

## **Student Government Association Forum Minutes**

**Date:** Thursday, September 7, 2017

**Call to order:** 12:30pm

- Technical difficulties prevent the projector from displaying the PowerPoint.

### **RSO announcements**

- The RAINN Day event is coming up. RAINN stands for Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network and helps bring awareness to sexual violence. RSOs are provided umbrellas to decorate for the event. At the end of forum, organizations can sign up and get an umbrella.
- NAACP is having a discussion on Tuesday about racial disparity in America. On Saturdays from 10am to 12pm they go out to Rothschild Learning Academy to tutor kids and help with homework. Every third Saturday they help disadvantaged families at Columbus Dream Center and extend the offer to anyone who would like to go.
- Omega Psi Phi has a box for Project Bookbag donations outside of the SGA office. The graduate chapter is having a fish fry on Saturday, September 16, and are also having a sickle cell walk that same day from 8 am to noon at the Fourth Street Baptist Church parking lot. Registration for the walk is \$30.
- The Georgia Game Developers organization is having a game event this weekend starting tomorrow at 6pm. They are also holding a card game tournament on Saturday, September 23 in the Columbus Room.
- Collegiate 100 is having a week full of events next week.

### **Executive Committee Reports**

#### **Logan Ragan, President**

- Old news: the motion to rewrite the constitution from the previous forum on was passed and a constitutional committee is needed to help with its review and revision.
- Some Armstrong University students will be coming to campus and staying in the residence hall because of the threat from Hurricane Irma. No more than 130 students are expected.

#### **Jasmine Navarro, VP of Scholastic Affairs**

- The Monthly Oversight Report deadline has been extended to next Friday, September 15. If you need help, email Jasmine or drop by her office.
- The Project Bookbag deadline has been extended to Saturday, September 30. The donations will be given to an elementary school in October.
- The next event SGA sponsored event is Spooktacular.
  - Becca Zajac from Uptown Columbus talks about Spooktacular: it's free and allows them to give back to the community. CSU's RSOs make up a large portion of Spooktacular's vendors. She will leave an application for organizations to sign up. Spooktacular is Saturday, October 28 from 1pm to 4pm in Woodruff Park. Becca will send Jasmine a video to explain it further.
  - Organizations can drop off candy donations in the SGA office.

- The Hurricane Harvey relief blood drive is Tuesday, September 19 from 10am to 3pm in the Columbus Room. If any organizations want to help, contact Jasmine.
  - A student asked about donating items instead of blood, but Logan explains that SGA doesn't have the logistics to donate items and the American Red Cross asked specifically for blood.

#### **Isabella Nunez, VP of Financial Affairs**

- A funds request training will take place on Wednesday, September 13 at 12:30pm to 1:30pm in Davidson 258. This training is to answer any questions about filling out funds requests.
- Kappa Sigma's \$426.80 funds request was approved, which leaves \$8,573.20 in the budget. There are currently three other fund requests waiting to be reviewed.
- Isabella encourages organization to request funds.

#### **Z'Taria Frazier, Speaker of the Senate**

- The Student Recreation Center is having their second annual Party in Pink health expo in October. Any organizations interested in helping with production will receive 70 points added to their Organization of the Year total. If organizations attend but don't help, they will receive 50 points.
  - The tentative date for the event is currently Wednesday, October 4, but is subject to change.
- Town Halls are meetings for students to present ideas and opinions and ask questions. The first town hall will be hosted by the College of Business senators. If anyone in the College of Business has any concerns, the meeting is expected to be hosted on Monday, September 25. The location and time will be sent out at a later date.

#### **Kaleb Corcoran, Speaker of the Representatives**

- Melissa Dempsey in the Student Life and Development office wanted Kaleb to inform RSOs that they need to renew their organizations with CSU Involve. The deadline has been extended to tomorrow. If anyone is not sure if their organization has been renewed, speak with Kaleb after forum.
- It is mandatory that all representatives join a committee. If students don't sign up for a committee, they will be assigned to one.
- Under the current constitution, one person cannot represent more than one organization. Talk to Kaleb if you have not resolved the issue.

