

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION  
COUNCIL

Tuesday September 22, 2008  
417 Kerckhoff Hall  
7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Birks, Chacon, Champawat, Garcia, Hosseini, Kohles, Liu, McLaren, Melgar, Nelson, Reodica, Roth, Shulman, Sien, Sobhani, Tressel, Tsai, Tuttle, Williams

ABSENT: Gonzalez

GUESTS: Emily Bautista, Alonzo Campos, Zeinab Sade Elhawary, Kelly Osmundson, Dina Mahmood, Anette Norona, Stephanie Roberts, Bill Shiebler, Adria Tinnin, JJ Yang

I. A. Call to Order

- Hosseini called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

B. Signing of the Attendance Sheet

*The Attendance sheet was passed around.*

II. Approval of the Agenda

- Melgar removed ASUCLA Surplus Request for Student of Color Conference from New Business.
- Sobhani added SOOF and Contingency under Fund Allocations.
- Garcia added Academic Senate under Appointments.
- Reodica moved and Tsai seconded to approve the Agenda.
- Hosseini called for Acclamation. Hosseini asked if there were any objections to approval by Acclamation. There being none, the Agenda was approved as amended, by Acclamation.

III. Approval of the Minutes

*There were no Minutes this week.*

IV. Public Comments

- Kelly Osmundson from University of California Student Association (UCSA) introduced herself and said she works with Melgar on various projects. If anyone has any questions, he or she should contact her.
- Bill Shiebler from United States Student Association (USSA) said he is currently on a tour of California with Osmundson, and if anyone has questions regarding federal regulations on higher education he or she should contact him.

V. Appointments

**A. Academic Senate**

- Garcia said Mussarat Bata is applying for the Academic Freedom Committee. Bata said she was involved last year with the Committee for Diversity and Equal Opportunity. She enjoys academic freedom as it focuses on the integrity of the university.
- Hosseini asked Bata what her time commitments are this year. Bata said she has Comm Board once a month, General Representative 1 meetings once a week, and she is involved with a sorority. Yet, none of them will be a conflict.
- Chacon moved and Melgar seconded to approve the appointment Mussarat Bata to the Academic Freedom Committee.
- Council approved the appointment of Mussarat Bata to the Academic Freedom Committee with a vote of 11-0-0.
- Emily Bautista said she is applying for the Undergraduate Council because she feels it plays a large part in important policy decisions and she wants to ensure the best for students at UCLA.
- Hosseini asked Bautista what she wants to accomplish. Bautista said she wants to see diversity in education.
- Chacon moved and Reodica seconded to approve the appointment of Emily Bautista to the Undergraduate Council.
- Council approved the appointment of Emily Bautista to the Undergraduate Council with a vote of 11-0-0.

## VI. Special Presentations

### **A. Digitization of Funding Documents – Roy Champawat, Kamran Mehdian**

- Champawat said they have been developing a first generation system of streamlining the fund application process while also cutting down on paper usage.
- Sobhani said he has been working on this project since last summer. The biggest problem they faced was having a method whereby an application could be submitted with the knowledge of the group signatory and CSP advisor. Through a system of direct emailing and multiple authentications, they believe to have overcome this obstacle. When a new application is filled out by a group member, it is emailed to a signatory for verification. After the signatory approves it, it is emailed to the CSP advisor who must approve it before it can be considered by the Financial Committee.
- A demonstration was given by Champawat and Sobhani as to how the online application works.
- Sobhani said a lot of things were streamlined, such as drop down menus and options on the application. Also, to prevent incorrect totals, the applications adds all line items together for the applicant, and if an applicant tries to input incorrect numerical data, the application will prevent that from occurring.
- Reodica asked Sobhani if there will be an option to attach documents to the application. Sobhani said other attachments will still have to be given in person, and scheduling for hearings will still be done in person.
- Champawat said the online application is by no means a replacement for meeting with groups signatories and the CSP advisor, but should be done in conjunction with all parties. It is simply to streamline the process and cut down on paper usage.
- Reodica asked if this new process is mandatory. Sobhan said it is.
- Nelson commended everyone for their hard work, but he is still going to require face to face meetings with students prior to any funding applications, so as to not lose any interpersonal connections that may get lost due to technology.
- Williams said his understanding of the process is that it only takes paper out of the equation; meetings with advisors will still be mandatory.
- Tressel asked that something be added to the application stating all groups must meet with their advisor prior to the application process.
- Shulman asked if there are plans to further interface this system with other UCLA processes. Sobhani said it is possible, but it will be challenging due to the various types of programs used.

