

## **Formal Meeting Minutes**

USG Senate Meeting

Lewis Library Bowl 120

Sunday, November 11th, 2017 7:30pm

### **President's Report**

At the upcoming Trustees meeting, some issues that will be brought up include the following:

- Some DACA, international students who have been impacted by the travel ban have expressed their concerns about traveling home
- Pricing for housing for married undergrad students.

The Winter Elections Cycle has been announced. However, the Winter Elections Cycle will be adjusted in the near future. USG needs to focus more so on raising awareness about the election. The number of people running for USG positions has dropped significantly in the past few years. There were seven candidates running for seven positions one year. USG needs more diverse voices and more people to run. Working with the Director of Communications to get the word out is a possible solution. This issue goes back to increasing student engagement.

### **SGRC Meeting**

The SGRC presented the following student groups for confirmation:

- Alpha Omega Ministry
- Classics Club
- Filipinos Living in Princeton (FLIP)
- Hoop Zine
- Princeton MedHack
- Princeton Student Veteran Alliance (under PACE)
- Princeton University Physics Competition

There was a motion to vote with all in favor. USG Senate members confirmed these students groups under unanimous consent.

### **Ad Hoc Committee on Calendar Reform**

If Princeton University chooses to adopt a new calendar, the current calendar would be in effect for another two years before the new calendar would go into effect. Princeton's calendar is so different in comparison to that of other universities. Changes made to the current calendar would

align the university's calendar with that of other Ivy League schools. No matter what changes to the calendar, we will still likely have eight days of Reading Period.

Reading Period and final exams would occur before Winter Break. This would allow students to have a real break without having to worry about studying. Princeton University would also be able to create a Winter Session, which would be optional. The Winter Session would consist of bridging types of activities rather than credit-granting courses. For example, if a student is taking a course in the spring that needs R, the student may take an R workshop during the Winter Session to get a jumpstart. There are many ideas and possibilities when it comes to what Princeton's Winter Session would look like.

A big change to Princeton's calendar would be changing the fall start date for classes. Changing the fall start date would help get Princeton's schedule on track in relation to the schedule of other universities.

Q: Depending on which date we choose for the start date, the next question is how long will the exam period be? Should we shorten the exam period?

A: If we shorten the exam period, we would have to get rid of the rule of not having to take more than one exam in one day.

Q: How many conflicts would it create? If we go in this direction, would it be possible to post final exam schedules upfront?

A: This would let students know what they're getting into. Posting a final exam schedule would be very consistent with the university's current approach.

Q: How much time do we then have fall break? Can we keep a full week? Do we need to have a long weekend or does it go away entirely?

A: The start date is the most important factor in determining how long the examination period is. Would the fall semester start before or after Labor Day? If we start after Labor Day, everything would be more crunched together. This is one of the main considerations to keep in mind.

Now is the time for feedback because now is when we're making the big decisions.

Q: Can Fall break and Thanksgiving be consolidated into a bigger break?

A: Mathematically, it doesn't make a difference. It might be possible to make Thanksgiving week a full break.

Q: If fall break is eliminated, what would happen to fall course travel?

A: No fall course travel would occur during Thanksgiving break, most likely. The trip may be able to occur during the Winter Session. It would be a longer break. Many instructors like to use the first half of the term to get students ready for the trip. The last half of the term is to bring it all together.

Comment: Starting earlier is a reasonable sacrifice. Some students have five exams, so it's better to start earlier and have more time for final exams. Starting earlier wouldn't impact the summer break. It would be sad if a student decided not to take a course because of the final exam schedule.

There are a lot of faculty members that like the status quo. The Calendar Committee is trying to move as fast as they can. The surveys are an exercise to show students that this is an issue that should be addressed.

Q: Will financial aid apply for activities during Winter Session?

A: The operating assumption of the Winter Session is that financial aid would still apply.

