

Student Government Association Senate

Wednesday, 3/18/2020

Session Agenda

I. Call the meeting to order 5:12 PM

II. Roll Call

Alford- Here

Billiot- Absent

Cannon- Here

Cao- Here

Crenshaw- Here

Fretz- Here

Jackson- Here

Johnson- Absent

Karkoutli- Here

Lair, B- Here

Lair, C- Here

Leblanc- Here

Melancon- Absent

Mott- Here

Ngo- Absent

Owen- Here

Pitalo- Here

Philips- Absent

Rusnak- Here

Smith Bradley- Absent

Smith Brendon- Absent

Snow- Here

Stackhouse- Here

Stevenson- Absnt

Stewart- Absent

Thamard- Absent

Vitali- Here

Yarabrough- Here

Cognevich- Here

18 Here 11 absent we meet quorum

III. Approval of the Agenda

Approved nothing to add to the agenda

IV. Approval of the Minutes

Julianne Romero Clerk of Senate- With all the craziness of moving everything online, I have not been able to complete the minutes but as soon as I can I will get both sets of minutes out from March 11th to March 18th.

V. Communications and Announcements (from anyone; 3min ea; non-SGA-related)

No communications or announcements

VI. Committee Reports (3min + 3min Q&A)

a. Governance- no report

b. Rules- Leblanc COLA- We voted on bill's presented to us but not the bill that was sent today.

c. Finance- Fretz GAL- We met via email but I am having a hard time maintaining quorum because not everyone responds, so we need to meet to see who is on the finance committee and who isn't participating so we can vote and pass bills.

d. Student Affairs- no report

VII. Other Reports (6min + 3min Q&A)

a. President- Christine Bourgeois- I had a Zoom call with Commissioner of Higher Education and COSBP the day before yesterday. Everyone shared their concerns and updates of their campuses and I will say I'm proud of UNO. It seems we were ahead of everyone else in a sense, and information has been steady and there are many resources being created to help students. If you weren't aware the library lends out chromebooks and laptops. I checked in and so far only half have been requested, but as the numbers change, I'm working with IT to possibly purchase more.

-I have received lots of emails from distressed or concerned students about the course load being a lot to transition so quickly. I shared these concerns with Dr. Nicklow immediately and within two hours there was a mass email sent to all faculty and staff that put emphasis on being lenient and understanding with students during this time. Throughout this next week I will be monitoring how everyone continues to progress and taking further action as deemed necessary by Tuesday.

-Thank you for all showing up, I know times are tough and I personally enjoy having these meetings through zoom to keep a sense of structure in my life. I've been working with Joy on plans for the executive budget and we are trying our best to serve where needed most.

b. Vice-President- Maddie Roach VP- The current amount in the senate operating account went up due to the inability to have events on campus, so now the amount is \$20,179.18, a little over 10 thousand got added so we have a good bit to spend now. The reserve is still the same \$416,675.59 and we extended the budget requests because a couple of student organizations asked to have it extended, we received 12 so far and they are due tomorrow at 4:30pm and I think we will be receiving two more by tomorrow.

c. Vice-President of Legislative Affairs- Cognevich VPLA- We are going to keep doing this as long as we have to. I would like to see a better format in terms of sending things out in committees to make sure everyone is involved and it runs smoother. SO if you do have an emergency come up, because I don't know what everyone's circumstances are. For instance I am taking care of a 3 year old, 6 year old, 67 year old and a 75 year old along with a pregnant girlfriend. So nobody can go to the store but me. So people are in similar or worse

circumstances. SO I would like to decentralize this meeting if we can, if we cant then we will keep meeting like this then. Talk to me offline if you have suggestions and thoughts.

d. Vice-President of Programming- Jaylan Johnson VPP- The rest of our events are cancelled for the semester. And we are going to try to do virtual programming. One of our events are a Netflix party with the chrome extension. Most of everything we will doing is online virtual, or news reports and updates. That's it.

