

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION
COUNCIL

Tuesday January 6, 2009
417 Kerckhoff Hall
7:00 p.m.

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

ABSENT: Champawat, McLaren, Tressel

GUESTS:

I. A. Call to Order

- Hosseini called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

B. Signing of the Attendance Sheet

The Attendance sheet was passed around.

II. Approval of the Agenda

- Hosseini said she is concerned about the final text for the UC/Gaza Coalition Resolution to be discussed tonight. Gonzalez said not everyone got the text of the resolution. Council as a whole decided to proceed with reviewing the resolution.
- Sobhani removed Contingency Allocations.
- Hosseini removed everything under Funding Allocations.
- Gonzalez said council needs unanimous consent to proceed with the resolution as an action item because written notice was not given 2 days before the meeting.
- Hosseini said everyone was fine with just discussing it. As for the two school day notice, it was impossible due to the scheduling of finals.
- Tuttle said the Agenda requires a majority vote to approve, but if an action item is to be placed on the Agenda after the two day notice, it requires a 2/3 vote.
- Shulman said the resolution should have Chacon's name, not Melgar's name.
- Melgar moved and Reodica seconded to approve the Agenda, as amended.
- Council approved the Agenda with a vote of 11-1-0.

III. Approval of the Minutes

There were no minutes this week.

IV. Public Comments

- Sean Carroll of CALPIRG gave a presentation detailing the current projects of CALPIRG, including the Campus Climate Challenge, a healthcare campaign, and open textbooks. They are also pledging students this quarter, and they need 3,300 students, the most ever required.

V. Special Presentations

There were no Special Presentations this week.

VI. Appointments

There were no Appointments this week.

VII. Fund Allocations

A. Contingency Allocations

There were no Contingency Allocations this week.

B. Academic Success Referendum Fund

There was no business for the Academic Success Referendum Fund this week.

C. Academic Affairs Mini-Grant

There was no business for the Academic Affairs Mini-Grant this week.

D. Travel Grants

There were no Travel Grants this week.

E. Cultural Affairs Mini-Grant

There was no business for the Cultural Affairs Mini-Grant this week.

VIII. Officer and Member Reports

President – Homaira Hosseini

Hosseini said the US Assistant Secretary of State spoke at UCLA, and the event was a great success. She is also currently working with Bob Naples and the Assistant Chancellor to find a venue for students to watch the inauguration. The Peace Pole ceremony will be at noon the day of the inauguration in Meyerhoff. She hopes to have international students speak at the Peace Pole ceremony.

Internal Vice President – Evan Shulman

Shulman said his office blog is up, and there will be some ARC meetings in the future.

Hosseini said Reodica needs to be reappointed to BRC.

Shulman moved and Melgar seconded to appoint Elaine Reodica to BRC.

Hosseini called for Acclamation. Hosseini asked if there were any objections to approval by Acclamation. There being none, Elaine Reodica was appointed to BRC.

External Vice President – Jesse Melgar

Melgar said he spent his break up in the Bay area with CSU student leaders. Bruin Lobby Corps also had their retreat over the weekend. He hopes to collaborate with CSU student leaders in lobbying the state, especially since the Governor's budget proposal was just released. There will be a 29.9 million dollar cut to the UC's, and a 87.5 million dollar cut to Cal grants. His office will be doing in-district lobby days soon, and he has two lobby conferences coming up, February 28th to March 3rd.

Academic Affairs Commissioner – Jeremiah Garcia

Garcia said he will bring a proxy in for Emily Bautista next week for approval. He will submit the AB540 resolution this week to the Daily Bruin for printing. He will also submit a minor change in the USA Constitution to CRC for review. He will also set up a meeting to talk about budget issues in California. UCOP is also looking to restructure the budgeting and funding for study abroad programs.

Financial Supports Commissioner – Elaine Reodica

Reodica said the drawing for the textbook scholarships was a success, and a total of 30 names were drawn. It was done on the Monday everyone came back from break, and she will tell council about any new updates. She has worked closely with the Labor and Work Studies Center, and she feels council should increase the amount of textbook scholarship money, due to the apparent need. She proposed 50 textbook scholarships in spring.

