



**75th Student Senate
Judiciary Committee**

October 20, 2023 at 4:00pm | [<https://fsu.zoom.us/j/93149836915>]

Call to Order: 4:00pm

Members Present: Chair Velazquez, Vice Chair Anandjiwala, Senator(s) Behar, Brewer, Chinn, Crusey, Mendez, Syska, Widman

Members Tardy:

Members Absent: Senator(s) McKinney, Ramos, Walerio

Guests: Senator White

Land Acknowledgement

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:

- None

Public Comments:

- None

New Business:

- **Senate Bill #92 – Brewer (P) Arellano, Birdsong, Brown, Dennig, Gummerman, McEntrye, Mendez, Newsome, Sparling, Syska, Walerio (Co)**
- Opening Statement:
 - **Senator Brewer:** So what this bill would do is convert CSU the Catholic Student Union at Florida State from a recognized student organization RSO to an agency this is the main point for making this change, CSU, mission statement and overall campus prominence and activity. It much more meets the definition of an agency at FSU than an RSO. CSU as of this fall has 662 active members. We do numerous service events throughout Florida today and throughout, really just the entire panhandle, almost on a weekly basis. We're extremely active on campus. And the fact that we have those numbers and we do all this activity, but we still fall into the RSO category even though we are an identity based organization, to me just doesn't seem right. So that's kind of the main point that we were putting this bill forward and I'd love to hear any questions anyone has.
 - **Yields with 2 minutes 57 seconds remaining**
 - **Senator Widman motions to enter roundtable, Vice chair Anandjiwala seconded.**
- Round-Table Discussion:
 - **Senator Widman:** Have you spoken with anyone in the department of student governance and advocacy regarding advising capacity for the organization?
 - **Senator Brewer:** Yes, I've spoken to President Jack Hitchcock, about his thoughts about it. And I've spoken with Mr. Andrew Johnson, our current Senate advisor about it. Both raised certain issues to me and those issues have since been resolved. Neither outright told me that they were not supported or that they didn't see this as something that FSU could fulfill. It was really just a conversation of how this transition can best be made. Certain financial issues were made up for one, like the question of funding, a really big point that Jack brought up to me was how what would the funding capacity for a religious organization look like? We found out in that in the election code as it states, religious organizations can receive A&S funding as long as they don't turn around and use that funding for religious proposition which CSU has never spent A&S money on that and its capacities are so obvious. So yes, a direct line of communication has been established.
 - **Senator Widman:** Okay, so just a point of information to the entire committee. I had a sweepings requests come in from student agencies and institutes, that is the group who oversees the agencies as well as class councils and just from what I've heard and read and their sweepings request, they're requesting money to hire staff because they are quoting their application here severely understaffed. So I'm okay with passing this sort of

committee. I don't want this to be something that stops it. However, I would strongly recommend to the bill sponsor that he reaches out to student agencies and institutes which is located in the old FSL offices and speak with them because I think it's very important that they have a say in this matter, as well.

- **Senator Chinn:** Yeah, I just wanted to say that I don't think the size of an organization grants merit for that organization to become an agency. I think if we set that kind of precedent is a very dangerous precedent. I know other organizations are huge look at animal society at FSU. They have several 500 members. So I think if we wanted to just say, Hey, this is a large organization, it's become an agency well, so should the animal society. I think it's a very dangerous precedent to set
- **Senator Crusey:** Are there like other universities in Florida that have a Catholic Student Union, like as an agency?
- **Senator Brewer:** One that I haven't really looked into. I've never based my policies for FSU of other universities. But I'd be happy to if you're interested.
- **Senator Widman:** Just my concerns we talk about it not being I don't know how to say not like spreading religion, but my two concerns are that CSU is a Roman Catholic organization. And I don't know if all Catholic students on campus are Roman Catholic that something that's a little concerning, and it does say just that full centered. CSU is a Roman Catholic organization of students who come together to strengthen, inquire about and share their Catholic faith through community service, spiritual growth and friendship. I just, to me, it sounds like the goal of this organization becoming a student union would be to spread the Catholic faith which again, yes, however, I just don't think that we should be allocating an estimate monies to go straight into spreading a certain religion when there are dozens of religions on campus. I just, it's a little concerning and I'm More behind statues beforehand, but I definitely do. I have some concerns that I think we should address before passing this bill to the entire senate.
- **Senator Chinn:** Yeah, as the previous senators, said I feel like this is very faith based religion which I think further sets a dangerous precedent. I mean, you say it's not meant for prophesizing but in the wording, it says, share their Catholic faith, and then join us in our journey. of faith. That sounds like prophesizing and spreading religion, which I don't think a university funded agency should do.
- **Senator Crusey:** Okay, so a point of personal privilege. I grew up Catholic. So I appreciate the work being done for this. But however, I do feel that there are plenty of you know, university, like organizations and other ministries for other religions on campus. And I think like, as the other senator said, it could set a dangerous precedent, because it would just open up the gates to, you know, allow all of these other religious based entities to have the grounds to create a union. I think the Catholic Student Union does a lot of great work for

the members and for the university, but I don't know if it grants like an agency based. I don't really know. But if that makes sense.