- Hosseini asked if a student group will get penalized if the CSP advisor is late in submitting their approval. Sobhani said there may not be strict deadlines; however, there are time stamps throughout the entire process, so the Financial Committee will be knowledgeable as to the timeliness of the groups application.
- Tuttle asked how much storage will be available for the applications. Kamran Mehdian said they are prepared to store at least 5 years worth of applications. Williams said they can get more storage if deemed needed.
- Tuttle said this system, in terms of its checks to ensure authenticity, looks good.
- Tuttle asks what occurs if someone steals an advisor's password and uses it to approve an application. Williams said the notification saying the application has been approved will appear to whoever is logged on at the time. Champawat said an email can be sent to the advisor stating they had approved the application as a measure of protection. Williams said if a person is logged on as an advisor, they are getting the emails too. Tuttle said there is a way to work around the situation.
- Chacon moved and Tsai seconded to recess for five minutes.
- Hosseini called for Acclamation. Hosseini asked if there were any objections to approval by Acclamation. There being none, the meeting was recessed at 7:59 pm, by Acclamation.
- The meeting was called back to order at 8:04 pm.

#### **B. Students of Color Conference (SOCC) – Jesse Melgar, Stephanie Roberts**

- Stephanie Roberts and Dina Mahmood said they received the bid to host the Students of Color Conference, and they proceeded to show a presentation and a video detailing their goals for the conference.
- Roberts said the themes they hope to focus on at this year's SOCC are education, empowerment, service, organization, and activism. They will be having workshops in order to inform people about their rights and how it affects them on a larger scale.
- Roberts said they will be having workshops working in conjunction with caucus spaces, which tackle issues of ethnicity, gender, and sexual identification. There will also be special events going on outside of the workshop spaces. There will also be performers and guest speakers for the conference.
- Roberts said they have been fund raising for the event. They have received support from UCSA, the EVP's office, and some other various donations. They have also reserved hotel rooms and will reserve more if a larger turnout is expected.
- Roberts said they hope to have USAC support the event because it is, on a statewide basis, a very important event for students.
- Shulman asked how many they expect to attend the conference. Roberts said they expect 850 to 1000 people, and UCLA is capped at 150 to 200 students.
- Reodica asked if they have any planning meetings coming up. Roberts said they have a meeting next Monday, and the goal is to reintroduce everything that has occurred in the last two months.

### VII. New Business

#### **A. Resolution for Students of Color Conference**

- Alonzo Campos and Adria Tinnin introduced themselves to the council, and Melgar said the resolution put forth states USAC supports the SOCC. It is November 21<sup>st</sup> to the 23<sup>rd</sup>, and as of now they will be looking elsewhere for funding, rather than going to council.
- Shulman made a friendly amendment, changing “Associated” to “Association” in the first Whereas. There were no objections.
- Reodica moved and Chacon seconded to approve the Resolution for Students of Color Conference.
- Council approved the Resolution for Students of Color Conference with a vote of 11-0-0.

## VIII. Appointments

**A. Academic Senate (cont.)**

- Anette Norona said she is interested in working in student retention, and she hopes to see how students are affected by readmission. She also wants to increase student input.
- Melgar moved and Sien seconded to approve the appointment of Anette Norona.
- Council approved the appointment of Anette Norona with a vote of 11-0-0.
- Rohit Tejwani said he applied for the Committee on Research because he wants to get more students involved with SRP while also streamlining the process by getting more faculty involved too.
- Reodica asked Tejwani if he had any ideas for outreach. Tejwani said he hopes to make students more aware of opportunities at UCLA.
- Shulman asked what his realm of influence would be on the committee. Tejwani said he would like to affect every research project and opportunity on campus.
- Tuttle asked what SRP is. Tejwani said SRP stands for Student Research Project, where students can work under a mentor for course credit.
- Tuttle asked if there are restrictions on SRP for students. Tejwani said some students can not do SRP due to unit restrictions.
- Tuttle said UCSB received an award for being a research institution that engaged students in research. It may be worth the while to see how UCSB accomplished such a feat.
- Shulman moved and Kohles seconded to approve the appointment of Rohit Tejwani to Committee on Research.
- Council approved the appointment of Rohit Tejwani with a vote of 11-0-0.
- Maj said he is interested in in the duties of the Committee on Academic Freedom, such as preventing the suppression of intellectual thought on campus.
- Garcia asked Maj what he does on campus. Maj said he works with different social groups, and he wants to promote an intellectual approach to why people face issues like racism and sexism.
- Roth moved and Shulman seconded to approve the appointment of Maj to the Committee on Academic Freedom.
- Council approved the appointment of Maj to the Committee on Academic Freedom with a vote of 11-0-0.
- Solhair said he applied for the Committee on Diversity and Equal Opportunity. He wants to promote more diversity among the faculty at the university.
- Roth asked how he will work to promote diversity. Solhair said he wants to ensure no one gets fired or is denied work due to ethnicity or gender.
- Chacon moved and Roth seconded to approve the appointment of Solhair to the Committee on Diversity and Equal Opportunity.
- Council approved the appointment of Solhair with a vote of 11-0-0.
- Garcia asked how council would like to handle Academic Senate Appointments over the summer, as some committees will have work and meet into the summer.

