

## STUDENT SENATE

### Executive Summary

April 29, 2015

- I. Invocation
  - A. Nidia Ruelas called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM
  - B. Michael Wajda led invocation
  - C. 1 was absent; 1 was late
- II. Approval of Minutes
  - A. Ryan Heard moved to approve the minutes
    1. Amy Smikle seconded
- III. Officer Announcements
  - A. Mr. Bryan Ricketts, Student Body Secretary
    1. Office of Housing Policy
      - a) Talked to Karen Kennedy (Director of Housing), next year they're looking to revamp the way that storage is done
      - b) analyzing check out policy: don't want to move it to finals week because of noise complaint
      - c) communication will be earlier next year (spring break at the latest)
    2. Bryan will be here all summer
      - a) if there is anything that needs to get done, email him over the summer
  - B. Ms. Nidia Ruelas, Student Body Vice President
    1. Last Senate of the Year
    2. Make sure to review parliamentary procedures
    3. Resolution 8 has been moved to a later Senate by the Resolution presenter
    4. If you're going to be absent make sure to email both Nidia and Sibonay
      - a) if you aren't able to get a proxy, let us know as well
  - C. Mr. Dan Sehlhorst, Chief of Staff
    1. For people in departments who are wondering how to stay involved in the summer, talk to Dan or department directors at any time
- IV. General Orders
  - A. State of the Student Union
    1. *Bryan Ricketts, Student Body President*
    2. Department of Academic Affairs is working to break down barriers between academics and social experience
      - a) ie: Snite at Night
    3. Department of Campus Tech: beginning implementation of new DARTing system
      - a) relaunch of online website
    4. Department of Communications: working to reinvigorate our social media presence
      - a) helping university promote its acceptance policy of undocumented students
    5. Diversity Council: Diversity Council Calendar will be made public soon
    6. Department of NEO: Revamp of Political Brew to make it bigger and more inclusive
      - a) Press Clips are expanding and becoming more active
    7. Department of Internal Affairs: clarifying inconsistencies in Constitution
    8. Department of Social Concerns: Working to increase participation in service opportunities
    9. Athletic Department: Working to boost attendance at underrepresented sports

10. FUEL: making FUEL a strong mentoring program, working with FCC and SUB on a freshman preview night
11. Department of Community Relations: Currently working on the first Quad Market
  - a) renewed focus on South Bend businesses
12. Department of Residence Life: Dorm Week coming Mid-September
  - a) Quad cook outs, carnivals, etc.
13. Department of Constituent Service: initiatives for student town halls
  - a) establishing an online forum
  - b) bringing back puppy days
14. Department Gender Issues: successfully executed sexual assault service
  - a) launching GreenDot program
15. Department of Health and Wellness (New Department): Actively meeting with the director of the McDonnell Center for student wellness
  - a) working on Irish State of Mind
- 16.

B. Discussion Re: Department of Gender Issues

1. Options
  - a) motion to reopen discussion
  - b) motion to close the discussion and move on to statement by Danny Funaro
2. Kathleen Rocks moved to close discussion
  - a) Amy Smikle seconded

C. Statement before Senate

1. *Danny Funaro, Director of Gender Issues*
2. Explaining why he doesn't see this as a conflict of interest
  - a) PRISM and Student Government have very different goals
    - (1) Pastoral v. Policy
  - b) Able to keep interests entirely separate
  - c) Complain about conflict of interest comes from his image in PRISM and Student Government, but he serves as historian in PRISM which is mostly symbolic and what he does in Student Government is first approved by Nidia or Bryan
3. Both positions are very important to Danny
  - a) Being in both positions allow him to express a platform on the issues presented to him, it's a very personal issue that means a lot to him
4. If anyone has questions at any point, Danny's email is [dfunaro@nd.edu](mailto:dfunaro@nd.edu)
  - a) or talk to members of his department about any hesitations or questions

D. Discussion Re: Open Letter

1. *Matthew Devine, Student Body Vice President Emeritus*
2. Letter arose out of the UNC-Chapel Hill Shooting
  - a) in conversation with the Muslim Student Association here
  - b) sends condolences and acknowledges the danger of microaggression and avoiding inclusion
3. Meant to be a reflection of the issue and to call our peer institution to do the same
  - a) also meant to recommit ourselves to the spirit of inclusion
4. Recommended that this letter is voted down and would rather move to a conversation of whether or not student Senate should be able to send out letters like this to our peer institutions
  - a) Recommendations of Matthew Devine and Diversity Council

