

WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

29th Student Government Association

13th Meeting of the Twenty-Ninth Undergraduate Student Government Association

To be held in the Rubin Campus Center, Odeum C

6:00 p.m. – September 3rd, 2019

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of the Minutes
- III. Public Comments
 - a. Suzanne Weekes, the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies, came to speak about her role as Associate Dean. She is building an office of Undergraduate Research to promote disciplinary research. She is hoping to engage student to participate in more research projects in their study earlier in their college careers. This will be used to develop resources for campus to help gain more research projects for students.
 - i. Senator Trey-Masters stated that he would have been interested in research earlier in his college career but was worried about contacting professors to find project. He hopes that there may be a good way to connect with faculty
 - ii. Senator Trey-Masters suggested a New Student Orientation Research Fair to encourage students to join in research projects.
 - iii. Senator Cataldo recommended that students should be aware that most of their time in a research project could be with a graduate student instead of a professor.
 - iv. Chair Tavares suggested more department-funded research opportunities.
 - v. Chair Giacoman suggested giving examples of how research opportunities could benefit the student
 - vi. Senator Nistler stated that sometimes professors only take graduate students for research opportunities. Maybe more undergraduates could have an equal amount of opportunities.
 - vii. Senator Cannata suggested providing a bigger picture of what the research project will be doing.
 - viii. Chair Racca suggested following in the footsteps of the Computer Science Department with their methods of promoting research opportunities both on campus and in the community.
 - ix. Weekes stated that she may reach out to SGA in the future to help create a student advisory group for research opportunities.
 - b. The club PERIOD has three main goals: To educate students, attend services to gather feminine hygiene products to people who need them, and advocate to bring awareness and make changes in access to feminine hygiene products. PERIOD showed that the lack of access to feminine hygiene products can reduce productivity. In a survey, 92% of people would like to see more feminine hygiene product on campus, and 50% of women stated that they have missed class due to not having a feminine hygiene product. Coin operated machines are more expensive than buying products from the store, so PERIOD is trying to promote providing free feminine hygiene products on campus. Members of PERIOD have

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reached out to Emily Perlow to make products more affordable and accessible to all, as students have shown concerns about the cost and accessibility of products. PERIOD is asking for assistance in promoting the survey to gather data for future action.

- i. Chair Hager asked why it would be cheaper to provide free products. Representatives stated that it would be cheaper in the long run because providing products for free would cut out the middleman who sets costs and provides the product.
- ii. Senator Stabile's concern with these products being free is the case of people taking them when they are not necessary.
 1. There a machine that would provide a delay between giving out products to combat people abusing the system. They also stated that 40% of people would use the product frequently. Since the majority of people taking the survey would use the machines infrequently, abuse of the system is not as much of a concern.
- c. Citizen Matthew Bisson, a junior at WPI, spoke on his opinions of the SocComm Big Show Funding Request. He believes that a single event that has been under-attended should not have such a high cost. He would like to see SocComm prove their attendance at less expensive events before giving so much money to an event. He also believes that it is unfair to give one club so much money while other clubs are struggling to get less funds.

IV. Special Orders

- a. Interim Senator Appointments
 - i. President Wilson appointed Kyle Pacheco and Marc Rosenthal as senators.
 - ii. President Wilson appointed Fan Gong, Anna Catlett, and Austin Shalit as Interim Senators.
 - iii. President Wilson appointed Natalie Toomey as Elections Chair.

V. President's Report

- a. Homecoming Cup
 - i. SGA usually run events for organizations to compete in for the homecoming cup. In the past, there has been a lack of participation, so SGA would like to help publicize the Homecoming Cup. There will be a tablesitting event on September 10th from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM to promote the Homecoming Cup and collaborate with other organizations.