## IX. Fund Allocations

**A. Contingency Allocations**

- Sobhani said the Contingency Allocations are still via his discretionary authority.
- Sobhani said that there were 2 of Contingency Requests submitted this week, totaling \$1008.32. He said he was recommending total allocations of \$632.53.
- Melgar moved and Chacon seconded approve the Contingency Allocations and to change the date of the Contingency Allocations to September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2008.
- Council approved the Contingency Allocations of September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2008, with a vote of 11-0-0.

**B. SOOF**

- Brian Tan said they finished the SOOF Allocations on Friday, and they believe to have come up with a very fair and impartial system.
- Tan showed a video detailing the SOOF Allocations.
- Sobhani said this year they had rubric score and not total request be the main factor in determining a group's overall allocation. In previous years total request would play a larger role, so groups who requested more money got more money despite issues of need. They also capped the all allocations at 3,000.00.
- Reodica asked how they came up with a cap of 3,000.00. Sobhani said it is an amount higher than any group would be allocated, but it still leaves room for variation.
- Tressel asked how many groups applied this year for SOOF funding. Sobhani said there were close to 158 groups that applied this year.
- Tressel asked if every group that had a valid application got some money. Sobhani said they did.
- Sobhani said they method which they used is, after the groups received an allocation based on the score received on the rubric, they had to scale those allocations to the money available. Doing so ensured a fairer way of allocating money, with more determination coming from a group's application and need.
- Tressel said he believes some groups deserve more money for their programs and flattening out the allocations overlooks the possibility of some programs' importance over others. Sobhani said if one group is doing more work for the community than others, it will be reflected in the rubric score.
- Nelson said there have been Supreme Court cases going back to decades, where the federal courts have interceded in college campuses, especially ones with liberal ideologies. There has been a history of court cases tackling the issue of the equality of student groups, and, especially in regard to funding, the courts have and will intercede. It is best for the council to know the history of what has happened at other campuses throughout the years.
- Garcia asked how the total pot for SOOF Allocations is decided. Sobhani said it is done by way of formulas, where amounts are determined for SOOF and SGOF, and historically it has been BRC that determines the percentage amounts that go to each fund.
- Garcia asked why the pot was smaller this year. Sobhani said it could be due to last year's expenses.
- Melgar said an issue that should be looked at is umbrella organizations, as they could improperly draw money away from SOOF Allocations. Also, he said some organizations need more help than others, which is a problem that council should consider addressing.
- Sobhani said it is not up to him to determine the way a group identifies itself with CSP.
- Shulman asked if there are anymore comparisons to last year's SOOF Allocations. Sobhani said this year groups are getting a similar amount in their allocation, but it is spread more equitably throughout all of the groups.
- Chacon said he feels since funding was opened up to all groups, the spectacular programming that had occurred in the past has gone down.
- Sobhani said one issue in allocating money is there is no way of determining how large an organization is other than what the organization claims on their application.
- Tuttle said council should keep in mind if other groups, such as religious organizations, have gotten a fair share of the funding, as a time may come where a federal judge will be ordered to oversee all funding allocations.
- Tuttle asked if they changed the SOOF formulas due to an overall change or because of one organization. Sobhani said they did it for an overarching reason, not on the account of one organization.
- Tsai asked how they judge a group when in some cases the information provided by that group is not completely legitimate. Sobhani said illegitimate information is the applicant's liability, and they judged the organizations without any personal biases or feelings.