5. Michael Wajda moved to approve the letter
  - a) Peter Durbin seconded
  - b) motion did not pass
6. Reynaldo Lopez motioned to open discussion about whether or not we should send letters such as this
  - a) Sarah Kim Seconded
  - b) Matthew Devine: The reason this conversation is important is because Senate is usually introspective, but this is an important role that we should decide if it is the responsibility of the Senate
    - (1) Discuss whether or not it even makes sense to issue statements like this
  - c) Matthew Krach: it's not a bad idea to be less introspective
    - (1) Since it's a catholic university it is a good idea to show we care
    - (2) Need to decide what can and can't go in these letters
  - d) Louis Bertolotti: In order to find ourselves, we need to look to others
    - (1) We are the only representation of the Student Body, so Senate would be the best group of people to issue these statements
  - e) Dan Riehle: Our purpose is to be the voice of the students
    - (1) If we're going to represent the whole student body, we need to have this issuing power
  - f) Bridget Ricketts: Notre Dame students have a reputation of being elitists, it's important to also issue these in a respectful way and keep in mind any limitations of respect
  - g) Matthew Krach: Problem with letter was how it may come off and how it may make Notre Dame students sound
    - (1) dangerous if it represents student body without full student body support
  - h) Seamus Quilty: Letters of condolences are completely appropriate, but more controversial ideas may be a little troublesome or dangerous
  - i) Ethan Holland: Not going to make everyone happy, saying condolences and recommending to work with other university would be acceptable
    - (1) impossible to please everyone
  - j) Matthew Devine: Letter itself wasn't design to take a stance on any issue, it was suppose to show solidarity between student communities
    - (1) wasn't meant to be extremely critical or criticize student life here or anywhere else, just to promote conversations like this
  - k) Eva Niklinksa: Caliber of Open Letters
    - (1) Should decide who we can address letters to and what circumstances will require letters
  - l) Louis Bertolotti: Notre Dame Student Body is a powerful force
    - (1) important to take on issues since we have a voice
    - (2) it's important to express when we disagree with university administration
  - m) J.P. Bruno: Letter was addressed to UNC because they are ACC schools
    - (1) would we send letters to schools that we don't have such strong ties to?
  - n) Matthew Devine: letter wasn't meant to have a policy that we always have to issue a letter, more of a case by case basis



- o) Peter Durbin: Guidelines wouldn't be necessary
  - (1) letter can be written without set ground rules
- p) Matthew Krach: Doesn't make sense to set ground rules, works better in case for case basis
  - (1) not everyone is going to agree in the student population with what we're doing, but we have to take into account that sending letters like this will put it in the public sphere where anyone can see it
    - (a) have to make sure letters are intelligent and well thought out
- q) Abe Jensen: Would look bad if we send letters that don't align with the University's beliefs
- r) Kathleen Rocks: members of Senate has differing opinions, so running letters through Senate let's many different opinions see and discuss the letter
- s) Dan Sehlhorst: We should be aware of these letters can find their way to the press
  - (1) may leads to questions, articles, etc.
  - (2) not that we shouldn't do it, but we should be ready
- t) Kevin McMannis: Letters take weeks to formulate and send out
  - (1) can always rewrite, redraft, and table letters
- u) Matthew Devine: How letters are sent out is another issue
  - (1) Cautionary idea of fear of press would debilitate student Senate from moving forward on some issues
- v) Peter Durbin moved to close discussion
  - (1) Kevin McMannis seconded

E. Resolution SS1516-09

- 1. *Michael Finan, Dillon Hall Senator*
- 2. Resolution commending Sargent Tim McCarthy
- 3. Reynaldo Lopez moved to vote on the resolution
  - a) Kathleen Rocks seconded
- 4. Resolution passed
- 5. J.P. Bruno: Where do these commendations go
  - a) Bryan Ricketts: An official copy will be sent to Tim McCarthy
    - (1) who we want to commend is up to us
  - b) Nidia Ruelas: Binder is kept with every single resolution, etc. signed by Bryan

V. New Business

- A. Kathleen Rocks: Motioned to open discussion about meeting between Dan and Department Directors concerning the ethics commission
  - 1. Peter Durbin seconded
  - 2. Wilson Barrett: recommended other subcommittee members to identify themselves
    - a) conversations about ethics violations
    - b) Talked first about Bryan and that there were no further actions that could be done
    - c) Noticed that a lot of discussion from the department directors, part of the concern was that there was a meeting where the directors found out more than the Senators knew, which led the conversation to be guided

