goal to continue advantaging our financial responsibilities and an organized and deliberate manner. This includes facilitating a conversation about the usage of funds that all board members can contribute to it's my responsibility to guarantee that our funding aligns with JSU. Schools' admissions and I will continue to provide money saving strategies general budgeting and finding ways the student body will benefit best from our purchases. Some materials that we purchased within the last year have ranged from merchandise two materials for our events for things like chocolate seder and things of that nature. JSU is and will continue to be a top priority for me and it is my goal to make sure I'm giving it my all. Thank you for considering me for this position once again.

○ Rounds of Questioning:

- **Senator Crocker:** I see you're very big on environmentalism and protecting the earth, how can you get JSU more involved with those values and ideas?

Candidate Ventura: Yeah, in high school I created an organization geared towards ensuring environmental justice for everyone in the country. One other organization I'm involved with is the environment service organization. JSU loved to collaborate with organizations across campus and I would love to see these types of collaborations.

- **Chair Diaz:** How was your previous time as treasurer?

Candidate Ventura: When I first joined, I am not religious I am only culturally Jewish, I felt many people couldn't relate. When I was introduced to JSU, it was eye opening to see people who are culturally Jewish like me. It has been unbelievable because the community seems so small. It has been a learning curve as I have not been a part of SGA prior to JSU. Seeing all of this has been super exciting and I have an awesome support system.

○ Deliberations:

- **Senator Crocker moves to call the question; Vice Chair McMahon seconds**

○ Closing Statement:

- First, I would like to thank you all for taking the time to listen and reconsider me for this position in a time when anti-Semitism is rampant across the country. I am very passionate as a Jewish student and community member to give back in any way that I can and I have found, like I said earlier there earlier that participating on this board as treasurer

has been incredibly rewarding, and the perfect platform to do so I'm super excited to continue collaborating with all of my Jewish peers. The community and student government as a whole and I look forward to working with everyone pending my confirmation.

- Vote:
 - Yes: 4 - Vice Chair McMahon, Senators Anderson, Crocker, and Vollick
 - No: 0
 - Abstain: 0
- **RESULT: Candidate REMI VENTURA PASSES**

- **Rules of Procedure Changes:**

- Chair Diaz presents a change to the Internal Affairs Rules of Procedure to eliminate technical non-debatable questions for interviews and legislation. The change would also move closing statements to happen after deliberations so candidates have the opportunity to respond to comments made in deliberations, giving them the last word on their candidacy.
- Senator Crocker: Have we always been able to speak against candidates in roundtable?
 - Chair Diaz: Absolutely, if you have something critical to say of a candidate or their experience, you can speak against them in roundtable.
- Senator Vollick: I like the change you added where a person gets to have the final say and then we go into voting. It would probably help and give them a chance to change our minds about how we feel about them if needed.
- Vice Chair McMahon: I like the changes.
- Senator Crocker: Any technical non-debatable questions that we have can be asked in general questions, correct?
 - Chair Diaz: Yes.
- Senator Anderson: It's really weird to have questions broken up that way.
- Vice Chair McMahon moves to adopt the amendments to the Rules of Procedure, Senator Crocker seconds. No objections.
 - **Amendments to Rules of Procedure adopted. Refer to SGA website.**

Unfinished Business:

- None

Closing Announcements:

- Chair Diaz: I would appreciate more debate from the committee in the future about candidates. It's unfair to almost fail candidates like we did today with the tie vote, and I would at least like for candidates to know why we failed them if we do decide to vote that way. We may also have future Rules changes regarding bureau review, as the Bureau Review process has changed since the summer.

Next Meeting: September 19th, 2022 at 5:00pm

Adjourned: 7:16 pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Samuel Diaz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S' and 'D'.

Signature of Chair Samuel Diaz