- Roth asked if allocations were in any way proportional to what each group requested. Sobhani said they concentrated on rubric score and not amount requested as a base for the allocation.
- Sobhani said the rubric should score need on a higher slope than it currently is scored.
- Sobhani said 6 points of the rubric are in reference to need, 4 points to goals, 16 points on the content of the application, and the rest of the points are for the group's mission and goals.
- Tressel said the rubric is essentially guiding the allocation process. He also said the flattening of student allocations also coincides with the decline of student activism, and he feels the Rehnquist Court accomplished such a feat with federal regulations on student group funding. He said it may be worth challenging court decisions to improve student activism.
- Melgar asked if they plan on changing the rubric. Sobhani said, if the rubric got changed, it would take effect next year.
- Tuttle said it may be worth tracking how much a group spends its allocations, and then take that into account in coming years to determine allocations. Also, if a group is not using the money allocated, council should interview the group and determine why the money is not being used.
- Sobhani said groups that are activist in nature tend to get more money than others. Also, SOOF is not a major programming fund, but rather an operational fund.
- Tsai asked why retreats are included in SOOF allocations. Sobhani said retreats play a part in an organization's operations, as it brings the group closer together.
- Garcia said council should look into changing the SOOF rubric, and they should also follow up on why some groups are not using all of the money allocated to them.
- Chacon moved and Liu seconded to approve the SOOF Allocations.
- Garcia asked for a roll call vote.
- Chacon, Kohles, Liu, Melgar, Shulman, Sien, and Tsai voted in the affirmative. Garcia voted in the negative. Birks, Reodica, and Roth abstained.
- Council approved the SOOF Allocations with a vote of 7-1-3.
- Hosseini said there should be an ad hoc committee about what to do in regard to the SOOF rubric. Melgar said it is best to leave it until next week.

#### X. Officer and Member Reports

##### **President – Homaira Hosseini**

- Hosseini said she had a statewide conference call where various universities looked at how their various SFACs were being utilized. Also, this weekend she is going to Oakland for the Student Mental Health Advisory Committee, where they will discuss the percentages of student funds going towards psychologists on campus. In addition, she spoke to the Daily Bruin to see about acknowledging the victims of the train crash. *Chacon asked about the meeting to happen on Wednesday. Hosseini said it is the Shared Governance meeting, and it will be at Covell in the Sunset Room from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Tsai asked what will occur at the meeting. Hosseini said USAC and GSA will collaborate regarding agendas.*

##### **Internal Vice President – Evan Shulman**

- Shulman said he has scheduled a lot of appointments for ARC. Next week they will be looking over some of the recommendations from CRC for changes to the OSAC guidelines. They will also be looking over ways to help the digitization of documents become allowed under the bylaws. Also, they have a full page color advertisement in the Daily Bruin, and the Daily Bruin said they could change the content of the advertisement between the Thursday and Friday editions. Shulman said his office will be having a staff retreat with Hosseini's office and Garcia's office on October 4<sup>th</sup> at the ropes course.

*Garcia said it would be a good idea to include staff and appointment outreach advertisements in the Daily Bruin. Tuttle said council should discuss the student*

*advocate position that was created towards the end of last year. Melgar said it might be a bylaw violation if the student advocate position is not appointed.*

**External Vice President – Jesse Melgar**

- Melgar said he was in Irvine last week working on the UC Regents meeting, and there were some interesting topics brought up in relation to student fees. He met with the Lieutenant Governor and introduced him to the UCSA action agenda items for the year. He will also be working on voting issues for the upcoming election, and he has also been working on the SOCC. His office will be having a retreat October 10<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup>.

*Birks said the first UCSA board meeting will be happening in DC this weekend, and he will tell council about it at next meeting.*

XI. Old Business

*There was no Old Business this week.*

XII. Announcements

- Tsai said he is working on t-shirts for USAC, and if anyone knows any cheap t-shirt companies, he or she should tell him.
- Shulman said next weeks meeting will be on Tuesday at 7:00 pm, and he will be posting the agendas on Friday so everyone should get their stuff to him by Thursday.
- Hosseini said a USC film student was stabbed on September 18<sup>th</sup>, and she would like council to have a moment of silence for him. Council proceeded to have a moment of silence.

XIII. Signing of the Attendance Sheet

*The attendance sheet was passed around.*

XIV. Adjournment

- Chacon moved and Tsai seconded to adjourn.
- Hosseini called for Acclamation. Hosseini asked if there were any objections to approval by Acclamation. There being none, the meeting was adjourned at 10:39 pm, by Acclamation.

XV. Good and Welfare

Respectfully Submitted,

Thomas King  
USAC Minutes Taker