3. Andrew Thomas: Main point is that it did seem kind of hindered to have an unbiased way of discussion
4. Seamus Quilty: What is everyone asking to be done from this discussion?
  - a) Kathleen Flavin: Trying to clarify what happened in the meeting
5. Seamus Quilty: Did such a meeting occur and what was discussed?
  - a) Dan Sehlhorst: Meeting was held with Dan and the Executive Cabinet, did not include parties of the ethics violation
    - (1) goal was to make sure that directors didn't feel blindsided
    - (2) made sure that executive cabinet was aware of what was happening
6. Michael Wajda: Why was there a need to brief directors before student Senators? and why did you feel as if you needed to warn the executive cabinet of an attack?
  - a) Dan Sehlhorst: Point was to make sure that everyone understand that the cabinet wasn't being attacked, and directors are ones who work closest to Bryan
7. J.P. Bruno: Why were you more concerned about directors being blindsided than Senators?
  - a) Dan Sehlhorst: A lot of the directors can't come to senate, so this was just a chance to inform them. Since they are nonvoting members, Dan wanted to make sure they had a chance to ask their questions too
8. Kevin McMannis: Directors have the same opportunities that Senators have to come so why should they be briefed?
  - a) Dan Sehlhorst: hope that proxies would report back to Senators who can't make it. Meant to be a personal care type of thing
    - (1) Didn't ask them to ask any type of questions, just gave them the history as Dan knew it.
9. Michael Wajad: What information did you tell the directors?
  - a) Dan Sehlhorst: Speculating that this had occurred, and let directors know that this might arise soon and not to freak out
  - b) Initiator of allegation had told Bryan and Nidia that this would happen five or ten times, and Bryan knew that recommendations would likely be made so he expressed that to the constitution
10. Morgan Dunn: Since there are two senators that are department directors, isn't it unfair that they were provided with more information?
  - a) Dan Sehlhorst: Purpose wasn't meant to steer anything, just wanted to make sure all directors knew everything was stable and didn't focus on who was and wasn't a senator. Looking back, this probably caused some stress and hostility, which was never the intent. Information disparity was never the purpose
11. Louis Bertolotti: Seems coincidental that all the directors were here, was it the purpose that they were suppose to be Dan's voice?
  - a) Dan Sehlhorst: Reason Dan wasn't here was because of a conference the same night, and the reason for telling the Directors wasn't to create a surrogate voice, just to insure them that Bryan wasn't in a bad situation
  - b) Bridget Rickard: Questions will be answered honestly and won't be funneled
    - (1) Bridget was encouraged to come to the meeting and express discontent

- c) Patrick Murday: Dan didn't say to go to the meeting, the reason so many directors were there was because they wanted to hear the conversation and support Danny
  - d) Rohit Fonseca: We were encouraged to defend if necessary and given object information
12. Ariana Zlioba: Were you individually encouraged?
- a) Bridget: Yes because Bridget missed the cabinet meeting and it came up when she talked to Dan
13. Zach Waterson: Ethics Commission hears allegations about any members of student government. Do you (Dan) feel like giving directors outside information give him an advantage in the student Senate setting?
- a) Dan Sehlhorst: Dan did tell them that this would be coming, encouraged them to go to Senate if this was a concern so that the directors could voice their perspective as a member of cabinet.
  - b) Unfair advantage: This wasn't meant to come from a perspective of advantage, it was more for new cabinet members so that they didn't feel overwhelmed or unaware and let them know that they had the right to voice their opinions.
14. Daniela Narimatsu: Also missed the meeting that Bridget missed, but was never asked to come to the meeting or defend Bryan or Danny
15. Amy Smikle: Isn't it within a cabinet member's right to defend the president?
- a) Bridget Rickards: agree, and chose to keep her voice quiet during the meeting.
16. Reynaldo Lopez: There is no problem with Dan reassuring his cabinet if it is the case that that was the purpose of the meeting
17. Kevin McMannis: The issue isn't that they were encouraged to support Bryan, the issue is that confidential information was released to cabinet members early
- a) Dan Sehlhorst: Dan didn't have any confidential information and only knew what was told before the meeting had ever been called. The initiator already told them the allegations beforehand
18. Wilson Barrett: How could you (Dan) reassure them that there would be no problems if you didn't have the total story?
- a) Dan: Had a strong belief in the truth and that the people involved were justified
19. Michael Wajad: Did the ethics committee find any merit to the ethical allegations or not?
- a) Dan Sehlhorst: Truth is just meant as the events that had transpired
20. Seamus Quilty: The issue at hand is if confidential information was given to cabinet members, but Dan said confidential information shared or not?
- a) J.P. Bruno: Was it reassurance or defense?
  - b) Dan Sehlhorst: Wanted cabinet members to give the perspective that they get from working in the office everyday
21. Sarah Kim: Did Zach know of the meeting before when the meeting was made closed
- a) Zach Waterson: No, not at all and found it a little surprising how involved cabinet members became