VI. Vice President's Report

- a. Retreat This Weekend
 - i. SGA Retreat is this weekend, and Vice President Toomey expects all senators to be there for an enjoyable experience.
- b. Assassins Game
 - i. Vice President Toomey announced a senator bonding game of Assassins to promote senator interactions

VII. Secretary's Report

- a. Guess the SGA Member

VIII. Treasurer's Report

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- a. No Report
- IX. Parliamentarian's Report
 - a. Exec Elections
 - i. If senators are considering running for an executive position, they must attend an information session, which will be after the next Senate meetings (September 10th and September 17th). The slating and executive applications will be sent out this week, and will be due on September 19th, with Slating Committee meeting on September 27th. The slate for the Executive Elections will be presented on October 1st. Any senator interested in being on Slating Committee must attend
 - b. Trivia
- X. Cluster Reports
 - a. Student Services Cluster
 - i. Superfan Shirts for Senate – Chair Tavares
 - 1. Chair Tavares announced that he will be sending out a google form for Senators to state their shirt size and will distribute them after the next Senate meeting.
 - b. Internal Services Cluster
 - i. No Report
 - c. Financials Cluster
 - i. No Report
- XI. Faculty, Institute, and Special Committees
 - a. Upcoming WSGA
 - i. Sunday, September 8th, will be the first WSGA Meeting and the Worcester Chamber of Commerce. UMASS will be hosting a Cancer walk on September 22nd. HECMA is making a video about student life in Worcester, and any student interested in participating should reach out to Chair Bimonte.
 - ii. Chair Hager is sitting on the Committee on Academic Policy, and asked Senators if they would rather course evaluations be opened earlier to be filled out and closed earlier, opened later and closed later, or kept the same.
 - 1. Chair Giacomani suggested the forms be opened later for students to be filled out.
 - 2. Accountant Bimonte suggested not opening them during Finals Week to prevent a lot of emails being sent during Finals Week. Senator Stabile believed that the final should also be used to reflect the professor.
 - 3. Senator Shalit believes they are given out at a good time. Opening them earlier would prevent more feedback and Opening them later would prevent final grades to be given out in a timely manner.
 - 4. Technical Coordinator Tocci stated that most students don't want to fill out an evaluation before the class is truly over. Students also state

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that evaluations are being sent out midway through the term, and close directly before grades are opened.

XII. Old Business

a. S.9 SocComm Big Show

i. President Wilson stated that this will be a continuation of discussion from the last Senate for the SocComm Big Show request of \$108,811.

ii. **Questions/Points of Information:**

1. Hearing a student from an outside source could help bring a different perspective.
2. What are the responses from the vote from Instagram?
 - Chair Coelho answered that around 80% of the poll's responses were in favor of having Big Show.
 - Senator Charles stated that the poll only asked if students wanted Big Show, and did not explain the cost for the event.
3. Some students who were asked about the event did not even know about Big Show.
4. People who attended Big Show last year were disappointed that Big Show may be denied this year.
5. Why did we already allocate money to Big Show? And if Big Show is denied, what will happen to that money?
 - Treasurer Candy answered that SocComm could still put on a Big Show with that money, reallocate that money to another event, or roll back to SGA to be redistributed
6. What is an example of an SGA Capital Project ?
 - SGA helped fund the Recreation Center, Water Bottle Fillers, and renovations to the Goats Head in the past.
7. Did any students ask their constituents if they would pay the cost from their student life fee to attend big show?
 - Of attendees from the last Big Show, many would like to see the event again and pay the cost to see it.
 - Some students also stated that the total cost per attendance is too high.
8. There are students that get no return on their student life fee and others that get a larger return on it. We shouldn't decide solely based on cost per person because the activity of people on campus varies so much.
9. Cost per person is not a uniform metric for every club's request.
 - During budgeting and most of the time during Financial board, it is a metric often used.
10. We don't only spend money on events.
11. SocComm stated that they only reached out to people who attended Big Show last year.

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- The survey was sent to everyone that attended Big Show or bought a ticket, anyone in the SocComm alias and through QR codes all over campus.
12. Would SGA be opposed to lowering the cost of the artist to \$50,000 and lowering the cost of the agent by 10%.
 - It isn't our responsibility to determine the cost.
 13. If this request fails, SocComm still has the ability to appeal.
 - An appeal would go to Cabinet.
 - SocComm could choose to appeal, and it would be brought to the floor based on new information. They could also restructure and submit a new Funding Request that would come to Senate
- iii. **Pros:**
1. Senators are only focusing on the past three years of SocComm. Big Show has been an event for many years prior and have been successful. We should look at the general success of the event and not only the past three years.
 - It's important to also look at recent events because campus has changed from the past.
 2. This show is a memorable and impactful event on campus.
 3. As students, it is their responsibility to get involved on campus. Every student uses the student life fee in different ways. The people that do not use their student life fee to the fullest can offset the people that do.
- iv. **Cons:**
1. The average for artists was roughly \$40,000, so we shouldn't be giving more money for an artist that is priced lower than they are asking.
 - The cost of artists fluctuates, so maybe that isn't a good baseline.
 2. There are many aspects that could make people not attend big show, and it may not be a good idea to give so much money on an event that could possibly end poorly.
 3. With SGA increasing the Student Life Fee, it would be irresponsible to drop so much money on one event.
 4. This event's audience is very specific and may not get to all of campus.
 5. With students saying they think Big Show is too much money, it is our responsibility to uphold the views of the students.
 6. SocComm won't be able to get an artist that the majority of campus would want to see.
- v. **Outcome**
1. **Request Does Not Pass**
- b. S.10 Bylaw Revisions for New Structure