Comment: We have to convince the faculty. The student can be 99% in favor of the Calendar Committee reform, but it is ultimately up to the faculty. The calendar has been around and has remained largely the same for so long. Moving the exams to before Winter Break is such a difficult exercise because the faculty have a lot of concerns about child care and other trade-offs. There is no perfect calendar. Every student would be able to find something that they don't like about the new calendar, but the new calendar would be definitely be better than the old calendar. The main change is moving exams before Winter Break. It takes about  $\frac{2}{3}$  of faculty to approve this change and it will be difficult to do so to accomplish this.

Comment: There was a lot of pushback from faculty about the 3-week credit-bearing course. Ad hoc committee thinks that we need to move away from this for now and focus on getting final exams before winter break. There is a focus on creating some space in December and January to create something not as stressful as the normal semester. A 3-week credit-bearing course may be more stressful for students.

Q: In moving the calendar forward, what would the impact be for first-year orientation programming. Concern about logistics? What is the general feeling with that?

A: The Freshman Scholars Institute program usually ends in August. There is a concern that an August start-date would not leave enough time for the 7-week FSI program. A slightly later start time would be better for FSI.

Q: What about departmental papers due in January?

A: The Calendar Committee reached out to all the departments. The Calendar Committee will be meeting with about a dozen departments in the next few weeks. JPs are due after winter. Students could enjoy the time over Christmas break to continue working on the JP. It would only be Junior year, so students would only have something to worry about over Winter Break for one year.

For any additional feedback, students can reach out to Ott and Pfeiffer. The Calendar Committee is working on a FAQ site to answer all the questions.

### **Amendment to the Charter of the USG-GSG**

Instead of three members at large, the amendment would allow there to be eight members at large. It would be good to have two Co-Chairs. The amendment increased the number of students at large on the Committee by reducing the number of students from the USG Senate. The amendment reduces the number of USG representatives down to 1--There would be one USG representative from either the Class or Senate.

Q: Do you think we'll get enough members from the entire student body?

A: The USG-GSG hopes to have one or two people who are independent. Eating Club members are included as well as students who aren't part of the Eating Clubs. The USG-GSG plans to reach out to first- and second-years. There will likely be plenty of interest from first- and second-years. This will serve as a good introduction to USG for first- and second-years. Rachel has drawn a publicity plan for all the clubs and groups on campus. Olivia and Rachel would select the second Co-Chair. Clarification is still needed. Provision of one chair appointed as the Eating Club liaison but another chair who is not appointed as the Eating Club liaison.

Comment: Two Co-Chairs is not unprecedented, but it is less effective communication-wise. Usually, one Co-Chair does most of the work and the other Co-Chair doesn't do as much.

Q: What is the necessity of having two Co-Chairs? Other possibilities include a Vice Co-Chair and other type of positions. Non-leaders of the project often take substantial roles in the project.

Comment: There should be a middle ground from going from six to one USG Senate members. Fewer people in USG but enough to encompass opinions from different perspectives. If there are other USG members who are willing to join, then they can definitely join. But it won't be necessary for the Committee to have six USG members. The USG-GSG is willing to explore other options. Maybe six to one is too drastic of a cut. Hard to fill positions with USG members. The cut was an effort to ease the burden if USG members weren't interested in being on the Committee. 6 is too many and 1 is too few. Maybe 2?

Patrick: "I am so thankful that Olivia Grah, '19, undertook a project that many people would view as impossible and managed said project with the utmost competency. As a USG Senate member, I want to express a heartfelt thank you."

The USG-GSG will receive another week to reformat the Committee so that it can be voted on in another week.

### **Thanksgiving Buses**

The ticketing venue screenshot shows all the current sales for the Thanksgiving Buses. DC sold out quickly. The second DC line hasn't filled out yet. Ticket sales are similar to what they were last year. USG decided to order four buses ahead of time.

There is still a need to send out an email to the list serves. This should be blasted through Myesha's school wide emails. There were a significantly higher number of people wanting to return to Princeton. There may be one-way ticket sales. An official closing date hasn't been discussed. One possibility is to look up students on Tigerbook who live in Washington D.C. and send them an email.

We've made \$10000 in terms of net value so far. The four buses will cost \$14,000. The goal isn't to make a profit, but to break-even.