IX. Old Business

A. USAC Town Hall

- Shulman said the town hall will be Thursday, the 22nd, at the Kerckhoff Hall Grand Salon. It will probably be around lunchtime.
- Garcia said they need to discuss the guest list. He said he hopes Hosseini can send an initial invite to some people.
- Garcia asked Shulman if there is a purpose or vision yet for the town hall. Shulman said there is nothing concrete yet.
- Hosseini said it would be good to have Janina Montero, Steve Olson, the Chair of the Senate, and the lead Vice Chancellor of Finance.
- Garcia said student groups should be invited too. Also, his office can hopefully cover most of the fees. There will also be a Question and Answer session, and students who can not make it can have questions submitted and read by the moderator.
- Hosseini said the USAC subcommittees can give their own reports at the town hall.
- Garcia said they still need people to work on media contacts. Tan work on filming the town hall, while Shulman is working on the vision of purpose.
- Hosseini said sponsorship issues should be tentatively added.

B. USAC Committee Reports

- Reodica and Kohles, as part of the Affordability Committee, said they sent an email out to start up the textbook coalition, and they will contact people in the coming weeks concerning the coalition. They will also be working on the Financial Aid Task Force with Hosseini in the coming weeks.
- Chacon and Garcia, as part of the Academic Advancement Committee, said they want to create a methodology by which they can get feedback from the student population on what needs to be done. They will also be contacting various student groups who would be interested in working on academic issues.
- Shulman, as part of the Sustainability Committee, said he hopes to reduce the energy consumption of Kerckhoff Hall, but also to give the campus a sort of energy audit and promote best practices of energy consumption. Roth said she has been getting recycling cans for offices, and if an office does not have one, he or she should get in contact with her.
- Hosseini said a sustainability cheat sheet would be a good way to disseminate information at the town hall.
- Birks, as part of the Student Engagement Committee, said their goal is to get USAC's name out to the students, and they are having a meeting this week to sit down and discuss goals and ways to accomplish this.
- Hosseini said each subcommittee should have a final product for the town hall.

X. New Business

A. Resolution – UC/Gaza Coalition

- Nelson thanked everyone for coming and said he is glad to see so many students showing concern. However, he said it's a shame an issue so divisive has come about, even though it is neither parties' fault.

- Hosseini said the presenters of the resolution will read it first, then there will be a discussion among council members, then a discussion involving other individuals in the room. No vulgar language or out of turn speaking will be tolerated.
- Chacon moves and Shulman seconds to approve the UC/Gaza Coalition Resolution.
- Bernice Shaw presented and read the resolution to council.
- Shaw said similar proposals are being passed at other campuses, and they hope to create a domino effect in passing at least a few resolutions. In the last 48 hours, 34 organizations said they would support the resolution.
- Reodica said the original resolution had “8 Israeli citizens” marked as victims, but now the number is down to four. Shaw said the numbers change as they compile new information.
- Tuttle asked about the rocket attacks being performed weeks before, and if there is a spot in the resolution detailing this. There is a line in the resolution detailing the rocket attacks, beginning on November 5th, 2008.
- Tuttle asked who called an end to the ceasefire. The ceasefire stopped once Israel invaded Gaza.
- Tuttle asked about Israel's point of view. Israel suspected six men of digging a tunnel cross-border in order to kidnap Israeli soldiers.
- Hosseini asked for a resolution that recognizes death on both sides, calls for a ceasefire, and sees the international community upset at the conflict.
- Rahim Kurwa added a line saying “Whereas, rockets from Gaza continued to fall on Southern Israel from July through October.”
- Roth said, since the resolution is humanitarian in nature, clauses putting blame on the incident and saying who did what should be removed. The UC/Gaza Coalition said one of their arguments is to show that peaceful alternatives were not exhausted.
- Kohles asked if they approached Bruins for Israel. Kurwa said they did try to contact them.
- Sobhani said a resolution like this should be updated in real time. Also, he asked if any organizations could not endorse it due to some outside impetus.
- Shaw said CALPIRG, Red Cross, and Project Literacy would not or could not endorse them. MUN, RASA, ISU, Hillel, JSU, Bruins for World Peace, Bruins for Israel, and the Political Theory Club did not get back to them.
- Bruins for Israel said they received the email 2-3 hours before the meeting started, without a resolution attached, so they did not have time to address it.
- Randa Wahbe said they have proof they sent the email 23 hours ago. Shaw said the intention was not for any group to get it late.
- The President of the Iranian Student Group said they got the information last minute, and met accordingly because of it.
- Sobhani asked how they could get groups interested without attaching a resolution.
- Shaw said the email simply asked for a return email if a group was interested, and then the resolution would have been sent out.
- Tsai said the resolution could have been attached as a Google Document, which negates any time sensitivity issues.
- Gonzalez said USAC represents all students on campus and taking a stance may cause a rift in the student body.
- Hosseini said, since it is a sensitive issue, the best focus should be humanitarian and calling for a ceasefire. Gonzalez said its very hard to take the resolution out of its context.
- Combiz Abdolrahimi said Israel has refused a ceasefire, and there will be people who do not agree to a ceasefire. This resolution will bring to light a serious issue to students on campus.
- Bruins for Israel said a resolution will only be unbiased if written by both sides. Also, there is very little talk about rocket attacks on Israel.
- Hosseini reiterated the necessity of a humanitarian focus. Shaw said the goal was to make it as nonpartisan as possible.