e. Advisor- Ballard Advisor- thanks everyone for coming it is really important that we have these meetings actually and we are not cancelling them period. By y'all's constitution, we have to meet on a regular basis, and these meetings by law have to be public to the university which is why the zoom call is the best way to do that. The zoom link is published on the University's official calendar as well on social media. SO it is a requirement by y'all's rules not mine. And I also think it is important that we keep meeting to ensure a sense of normalcy for y'all business is done as usual and school is not cancelled so it is important that we continue to operate as normal as possible. With that being said if you cant come to this meeting for any reason please proxy, proxy forms are not hard copies in the office anymore and please email Wesley proxy forms. I am all for making these phone calls more efficient and I am open to suggestions but we won't stop meeting. We have to have a public forum because that are the rules. Sorry for anyone who doesn't want to be here. Also please remember we have to meet so all you executives have something to do , you all pay their tuition. I am obviously working form home welcome to my house, over the next few weeks if you need me please email me , I can call, zoom call, email back , whatever you need during regular business hours, I need to log everything I do during business hours and talking to you would be a fun addition to that. If you need anything at all please don't hesitate to reach out. With that being said SIL is planning tons of virtual programming to try to keep students engaged because it is important that you all still have a sense of community. Like Wesley said yall obviously have lives outside of school but if we can provide some kind of happy interactional activity away from that, let us do that for you. Mondays we have Meet Up Mondays we all get together on a zoom call and just talk, Tuesdays is a trivia game, Wednesdays it's a game day we will do some fun game, Thursday we will hear from volunteer center with volunteerism and things going on around the city and how we can help, Friday's are DIY Fridays where we do little activities you can do at home and make along with our staff. There has been a lot of talk about paying student workers, that is why SIL is doing all of this stuff. We have to keep our student workers employeed but just like I have to keep my hours logged everyday so do they. So by doing these activities they can log what they do, if you come to these events you are essentially keeping people employeed and also getting away from everything. Please come join us. Elections start at midnight tonight, you will get a ballot at midnight to vote for SGA President, Vice President and Senate seats, please stay on top of that. Also if you are running in elections I will be sending an email on how to file that final expenditure report, since we are online. Stay posted for that. Yesterday we had the SGA Debate with our two Presidential candidates we had a 40 minute conversation , and 19 people in attendance on a zoom call which I think is impressive for a virtual debate, if you are interested in watching it the link is posted and it is on youtube. Maddie told yall about the budget, please think of things yall

can do with that money that does not involve a lot of people. Lets try to get those bills circulating. I understand yall have things to do, yalls classes come first, yalls families even before that. I know you are busy but this is a commitment you have made school is not cancelled, and hopefully this can be a fun relief from craziness that is happening.

Questions:

Cognevich VPLA- I do let me start, I heard a rumor that Grad students were being laid off, is that the case? Like assistantships not research.

Ballard Adv- Sure, I have heard nothing about anyone being laid off. I have heard of some student workers being fired including grad students just because their jobs don't translate to remote work well. That is a reason why our office and SIL are doing what we are doing for our workers. We are pushing for the university to do more for that. There is emergency funding by the financial aid office if anyone or anyone you know lost a job in the service industry or lost a job on campus, if you need financial help they are providing that.

Cognevich VPLA- All these student workers jobs every single one instead of research assistantships already have money aside for their positions, has there been any talk of paying them anyway?

Ballard Adv- I have not been in those conversations and obviously I am not in all conversations, I know that work study and the department of education has strongly said that we continue to pay our work study even though they are not working because it is federal aid money. Personally, I believe the same should happen for grad students. But I cannot make that call nor have I heard anything.

Cognevich VPLA- Have you had the conversation with our supervisor to pay our student workers Since we already have the money set aside?

Ballard Adv- Yes , SGA student workers are taken care of.

Cognevich VPLA- All of them?

Ballard Adv- All of them with the exception of a few that have decided to move back to their house.

Cognevich VPLA- What about SIL?

Ballard Adv- SIL is covered as well. That is why we are doing these crazy games.

Christine Pres- Just a Point of Information, I know on the FAQ page they have questions and answers about an emergency fund I don't know if they will put more details, I am certain that work study is good-

Cognevich VPLA- Yeah joy was just saying that

Ballard Adv- Yeah work study is good and like I said there is a financial emergency funding.

Christine Pres- The FAQ page is very helpful

Cao COLA- You just brought up how they are distributing money for work study, does that mean I don't have to work, because I emailed the financial aid people they didn't give a response and Nicklow allowed us to work remotely, and my thing is because I don't have all the proper tools to work remotely I would rather just get the remaining money from work study, versus trying to scramble to work in all this chaos.

TIME Fretz

Motion to extend time by 3 minutes Rusnak COS

Cao Second

Ballard Adv- Yes, I totally understand the university rule is if your job can be done remotely then it must be done remotely to get those funds, I would argue though that if you don't have the tools to do the job remotely then you can't do it. But that is something you would have to work up through your supervisor. But if you have problems with your supervisor, you can email me on your individual situation and I might be able to help you out.

Cao COLA- I don't know if this is the right time to ask, I tried to email but since we are here I will ask, are there bill restrictions, were there restrictions for us to give canned goods to student organizations because there are people who are literally starving due to limited resources and from my understanding I know we can't write bills for certain things but can we write a bill for like canned goods and toiletries and distribute it to everyone and not just members of a club.

Ballard Adv- First of all I would say if you know someone in immediate need, the privateer pantry is not closed the staff just had to go remote. But they delivered all the goods to the housing office, so they do have food if someone is in need. Now the privateer pantry will run out of food eventually, so I have been working closely with Christine to buy food and toiletries with her executive account. Here's the thing is I cannot buy food except for by check without special permissions. The special permissions have to come directly from Dr. Nicklow. I am positive he will sign off on it because he has been very lenient of things in this time. It's just a matter of us getting this signed off on, and getting it to actually go get it and go to campus, we are working the logistics of this, and as soon as we know I will let y'all know so if y'all want to add money to that we can possibly work that out.