- **Senator Chinn:** I also am a Christian, and I have no problem with CSU, receiving funding from Senate and things like that. But I don't think you should receive direct funding from the university if funding is the problem. They're welcome to come to Senate and request money but as far as I've heard, they never come and request money so I don't see that issue there.
- Pro-Con debate:
 - **Senator Widman motions to move to pro con debate , Vice chair Anandjiwala seconded.**
 - **Senator Chinn motions to enter con, Senator Widman seconded.**
 - **Senator Chinn:** All my previous points and some of the other senators previous points. I just think this sets a very dangerous precedent. I don't think a religious organization has any reason to be a recognized agency on campus. Thank you.
 - **Senator Widman:** Yes, I just I was on the fence about this bill last week as well, just after seeing the sweeping requests come through for student agencies and institutes saying how understaffed they are. I just I think that if we were to pass a bill like this, I would really like to hear directly from that entity. So I just don't think that right now is the time to institute this on a funding level as well as within advising capacity. I just I don't really think that this is the best idea at the moment.
 - **Senator Widman motions to call the question, Senator Syska seconded.**
- Closing Statement:
 - **Senator Brewer:** Thank you to everyone for hearing out this bill today. I know anytime a bill that would alter SGA to this extent is brought up. It's going to be a lot of questions, a lot of criticisms. And I fully understand that and I thank everyone very much for their comments. This being judiciary committee I guess my main point that I heard address, I'll answer from a statutory basis. Frankly, what it says in the statutes in both the student body constitution and the student body statutes of course the university is that our agencies exist as a way to give identity based groups a platform and a chance for them to express their identity. And like it or not, religion is a part of that. CSU would absolutely be friendly if other religions or organizations wanted to. For those organizations become agencies. Yeah. Going through their own process. As far as the technical issues go, I know there were some financial issues brought up. I would love to be able to answer every single one of them today. But the best I can tell you is just let's just please put this board to the floor. We'll be able to be able to bring in the CSU president, the CSU treasurer right now. We've been talking about these issues and we're very aware of them with the executive branch at SGA. And, you know, committee, we can answer some of these questions. But I think this bill

deserves to be really investigated and looked at by the Senate as a whole. So I if you're planning on voting no, based on these holdups, I would urge you not to because they will be addressed in a very full capacity. And if it doesn't satisfy you on the second reading day in the Senate, then by all means go No. But there's been judiciary on what statutes on a statutory basis. There's nothing that says a religious organization can't receive it and that's money as long as they don't use it for religious proposition.

- Vote:
 - Yes: [4] Behar, Brewer, Mendez, Syska,
 - No: [1] Chinn
 - Abstain: [3] Crusey, Widman, Anandjiwala
 - **RESULT: Motion to pass Bill 92 [PASSES]**

Senator Widman motions to unlock the calendar to Bill #91

- **Senate Bill #91 – White (P)**
- Opening Statement:
 - **Senator White:** Hi, everyone. I hope you're all having a great day. So this resolution just changes the rules and just changes our student body statute. This bill I mean, changes our student body statutes to put our campus board on our funding boards for Pac and our top replacing the student engagement ambassadors. The student engagement ambassadors have not been an organization on campus for a while now, which leaves PAC in our tech meeting to get senators to fill quorum. By changing this will allow our tech and pack to have quorum more so that our chairs for those funding boards didn't have to reach out to the Senate chat and do not have to worry about quorum every meeting. It also allows Campus Rec to expand their responsibilities across campus, which they are elected to those seats and it gives students more of a voice in their representation. I yield.
 - **Yields with 58 seconds remaining**
 - **Senator Widman motions to enter roundtable, Senator Brewer seconded.**
- Round-Table Discussion:
 - **Senator Widman:** I believe there's a technicality that requires any member to be added to added to a forwarding letter by the student body president. So, I may recommend just I'm just looking to see if you'd be able to do an amendment to remove strike select and re add forward. Just because I'm

pretty sure we would need to forward them rather than just have the chair of that committee select them, or as chair of that board.

- Senator White: But I believe open the bill now that it says select for union board already, which is why I wanted to keep them the same. So the union board and Campus Rec aren't different.

Senator Widman motions to call the question, Senator Syska seconded.

- Closing Statement:
 - **Senator White:** So, I did double check. It already has select for union board which currently right now that union board chair picks two representatives for each. So that just keeps our Campus Rec board and union board the same standard.
- Vote:
 - Yes: [8] Behar, Brewer, Chinn, Crusey, Mendez, Syska, Widman, Anandjiwala
 - No: [0]
 - Abstain: [0]
 - **RESULT: Motion to pass Bill 91 [PASSES]**

Old Business:

- None

Unfinished Business:

- None

Closing Announcements:

- **Chair Velazquez:** But obviously I know all you guys have heard there's a lot going on in terms of like going out here and kind of like the dangers of that at the current moment. So if you do go out this weekend, please please please be safe. And obviously with election week coming up this week. I feel like I made a point on this committee to say that we're not going to have a partisan stance. Like we're a pretty diverse committee. And the fact that we're still able to work together a lot of the times and you know, have civil conversations. It's something that I really admire about the group that we have here together. So if we can continue that work out until the election world and overall just campaigning just continue to be kind be nice to each other. We're as SGA guys like this not worth losing friends. So have a good week, and I will see you guys on Wednesday.
- **Senator Widman:** Yes, just want to let everyone know that. The sweepings committee currently has applications open for sweeping so if you are part of any other organizations, please spread the word. The applications are going to be closing next Wednesday the 25th or this upcoming Wednesday. Excuse me. The 25th at

11:59pm. So if any organizations are interested, please apply and make sure to have them sign up for a time block as well. And then if you have any questions, just let me know.

- **Senator Brewer:** I just want to thank everyone for bearing with me I'm glad everyone's able to hear me and just one last thing to say. Go Noles baby!!!
- **Vice chair Anandjiwala:** Everyone have fun this weekend and safe!! See you all on Wednesday!!

Adjourned: at 4:26

Signature of Chair Velazquez

Christian Velazquez