

NOTRE DAME STUDENT SENATE
Executive Summary
October 28, 2009
Notre Dame Room, LaFortune

I. OPENING BUSINESS

- i. Cynthia called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.
- ii. Chase led the invocation.
- iii. Brian, Kolin, and Ted were absent.
- iv. Cynthia entertained a motion to approve the new October 14, 2009 executive summary. *The October 14, 2009 executive summary was approved at 6:05 p.m.*

II. PODIUM

III. OFFICER REPORTS

i. Mr. Grant Schmidt, Student Body President

- a. Grant mentioned that the Board of Trustees meeting went very well. Denise will discuss those issues.
- b. Contract for Transpo is being looked at by General Council and by the end of the week, everything should be ready to go.
- c. Lafortune renovation in the arcade room will be done.
- d. One thing Grant mentioned in CoR yesterday is that if anyone has small complaints or suggestions, they should bring those ideas to senate.
 - i. Mints in the dining halls
 - ii. Benches at main circle

ii. Ms. Cynthia Weber, Student Body Vice-President

- a. Cynthia introduced Peggy and Matt Barlow
 1. Matt announced that if anyone is interested in being the Shirt Project President, senators or anyone who wish to apply should visit the site, theshirt.nd.edu
- b. Cynthia emphasized that senate will be starting at 6:00 sharply
- c. Cynthia wishes to charge the group to start getting creative and improving the university in ways student leaders wouldn't ordinarily think of. This year, there is some lag because there have been many accomplishments already.

iii. Mr. Ryan Brellenthin, Chief Executive Assistant

- a. Grant and Ryan had the opportunity to discuss the academic policies with faculty. The academic committee is looking at AP policies.
- b. Board of Trustees meeting was successful.
 - i. Off campus-housing evaluation and off-campus incident report are two of the statistical suggestions that will be brought up.

iv. Professor Vijay Gupta, Faculty Senate Liaison

- a. None

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

i. Committee on Academic Affairs [Austin Holler]

- a. Austin's committee has not met in the past two weeks.

ii. Committee on Campus Technology [Walker Anderson]

- a. Walker mentioned that this past Friday, he met with several board members from SunGuard, which runs course registration and insideND administrative systems.
 1. Basically, Walker talked about course registration issues and the administrator at SunGuard was very impressed and planned on perhaps implementing the ND template at other institutions.
 2. What came out of this meeting was basically an improvement in the relationship between SunGuard and ND. In the future, Notre Dame could possibly customize their own insideND and course registration systems.
- b. November 9th-12th : Tech Week; posters will make it to senators' boxes by this evening.
- c. Walker mentioned that Gordon will come to talk briefly about OIT issues during tech week.

iii. Committee on Community Relations [Denise Baron]

- a. Erika mentioned that Fall Festival is coming up this Friday on North Quad. The event is open for everyone.
- b. Cynthia added that fall festival may need a lot of volunteers and ambassadors to welcome the community members on campus.
- c. Denise added that she plans on sending out a sign-up sheet for senators to volunteer.
- d. Also, on Sunday, the November event will take place. If senators could please send out an email to the dorms, that would be great.

iv. Committee on Gender Issues [Patrick Tighe and Robyn Grant]

- a. Patrick mentioned that *Sex Signals* is tomorrow night at Mendoza from 7-8:30. The play is a national success that deals with issues of consent, rape, and sexual assault.
 1. It is a performance with two actors on stage.
 2. Patrick encouraged senators to engage dorms and to perhaps have a walk over to the dorm.

v. Committee on Multicultural Affairs [Nika Giger]

- a. Nika did not meet with her committee this past Monday and looks forward to meeting next Monday.

vi. Committee on Oversight [Kevin Kimberly]

- a. Kevin mentioned that oversight will be meeting Monday.
- b. To be able to do anything in Senate, Kevin emphasized that senate needs quorum (24 senators). If anyone anticipates on being absent, senators should leave a proxy to provide the vote since every vote will essentially matter.
- c. Senators must attend hall council meetings.

vii. Committee on Residence Life [Nick Ruof]

- a. Nick's committee did not meet.