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- i. **Questions/Points of Information**
 1. Was there a vote during the last academic year to change the Senate structure?
 - There was a vote to determine whether or not to rewrite the bylaws to support the new structure, or to amend the old bylaws to support it.
- ii. **Pros:**
 1. The Bylaw revisions reflect the change in structure that SGA has been following, taking into consideration of the opinions of senators.
 2. Overall the structure is an improvement. There still could be changes, but generally the changes have made more productivity. The purpose of SGA has stayed the same.
 3. The project structure states that there must be one other senators in addition to the chair, so that would allow a good division of senators in project groups.
- iii. **Cons:**
 1. There are many points that would be made better by adjusting the old structure. This new set of Bylaws allows some sectors to be less focused on and ignored.
 - Adjusting the old Bylaws would require making the document in present tense, removing the additional sectors to become appointed positions, and making the accountant as an appointed position
 - The changes to the old structure would still keep the project-based outline, but still allow a framework for some of the more forgotten sectors.
 - Where would community outreach go in this structure?
 - i. This would be made an appointed position, as there are not many projects and is something one or two people could do.
 - Continuous Improvement has a set list of duties without much wiggle room. This is the same situation as other appointed positions.
- iv. **Motion to cap the number of chairs to two for each sector chair, and one for financial sector chairs.**
 1. There should be a cap due to a line of succession.
 2. **Pros:**
 - This is focused to allow a singular line of succession.
 3. **Cons:**
 - It should be up to the president to determine the number of chairs.
 - Senate must confirm chairs as well.
 - Any member should have the ability to interpret the bylaws

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- i. There is supposed to be more than one person sitting on the Internal Affairs Sector, so usually there are more people interpreting the bylaws.
- ii. With more people to interpret the bylaws, there is more of a chance of the Executive Branch overstepping. The Internal Affairs Chair acts as a balance.

4. Outcome:

- Motion Does Not Pass

v. Outcome:

1. Bylaw Revisions Passed

XIII. New Business

XIV. Questions, Comments and Ideas

- a. Parliamentarian Liberacki stated that while these bylaws have been passed, there is still a lot of work to be done. We still need to figure out what works well for the students to better improve the structure.
- b. Chair Rice will be improving miscellaneous spelling and grammatical errors in the bylaws.
- c. President Wilson stated that we are in Salisbury Labs, Room 411 next Senate.

XV. Announcements

- a. Trivia in the Goats Head is at 9:00 PM on Tuesday nights.
- b. Empanada Day is on Thursday, September 12th.
- c. Vice President Toomey is the captain for a team for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Walk on Saturday, September 14th in Institute Park. She will send out a link to Senators so they can join her team.
- d. Senator Trey-Masters announced that Active Minds will be meeting in HL 114 at 3PM on September 4th.
- e. Senator Shalit announced that the Career Fair is on September 19th. Anyone interested in getting their resume critiqued should go to the CDC.
- f. Senator Silvia announced that this week is Alpha Phi's Community Service Week.
- g. Treasurer Candy thanked everyone for the discussion on the SocComm Funding Request. Anyone with questions should reach out to Treasurer Candy.
- h. ISC is hosting a trip to Boston on September 14th.

XVI. Advisor's Remark

- a. Advisor Charry reminded senators that bands for the Shrewsbury Street College Shuffle are on sale in the SAO for \$10.

XVII. President's Remarks

- a. President Wilson thanked everyone for their discussion and to Chair Rice for her work on the bylaws over the summer. There is still room for improvement with the bylaws, so anyone with suggestions should reach out to her. If senators are interested in being on Slating Committee or running for an Executive Position, they should stay after Senate for the information session.

XVIII. Adjournment

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