- Hosseini asked that council recess and people from both sides help amend the resolution to create something mutually acceptable.
- Gonzalez said this topic will not be fully discussed in a fifteen minute recess.
- Garcia moved and Reodica seconded to recess at 9:35pm.
- Hosseini called council back to order at 11:25pm.
- Hosseini asked the authors to discuss any changes made.
- Kurwa said, in the second Whereas, Israel was removed, and also the phrase “in violation...2008”. The third and fourth Whereas were completely stricken. The fifth Whereas reads “..has killed more than 640 in Gaza and 4 in Israel and injured over 2800 in Gaza and countless in Israel, and...”
- Kurwa continued, saying the eight and ninth Whereas were combined. They offer this version for a vote.
- Kurwa said there will be an asterisk next to the numbers in the new fifth Whereas, detailing the numbers are changing as new figures are published.
- Kohles asked if they received endorsement from the opposing parties after these changes were made. Kurwa said he did not think they offered to support it.
- Shulman asked if it is possible to include another Whereas that calls for future dialogue.
- Bruins for Israel said they do not sponsor nor author the resolution, as they wanted Israel to be included in the title, and the resolution to say that the problem in southern Israel is a humanitarian crisis as well. Also, the resolution should include a statement saying that Israel has a right to defend its citizens.
- Garcia said he wants to see a resolution that works for all sides and asked what the problems were in the resolution.
- Hosseini said the UC/Gaza Coalition conceded to changing the title and content of the Whereas, but the other party did not accept it. She feels the offer was a great step forward though.
- Shaw said they made concessions, and now the resolution should be voted upon.
- Hosseini said the concessions made are on the resolution, but Bruins for Israel will not sign off on it, so their name will not be on the resolution. The resolution's main aim is now humanitarian.
- Kohles asked if they could create a more nonpartisan resolution if they had more time. Kurwa said they were discussing the issue for a long time. The President for the Bruins of Israel said they were just landed with the resolution, and they could create a joint resolution given enough time.
- Monica moved to table the resolution. Chacon rejected the motion.
- Melgar said he feels the resolution is bipartisan, and it would be good to add Shulman's comment to the end of the resolution.
- Melgar called the question and Reodica seconded.
- Council approved Melgar's motion with a vote of 11-0-1.
- Shulman made a friendly amendment, adding a last clause detailing a necessity to stimulate future dialogue between the two sides. Chacon accepted the friendly amendment.
- Garcia called for a roll call vote.
- Shulman, Melgar, Birks, Liu, Sien, Chacon, Tsai, and Reodica voted in the affirmative. Gonzalez and Kohles voted in the negative. Garcia and Roth abstained. The resolution passed.
- Shulman said he hopes the dialogue does not stop tonight. Hosseini said it was a great step forward for both sides.
- Shulman said a letter should be broadcasted to detail future dialogue on the subject.
- Tuttle said they have to vote whether or not to put it on the ballot.
- Birks moved and Garcia seconded to publish the resolution in the Daily Bruin.
- Chacon said it should be published with the date the two parties plan on coming together to talk.
- Melgar said putting a time limit on a date would pressure groups too much already.
- Hosseini said there should be a stipulation that a date is discussed between the two parties.

- Birks and Garcia accepted the stipulation that both groups discuss a date in which to have further dialogue on the subject.
- Birks said the advertisement will be a quarter page and Garcia accepted.
- Gonzalez said a lot of students did not have a say in the resolution, and thereby should not be published.
- Council approved to put a quarter page advertisement of the resolution in the Daily Bruin with the stipulation that both parties discuss a date for future dialogue with a vote of 8-2-2.

XI. Announcements

- Tsai said the USAC shirts arrived, and the costs were covered by the University Credit Union.
- Melgar said he sent out an email detailing how the California state budget will impact the UC system.
- Hosseini said parking permits are available, and they are in Nicole Stednitz's office.

XII. Signing of the Attendance Sheet

The attendance sheet was passed around.

XIII. Adjournment

- Garcia moved and Chacon 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 12:22am pm, by Acclamation.

XIV. Good and Welfare

Respectfully Submitted,

Thomas King
USAC Minutes Taker