

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION
COUNCIL

Monday August 26, 2002
417 Kerckhoff Hall
4:00pm

MINUTES

- PRESENT: Cordero, Clark, Dahle, DerManuelian, Eastman, Harmetz, LaFlamme, Leyco, Neal, Nelson, McLaren, Styczynski, Tuttle, Wilson, Yu
- ABSENT: Diaz, Lam, McElwain
- GUESTS: Stephen Araiza, Elizabeth Delgado, Ani Gasparyan, Robbie Hurwitz, Emerson Lego, Anica McKesey, Robert Salonga, Jennifer Wood
- I. A. Call to Order
-Dahle called the meeting to order at 4:09 p.m.
- B. Signing of the Attendance Sheet
-DerManuelian pass the attendance sheet around.
- II. * Approval of the 2002 - 2003 USAC Base Budget Allocations
-Dahle said that there will be chair-designated rules for the discussion of the Base Budget Allocations. He introduced the Budget Review Director, Levi, to once again present the recommended Base Budget Allocations.
-Levi said that there were three criteria by which the groups were funded.
1) Number of students involved within the organization
2) The student population that the group represented.
3) The number of students that directly benefited.
He said that they scored the groups on a scale from 1-20. He announced that every member of the BRC evaluated each of the groups according to the criteria and process approved by Council
-Dahle announced that to raise a question or make a comment, a person must be formally recognized by the Chairperson. He also said that Council would not address repetitive questions.
-Neal asked if there needed to be a motion on the table to have the discussion on the Base Budget allocations.
-Tuttle suggested to Council that there be a motion and a second on the table.
-Dahle asked if someone would make a motion as recommended by Tuttle.
-LaFlamme moved and Styczynski seconded to approve the 2002 - 2003 USAC Base Budget Allocations.
-Dahle called for questions that people might have. He also announced the rules for the discussion. He said that as soon as people who want to speak raise their hand, he will place them on a speakers list and call on them in order once the discussion started.
-Cordero said that looking at criterion number two, he did not understand why the two groups that did not meet the minimum criteria had received funding.
-Levi said that the By-laws do not explicitly state that a group must meet both minimum criteria in order to receive funding. He said the interpretation of the committee was that if a group wasn't automatically disqualified, they would be considered for funding.

- DerManualian asked Council if there would be a time limit on the discussion of the Base Budget Allocations.
- Tuttle said that the chair could assign a discussion time limit which could be overruled by a majority vote of Council. Tuttle said further that, if at the end of the discussion cap, the chair decided not to allow more time, someone could move to add more time. If that motion were seconded and approved by Council, the chair's decision would be overruled.
- Dahle said that he did not want to deny adequate time for people to say what they wanted to say and ask what questions they might have. He said that, for those reasons, he was setting a maximum of an hour for the discussion.
- McKesity said she wanted to return to Cordero's question because it had not been properly addressed or answered. She said that it states in the Bylaws that groups that do not meet the minimum criteria do not qualify for funding, period.
- Levi said that it did not say that the groups would not be considered for funding if they did not meet the minimum criteria.
- McKesity said that she and Liz Delgado, the representative of MEChA, had sent out e-mails to the Budget Review Committee requesting documentation that a clear definition of size and scope had been stated before the hearings. She said they had not received a reply to their emails. She also said that minutes of the BRC's deliberations have not been provided.
- Levi presented documentation of the summaries that every member of the BRC compiled as to how they rated each group and the criteria they used for those ratings.
- McKesity said that those documents presented information that was developed after the deliberations, but she wanted documentation of what was discussed during the deliberations. She said she wanted to know why, if the purpose of the deliberations is for the committee members to reach a final decision, why was there a reconsideration of the numbers they had decided on at the deliberations.
- Yu said that the reason she changed her numbers was that after-the-fact, in reflecting on the groups as a whole, she did not believe that the numbers she had given were accurate.
- McKesity asked why that had happened.
- Yu said that she double checked her numbers and concluded that they weren't accurate.
- Levi said that the BRC voted on the numbers they would present to Council, and there was agreement by a majority of the members. He said that because of certain time constraints, the BRC had to get the Budgets considered by this meeting.
- McKesity said that, based on the lack of concrete answers to the questions that had been asked so far, she felt more concerns had been raised. She said she wondered why the BRC members did not reconvene to vote on the new numbers.
- LaFlamme said that the BRC tried to convene all the committee members but, because of conflicts in everyone's schedule, it became an impossibility. He said that there was discussion among the people who could make it to the meeting and that the people who could not attend were informed via e-mail, which is also how they voted.
- Dahle asked if the Budget that was brought before Council today was the will of the BRC.
- DerManuelian answered yes.
- Cordero said that he wanted to ask again what the Committee meant by "size and scope".
- Eastman asked what changes were made to the initial recommended allocations.
- Levi said that ASU's allocation decreased by \$40, Samahang Pilipino's allocation increased by \$40, and Campus Events allocation increased by \$50. He also said that the recommended allocations to the United Arab Society and VSU essentially flipped.