22. Louis Bertolotti: Issue is also that Bryan was represented by a number of cabinet directors which seemed a little unethical. Did Bryan and Nidia know of this discussion?
  - a) Bryan: Knew that this discussion had occurred after the discussion took place, but didn't know what the content was
  - b) Bryan: Left after an executive cabinet meeting had occurred
23. Wilson Barrett: Why did this conversation occur without Bryan and Nidia
  - a) Dan: Wanted to protect against biased
24. Kathleen Rocks: Did this meeting occur after minutes stopped being recorded
  - a) Dan: Yes because it was after the meeting occurred
25. Louis Bertolotti: Can cabinet members speak?
  - a) Rohit Fonseca: Bryan, Nidia, and Danny left the room and then Dan addressed the meeting
  - b) Louis: Why did the three of them leave the meeting? Was it intentional?
    - (1) Dan Sehlhorst: Dan asked the cabinet members to stay because he wanted to talk about this with them. Everything Dan knew was based on assumption, and it was easy to put two and two together and knew that this was coming.
26. Tommy Schneeman: What exactly is meant to be confidential?
  - a) Zach Waterson: Who's involved and what it's about
27. Michael Wajda: If someone were to tell a group of directors that there was a potential allegation, is that an ethics violation?
  - a) Zach: Yes
28. Reynaldo Lopez: Dan just assumed that there would be an ethics violation meeting?
  - a) J.P. Bruno: Did you know for a fact that the ethics commission had convened?
  - b) Dan: was very confident and no one ever said that there was an ethics commission coming
29. Ethan Holland: Dan was just doing what he felt was right by informing them, if we're worried about the department directors being biased, they're able to formulate their own opinion.
30. Wilson Barrett motioned to continue discussion
  - a) Peter Durbin seconded
  - b) motion did not pass
31. Reynaldo Lopez moved to close discussion
  - a) Amy Smikle seconded
  - b) motion failed: discussion continues
32. Seamus Quilty: Can subcommittee decide if they want to file an ethics violation?
  - a) Zach Waterson: this was discussed at the subcommittee, but a new subcommittee can be put together to evaluate
    - (1) has the power to remove someone from office, express opinions towards dan, or refer it to a committee
33. Wilson Barrett: motion to table this discussion
  - a) Christine Zvakos seconded
  - b) motion doesn't pass
34. Reynaldo Lopez: Move to create a new subcommittee to discuss this
  - a) Ethan Holland seconded

- b) Wilson Barrett: A new meeting won't help, the topic is exhausted
- c) motion does not pass
- 35. Sarah Kim: Does Zach, as the ethics committee, have any recommendations?
  - a) Zach Waterson: There are concerns about not being able to have an unbiased conversation, so there isn't enough malpractice to continue this. However, this should set a precedence to avoid conflicts like this in the future
- 36. Michael Wajad: Is it possible to make a motion to make a recommendation that Zach look at this issue as the head of the ethics commission?
  - a) Nidia: Yes?
  - b) Zach: You can make the recommendation, but you can't compel anyone to do anything
- 37. Abe Jenson: sounds like subcommittee already did some digging on the issue, what did the subcommittee come to?
  - a) Kathleen Rocks: the subcommittee doesn't really have the power to speak on this, which is why discussion was open
- 38. Peter McMannis moved to close discussion
  - a) Amy Smikle seconded
- 39. Michael Wajda moved to reopen discussion for clarification
  - a) Reynaldo Lopez seconded
- 40. Reynaldo Lopez: were you (Michael Wajda) suggesting that ethics commission looks at this and makes recommendations?
  - a) Michael: It seems like ethics commission would be the best group to handle this
- 41. Kathleen Rocks moved to close discussion
  - a) Ethan Holland seconded

VI. Announcements

- A. Kevin McMannis: Him and Peter formally have 24 hours left, new officers are Meg Mannis and Kevin Culman
- B. Michael Finan: Sunday at 6:00 in Notre Dame room, SUB stress relievers
  - 1. food, t-shirts, all free
- C. Zach Waterson: Student Organization leaders will receive an email soon
  - 1. Bylaws due May 1st and ethic commissions email will be sent out soon

VII. Adjournment

- A. Kevin McMannis moved to adjourn
  - 1. J.P. Bruno seconded