viii. Committee on Social Concerns [Rachel Roseberry]

- a. Rachel said that the Farmer's Market was a great success.
- b. T-shirt sales for the GWI will be from this coming Monday to next Monday. These will all be pre-ordered sales that will be held at Lafortune and the dining halls.
- c. Rachel met with the Office of Sustainability and with regard to the Dorm Energy Competition, it will proceed from November 1st to November 30th. Last year, ND saved about \$4000. This year, the savings will be contributed towards the GWI:
 1. Rachel advised senators to discuss with hall council leaders and rectors to promote energy-saving solutions towards this competition since all these little things will go towards contributing money to the GWI.

ix. Committee on University Affairs [Jeff Lakusta]

- a. Jeff reiterated the "little-things" imitative with issues such as the following: burnt-out lighting, vending machine, misplaced sprinklers

x. Wall of Ideas [Elle Metz]

- a. Computer cluster in Jordan

V. GENERAL ORDER

i. Intellectual Engagement- Discussion and Extended Committee Report from University Affairs

- a. Jeff said that having been here for four years, student government has accomplished a lot. However, the issue of the intellectual environment is a much broader issue.
- b. CJ mentioned Notre Dame focuses on a particular popular language of topics ranging from sports, campus life, etc... however, there is much less emphasis on academic topics such as philosophy (Plato), etc...
- c. Since ND is on par with its other higher academic institutions (Harvard, Yale, etc.), ND should promote a similar academic atmosphere
- d. CJ suggested several ideas: changing the freshman seminar system or freshman booklet
- e. Andrew brought up the anecdote of his professor (from Princeton), and that the professor's impression was that though ND students could test well, know a lot about sports, take good notes, they could not hold intellectual conversations with professors. Although it was initially appalling at first from Andrew and other students' points of view, this provided a driving force for Jeff's committee and student government to inquire more about this issue.
- f. Based on the handout that was passed, Andrew brought up several stereotypes.
- g. Andrew highlighted the program at WFU in which students have to read a book and go to the professor's house to get to know the professors more.

- h. Martha mentioned that at USC...U of South Carolina...they would read a book by a particular author and that actual author would come in for a Q and A session. So Martha basically recommended that instead of professors, the idea of bringing in the author would be a great idea.
- i. Walker said that another huge aspect would be the community building issue.
- j. Cynthia mentioned that this intellectual environment isn't about making ND better to increase its reputation but rather hear about the insufficiencies. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that the Office of Student Affairs is well aware of this insufficiency as well.
- k. Denise wanted to add that, along the lines of community building, the academic aspect in a sense of brings the ND community factor down. From Denise's perspective, she feels that at the moment, the academic personality is a decisive factor as to how students perceive others and there is a certain boundary that is established.
- l. Kevin said that a huge part of this has to do with how a lot of classes and majors are constructed.
- m. Patrick feels that FYS is very undemanding and does not push students to go into areas that are very challenging.
- n. One of Patrick's ideas is to perhaps have professors come and teach in dorms.
- o. Maria suggested the idea of having seminars during junior and senior years. Maria feels that the majors have perhaps too many requirements and less space for electives.
- p. Maria says that as a political science and history double major, there actually has not been a lot of discussion. Maria also mentioned that at South Carolina, the rhetoric program was really strong.
- q. Walker said that perhaps our focus should involve tangible ways to blur the line between academic and residential life.
- r. Ryan proposed the idea of having 1-credit seminars with no requirements in order to promote such an atmosphere.
 - a. Austin feels that provided the requirements, this would be a great idea.
- s. Denise feels it is the social atmosphere, not the professors or students, that needs to be confronted.
- t. Taylor feels the 1-credit atmosphere and also proposed the idea of having a current events session.
- u. Peggy whispered...

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- i. None**

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- i. St. Ed's Talent Show tonight in the Lafortune Ballroom**

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

- i. Cynthia entertained a motion to adjourn. Chase motioned first. *The October 28, 2009 Student Senate meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Tej Mudigonda
Student Body Secretary

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Respectfully Submitted,

Tej Mudigonda
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