- Eastman said that she did not understand from the previous discussion why the changes were made.
- Yu said that she was unable to submit her numbers in time for the agenda to be printed.
- Eastman asked if this was explained at the meeting two weeks ago.
- McKeseey asked if the changes were made after the deliberations process.
- Yu said yes.
- McKeseey persisted by asking why the changes were made.
- Yu said that after reviewing the groups one more time, it seemed to her that certain groups deserved more funding.
- Tuttle said that the question at hand was whether the process was fair. He said further that, when talking about student fees and public resources, such matters must be treated as a public trust. He said that, even 'though it might be custom and practice to not take minutes during deliberations, it might be a good idea for committees to begin keeping a record of the deliberations.
- Levi said that there were no official minutes available to Council from that meeting. He said that the BRC did, however, put together their assessment of every group and every office regarding how they reached the conclusions they did.
- Tuttle asked if that record was available to council.
- Levi said yes.
- Tuttle recommended that, in the future, more effort should be put forth by the BRC to record and present what occurred during their deliberations.
- Dahle said that in the future Council could work on putting such changes into effect.
- McKeseey said that this was an issue of precedence, and of the fact that Council was unable to review any documentation that would explain or justify the numbers presented to the groups. She said she felt the process was flawed and that Council should not approve the proposed budget figures at today's meeting. She also said that the criteria were not clearly defined to the student groups.
- Eastman asked if the BRC had presented everything to Council that had been recorded concerning the process and how they reached the numbers for each office and group.
- Dahle said that since everyone presented justification as to how they voted, it was possible to assume what they were thinking during the deliberations process.
- McKeseey said that it was completely wrong to assume, and that as a representative for the African Student Union, she was not willing to move forward with a budget of less than \$4,000. She reiterated that her questions had not been answered.
- Harmetz said that it was his understanding that there was a cap of \$4,000 for each of the groups.
- Levi said that Harmetz's understanding was correct.
- Tuttle advised Council that the BRC was a subordinate group of Council and that their responsibility is to present recommendations to Council based on the committee's judgment.
- Neal asked who was able to amend the budget allocations. He asked if specific line-items could be amended. He asked also if he could request that the allocation of a specific group be brought up to the \$4,000 cap.
- Tuttle said that there would need to be a motion and a second to amend the allocations.
- Jennifer Wood, the Director of Dance Marathon, asked how they groups would get funding if the budgets are not approved.
- Dahle said that none of the groups could get funding until the budgets were approved.
- Wood asked what the main difference was between the process and the priorities this year and last year.
- Dahle said Wood's question was difficult to answer because this year's BRC had been given a different set of rules to work with in order to make the allocations as equitable across the board as possible.
- Levi said that there were no official minutes of last year's deliberations either.