#### **Logan Ragan, President**

- Logan introduces President Markwood. President Markwood will share his future plans for CSU and answer any questions from students.

#### **President Markwood**

- He encourages CSU students to welcome Armstrong University students and encourage them to engage with any activities on or off campus.

- He strongly encourages students to participate in the third WinterFest. Over 4,500 people from the community came out to the event last year. He explains the bigger purpose behind WinterFest: in Columbus, the high school to college going rate is not as high as it should be. WinterFest is one opportunity to get kids comfortable on a college campus and potentially envision themselves attending college.
  - WinterFest is the first Tuesday after Thanksgiving, November 28.
- One of the issues that was presented to him when he got here was the budget and how the budget is developed on campus, where the money comes from, and where it is distributed. There will be a new process to the budget development process at CSU and he encourages students to participate. Similar to town halls, there will be a public budget hearing once everything is ready and everyone will get a chance to know where the money comes from and any increases that are being considered and any other information.
  - The date for the budget hearing has not been set yet.
- The new strategic plan for the university is being finalized. Dr. Sheeks and Dr. Tina Butcher have been leading this effort over and will be attending an upcoming forum to give more information about it. The plan is focused on becoming a student-centered campus and doing things based on how they will benefit students and taking into account how students are impacted. The goal is to launch it in January, with 2018 being the 60th anniversary of CSU.

#### **President Markwood Q&A**

- A student brings up an issue with the soft and wet grass around Schuster and Clearview. He also mentions how the sprinklers often go off when it's raining, which adds to the problem, and wonders what can be done about it.
  - President Markwood has also noticed this around the Greek Center and will talk with Dr. Helton about the sprinkling schedule. He talks about possible solutions being raising the sidewalks or putting in an underground French drain, which is expensive.
- A student brings up an issue with the shuttles and how they tend to skip scheduled stops and wants to know if the drivers get any type of official training.
  - President Markwood says this is the first time he has heard of this issue and asks if other students have had this problem. He assures the student that drivers do go through a training.
- Jasmine Navarro wonders what can be done to make the transportation schedule more consistent or if more shuttles can be added. She also mentions the complaints students have sent in to SGA when they have had to wait for the shuttle for long periods of time in the rain.
  - President Markwood says this is not the first time he has heard about this complaint and will talk to the director of transportation. Related to the issue of students having to wait in rain, he talks about the suggestion of adding more bus shelters around the bus stops. He explains that not all of the stops are ours, some are the city's, and it can get problematic since it's city's property, but they

will look into adding shelters at CSU stops and begin talking with the city to see what they can do.

- A student asks whether or not the shuttle could possibly pick up students from their apartments.
  - President Markwood says there are competing philosophies with this, as there are empty dorms and they want students to live on campus. Providing transportation to other apartments competes with this purpose. He says he has raised this question himself, but they will re-discuss it.
- A student would like to know if any stops on the shuttle route can be dropped.
  - He says they can check. The transportation does keep a check of how many pickups and drop offs are at each stop. He talks about the stop that was added at Piggly Wiggly so students were able to get groceries. With active monitoring of the stops and how effective they are, they can raise that question.
- A student says college students can typically ride public transportation with their student ID and asks whether there is a way of finding out if Columbus would think about doing the same.
  - He says the last time he asked that question, there didn't seem to be interest in the public transportation of negotiating an affordable price for CSU. He adds that college towns he has been in where there were similar arrangements, the university paid to allow students on it because they can't run anything for free. He says they can raise the question again because he thinks it makes sense that students can get all around town instead of just main campus and RiverPark campus.
- Kaleb Corcoran asks what's being done in regards to the school's retention rates.
  - President Markwood says the first year to second year retention rates have increased. They aren't as high as they want them to be and probably will never be, but they will continue to work on getting better. He says the school's first year to second year retention rate has gone from the low 62-ish, 63-ish to 75%, according to an estimated report he received today, a significant increase over the last four or five years. He says this is because of the program the school has put in place: more intrusive advising, program maps that lay out every undergraduate program and the courses needed to graduate, an early alert system from a company called the Education Advisory Board that allows faculty to submit a red flag to a counselor or advisor when students stop attending, have a string of low grades, and there is any concern a student isn't progressing like they need to. This lets an advisor or someone at ACE contact the student to see what is going on and hopefully help with retention.
  - Graduation rates are inching up, though they are still in the 30s, for a six year graduation rate and this includes students that transfer somewhere else, which counts as a loss for CSU.
- Z'Taria Frazier says she has had students complain about music in the cafe and asks if that is something that can be adjusted.
  - President Markwood says they can ask the question. He eats in the cafe frequently and notices that they do change the genre everyday. He says not