Cao COLA- Let's say we could write the bill, will we have to rely on Walmart prices or Amazon?

Cognevich VPLA- Let's save this for offline, and email about it.

TIME

VIII. Old Business

none

IX. New Business (6min intro + 10min Q&A; 3min Amendments; 3min Opposed + 3min For)

none

X. Nominations and Appointments

none

XI. Open Forum (12min; for the betterment of SGA)

Mott COE- Is there something we can do if the Privateer Pantry is out of food already, because the food they dropped off at the housing office is already gone.

Cognevich VPLA- Wow that was fast

Ballard Adv- Thank you for sharing because that is news to me. In that case once again I will let you know as soon as I hear back information on what me and Christine are working on.

Cognevich VPLA- I would go as far as to say if we can get committees to meet we can have something on next weeks agenda. Even though it hasn't come by 5:00 today, im sure we can still get it on the agenda since its time sensitive and we can call a special session before then. So keep that in mind if it is an emergency,

Christine Pres- I definitely think sooner is better than later. With that being said if you know anyone willing to donate please do. Obviously, people are in need. And special sessions can happen so let's stay in communication even through all of this.

Leblanc COLA- I was going to ask, I reached out to joy regarding the specifics of the Privateer Pantry and I was wondering if I know we have the rues that you were reaching out to chartwells , did they reach out to you to see if we can do the bills for the food.

Ballard Adv- Chartwells was another option we were looking into to see if we could buy x number of meals or whatever, I have not heard back from them , we are exploring many avenues for food I know Christine has a large sum of money she wants to spend , we are exploring all food avenues.

Cao COLA- Is Christine the only person with access to email the entire student body? Because lets say we do get these resources we need to ensure they are distributed equally among

students. And if we do it will be people we are affiliated with which is not fair. And furthermore aside from that is there anyway we can supply ride support for people who need supplies because my concern is people don't have rides to get food.

Cognevich VPLA- That sounds like a grey area also lets look into the rules a little more joy has a lot more insight on that, lets see what we want to do first and what we are able to do and see how we can finagle getting it done lets come up with plan first.

Christine Pres- I was just going to say again its been very frustrating being honest because there are a lot of rules in place and I cannot just immediately buy all these things so working to try to get these things as soon as possible and also buying toiletries. People who are living on campus are those we are thinking of right now because they are here and those who are on campus either does not have a home and this is their home. SO rides are a great point. If any of you have any ideas at all please constantly stay in communication with us I know that they did purchase that shuttle and the biggest problem is they don't have a driver and I know in times like this that might not be an option due to social distancing. I think many things go into this on the state level and we can't have more than 10 people in a place at a time. We are trying to move and navigate this efficiently so if anyone has any ideas please let us know because we aren't the only ones who are able to email back and forth with people. We are in the works and we are planning this out and you will probably be the first to know if we do get something done. Ad we also don't want to just use student funds for students on campus because everyone who comes to school on campus or not are students. That are great points nicky we are trying to get this efficient as possible.

Cognevich VPLA- Lets say there is an organization who does charity work, we can get them to apply for funds for food and find the right way to filter the funds where they need to go while working in the system.

Cao COLA- Can senate write something for the Bursar to refund things that students aren't using such as their student ID money and food or what not, im just think about that..

Cognevich VPLA- Lets cross that bridge when we get there, lets wait until they fail.

Cao COLA- Can we as senate help get people funding to get transportation back to their homes, I know people are stuck on campus because they cannot afford to go home, so they are stuck here suffering and alone on campus.. is there any thing we can do, like I know travel funding is not a thing for individual use but.. I mean what about people who want to bus home or fly home.

Ballard Adv- I just wanted to say I obviously cannot say yall can do this yall have , yall set aside a travel fund this year and over half of it can't be used because people cannot travel and I think that is an excellent and very helpful use of those funds that are for travel and we need to give to people. That is something you can work on if you want.

Cognevich VPLA- Can we say that to designate that any uno student can use to travel one time, like does it have to be academic travel or is that just the stipulation we put on it.

Ballard Adv- You put the academic stipulation on it, I think yall can do a temporary something, I think yall need to think of the rules of that like lets be judicious on what we do.

Leblanc COLA- I was curious to know in the case of emergencies can the reserve account be unlocked to help students with various issues they are dealing with in this time?

Cognevich VPLA- There are no provisions in our constitution that allow that and I think doing that might start a dangerous precedent for emergencies, I would rather see something direct and specific, and if we can follow the rules we can finagle it.

Lebalnc COLA- It was just a general and broad question that im sure we would need to fine tune if we would like to do that,

Cognevich VPLA- I wouldn't take the reserve money off the table but we have plenty of money right now in the operating account, if we go beyond that then I'm all ears.

XII. Adjournment- 5:57 PM