- Cordero said that last year there was documentation available for every single line item that was allocated stating why it was funded.
- DerManuelian said that the line items were presented as a percentage of what groups had requested and what they were allocated.
- Eastman said she had missed Council's last meeting, and asked if the BRC had given Council any documents that might be helpful to this discussion.
- Levi said they had provided a packet of information three weeks ago.
- McKeseey said that her issue was that there were no minutes, and without minutes of the deliberations, there could not be any justification of the process used.
- Eastman said it was her understanding that no minutes of the deliberations were provided last year either.
- McKeseey said that last year's BRC did provide justification for each line item.
- Levi said that they were only in percentages.
- Cordero said that this was effective because it showed how much of their line-item allocation was reflective of the group's request.
- Levi said that they allocated according to the proposal; if Assistance counted for 10% of what the group was asking for, the BRC attempted to allocate 10% of their total allocation to Assistance.
- Yu presented summaries for each of the different groups.
- Eastman offered to have copies made for distribution at the table.
- Gasparyan, a representative of the Armenian Student Association, said she felt that all the groups knew that information on the number of students involved and the number of students benefited would be considered in the process because that information was asked for in the proposal packet. She said if the issue being raised was about the committee being biased, she felt that everyone has a bias, regardless of the groups that came up for funding.
- McKeseey said that she could not make that claim because there were no minutes.
- LaFlamme said that information was provided as to what was allocated and how the committee determined the amount of the allocation for each group.
- Cordero said he wanted more justification regarding the percentages used.
- Levi said that they first determined the total allocation for each group, and then used percentages ensure that the allocation for each line item was relevant to the percentage they requested for that line item.
- Cordero asked if a group had graphics as their number one priority, did the committee take this into consideration.
- Levi said yes. He said further that some groups request line-items that were not funded.
- Wood asked, if a group changed its priorities during the hearing, did the committee take this into consideration
- Levi said, in such a situation, the proposal would be adjusted so that the top three line items would still be at the top.
- Tuttle said he'd like to return to an issue that was raised earlier by students who said that certain groups which did not meet the minimum criteria were allocated funds. He asked how the BRC determined that these groups met the criteria to be funded.
- Levi said that the Bylaws did not specifically state that if the groups did not meet both of the minimum criteria they would not be considered for funding.
- Cordero said that this was all based on interpretation and the way he read it was that all groups needed to meet both minimum criteria in order to be eligible for funding.
- Neal said that he thought it was improper to fund groups that did not meet those minimum criteria, and that it would set a bad precedent.
- LaFlamme said the fact that they did not meet both of the minimum criteria was reflected in the fact that those groups received less than the allowable cap.
- Cordero said that first and foremost, he believed all groups needed to meet the minimum criteria in order to qualify for funding.

- McKesey said that by giving funds to groups that did not meet the minimum criteria was opening a can of worms that would lead to other unqualified groups coming up for funding. She said it was not right for a group such as Dance Marathon that has only one event in the year to be considered eligible and get as much funding as other student organizations on campus that have far more programming.
- Levi said that Dance Marathon was an officially recognized student organization on campus.
- Dahle said that this debate has taken Council away from the initial question, which was about the process.
- Liz Delgado, speaking on behalf of M.E.Ch.A., said that because the criteria for the process were not set before the hearings and because the BRC did not follow proper process, she thought it was important for Council to take those things into consideration before they vote to approve the allocations. She said that even though size and scope was presented in the proposal, the BRC had not given Council any documentation that they were fully and uniformly addressed during the hearings or during deliberations. She reminded council that they could override the BRC recommendations.
- Dahle called for a vote on the motion that was on the table to approve the 2002-2003 Base Budget Allocations. With 8 votes in favor, 1 against, and 0 abstentions the Budgets were approved as submitted.

III. Signing of the Attendance Sheet

- DerManuelian passed around the attendance sheet.

IV. Adjournment

- Styczynski moved and Clark seconded to adjourn the meeting. There being no further business, Council voted to approve the motion with 9 votes in favor, 0 against and 0 abstentions. The meeting was adjourned at 5:10pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pedro Alejandro Gomez
USAC Minutes Taker