everyone will like or be happy with the music all of the time and says they can learn to enjoy different kinds of music.

- A student states that, from her experience, sometimes there's an overflow of students in the cafeteria during Discovery Days, which can be a problem because some people are unable to eat in the cafeteria, and wants to know if the school can expand it so people can enjoy the campus and eat in the cafeteria.
  - President Markwood says the remodel and slight expansion of the cafeteria was just finished. He says they will look at the numbers and see if they can find alternative things they can do to make people feel welcome and enjoy the campus.
- A student asks why students are getting charged for the parking deck and parking decal, especially if they don't use the parking deck and don't get charged to park anywhere else on campus.
  - Logan Ragan mentions that this was brought up in the executive committee meeting on Tuesday, where they talked about how students essentially have to pay to park twice, once for parking and once for spots just in the parking deck, and was going to ask President Markwood what could be done about that and if they could look into it.
    - President Markwood says that some years ago the parking deck fee referendum happened and asks Dr. Sheeks how many years ago it was. She believes 12 or 15 years and he explains that 12 or 15 years ago students asked for a parking deck and the way it came to be built: the school took out a loan on the revenue that would be generated by charging the fee to students for that debt. This commitment was made many years ago to pay for the facility. It doesn't pay for parking lots, parking enforcement, parking safety, or the rest of the lot. He says it is a debt fee that just pays the debt. He separates the facility from the charge.
- A student asks if they knew when the debt will be paid off.
  - He says they can get students the information and believes Dr. Helton would probably know it.
- A student asks about why CSU only offers a two-year engineering program.
  - President Markwood had a meeting with the chancellor yesterday and they raised this question. He says that engineering programs are among a group of programs that are extremely political in a variety of states and that in his previous state, it was difficult for them to break into engineering. He adds that CSU had not been looked at for a four-year engineering program in the past. After hearing from the community, he asked the system leaders what it would take for CSU to have a software engineering program and they advised him not to call it engineering. Since that time, the Columbus Chamber of Commerce business and industry leaders came together to see where they want Columbus to be in 2025 and created a plan to move Columbus economically forward. One thing they did was bring in a consultant to make a study, which showed two areas, among a handful of others, where there is a lack of educated workforce: software engineering and aerospace engineering. The city asked him what he could do

about it and he said he did not think he could do much but raise the issue and they eventually went to Auburn to see what they could offer and if they could partner with Auburn. In his conversation with the chancellor, he shared about Columbus 2020 and 2025 and workforce needs for this community. If the community couldn't get what they needed from Columbus State and went to Auburn instead, that is an obvious loss for the community and he says they got the door for engineering at CSU cracked open a little. They will talk to the community and find out exactly what they need and begin those conversations and come back to it. They will see if they can't work something out, see if they can get that program need met here, whether it's CSU offering programs of their own or partnering with Georgia Southern or University of Georgia to offer some programs here. He doesn't know what that might look like, but getting the door open is a positive step in a complicated issue.

### **Logan Ragan, President**

- He says the USG and Board of Regents can be political and the alumni essentially control the power of USG. If students create more concern and show things to the USG, they will listen to more of students' word because they are here to serve the students.
- He says that resolutions, like the one for the bus coverings, have power, but we need to know the student body's concerns and hear their voice.
- The next forum is in two weeks, and Chief Lott will be speaking about campus safety.
- If a student has suggestions about speakers they would like to see at forum, email Logan at [sgapresident@columbusstate.edu](mailto:sgapresident@columbusstate.edu)
- After a motion and a second, the meeting is adjourned at 1:20pm.