### **The Printer Group**

A few years ago, OIT determined that there was no location on campus that was more than three minutes walk from a printer.

However, there are probably high-traffic places that should have printers. Are there printers that aren't being used that much? Perhaps move these printers to the highly-trafficked places. We don't want the number of pages printed to go up. Create a heat map of where the printers are. Get some student feedback about where the printers should be. Just a quick note, something that always comes up is printers in the Engineering Quad. Loop faculty and professors into the conversation because they're the ones making us print. There should be a poster next to each printer to encourage sustainability. It is important to get packets on the website.

### **Academics Chair's Report**

Appointed new members to the Academics Committee. There's George Rettaliata, '21, Yousef Elzalabany '20, Sara Hailu, '21. Elzalabany is interested in the Add/Drop period. There should be more more flexibility. Perhaps take a look at Yale's model for the Add/Drop. The Academics Committee of the USG does a blind review, but major is considered.

Specifically looking for underclassman. The three members were approved with unanimous consent.

Columbia University allow students to self-report their scores. The cost of sending AP, SAT, and ACT scores is very expensive, especially for low-income students. This will help students with the cost of applying to college.

The Academics Committe is working on potentially moving thesis deadlines all to one week, which would make for greater senior class unity and fairness in theses across departments.

Kevin Liu is replacing the member that resigned from the Honor Committee. There was an Honor Committee survey sent out. For many students, this was their first opportunity to say anything about the Honor Committee. 230 responses in terms of what should be done with the Honor Code penalty. Most students said that the penalty should be less than 1-year because the current penalty often does not reflect the crime. Looking at other possible penalties. For a student to go to trial, the Honor Committee needs to have two strong pieces of evidence. There is so much power centered in the Chair. There should be a focus on diversifying the power. Three people from the Honor Committee gave their input.

Kevin Liu was approved as a new member by the Senate with unanimous consent.

### **USG Urges the University Enroll Puerto Rican Students for the Spring 2018 Term**

Request: Following the destruction brought by Hurricanes Irma and Maria, Princeton University should admit a select number of students from Puerto Rico for the 2018 Spring term at no cost. In 2005, following Hurricane Katrina, twenty-four Tulane University students were enrolled at Princeton tuition-free. Peer institutions, including Cornell, Brown, and NYU have committed to each hosting over fifty students for the 2018 Spring semester tuition-free.

The USG body has the responsibility and capacity to nudge and remind the administration of its own duties. To not do so would be a failure on our part.

Comment: This should be expanded to all the Carribean islands.

Comment: This is for students who don't have a school to go to because it was destroyed in Puerto Rico.

Q: Selection process?

A: Same rigorous process. Pick the top students from Puerto Rico and allow them to attend until they can return home. The primary concern maybe capacity. There should be conversations with Housing. Reach to the DSLs.

Comment: Maybe we should be hesitant to extend to the entire Caribbean. Be realistic to the number of students Princeton University will take in?

Comment in response: The option should be available. It's not certain if Princeton would actually take these students, but they should also have the opportunity to apply.

### **Projects Board Update**

This needs to happen every month. This update will reveal the Projects Board allocations and give a sense of where we are in terms of allocations. The total amount funded to date is about \$32,000. USG funded \$21,285 and the funds available from USG are \$13,715.

One thing that is important to clarify is that there was no money from the endowment. It was 100% student activities fee. The number before was about 90% anyway. This has all the data for the transactions.

Q: The goal is to work on budget transparency. Thoughts on how to do this?

A: Thoughts or recommendations would be great. It's not easy to get this data. Start to keep a record of the data now for future Treasurers. We may also make a cheat sheet for students leaders so that they don't just depend on student activity fees.

70% of amounts requested is matched. This shows that the Projects Board is doing its job. ODUS money versus other forms of money.

USG Senate members need to reach out to people who they think should run.

Daniel: "We should definitely give another round of applause to Olivia Grah, '21. Thank you to Alison as well for truly taking the initiative with the Projects Board update."

