



Memorial Student Union, Room 201 • 50 Lower College Road • Kingston, Rhode Island 02881 • T: 401.874.2261 • E: info@rhodysenate.org

URI STUDENT SENATE – GENERAL ASSEMBLY MINUTES October 20, 2021

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Beazley, Blake, Bose, Del Bonis, Eustis, Gamache, Gibson, Goswami, Harnett, O. Johnson, Kiernan, Kittle, Peckham, Scotti, Shindler, Siegle, Summerson, Tyson, Williams

Absent: Alryati (Excused), Asante, Breene, Cahdronet (Excused), Fielder (Excused), N. Johnson, Palmer, Thiel, Turano

Guests: Director Hoover, Vice President Rider

C. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Shindler motions to move special orders to after public forum, Seconded by Chair Siegle
Motion passes

Senator Gibson motioned to approve the agenda, Seconded by Chair Shindler
Motion passes

D. READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Chair Shindler motioned to approve the minutes, Seconded by Senator Blake
Motion passes

E. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Speaker Bove announced that Vice President Ramsay was away, as well as Director Stiles. He also announced that elections have been postponed indefinitely.

F. PUBLIC FORUM

Vice President Abigail Rider

VP Rider gave a presentation about parking:

Parking Availability

Explained how many commuter, resident and faculty/staff parking spots are available on campus.

First three weeks of the semester:

Everyone comes to campus until they settle in to their schedule for the semester

Checking every commuter lot at peak times daily

Plains Road Lot never filled up-- 80% full was the peak

Fine Arts North

Post parking officers at the entrance to the lot to tell when the lot is full

Aspire to put signs at the entrance that say "lot full"

Currently more people would like to park there than fit--wetlands that are east of the parking lot are on wetlands and cannot be built on

Very important that students plan ahead

Do not have any room to create more parking availability on the top of campus

Fine Arts Lot

A traffic engineering consultant for traffic engineering provided the parking/traffic design plan for this lot

(More bullets on the slide)

Plains Road South

415 spaces

Parking covered with solar panels

Panels are expected to generate 1,725,000 kWh in year one

Provides capacity when

The Christ the King lot (176 spaces) is unavailable

Large events are held on campus while class is in session (ex. 2020 Commencement held in October 2021)

Overall enrollment increase

When we are able to build more University housing

Shuttle Service

Run from 7:30am to 8:00pm Monday through Friday

Four (?) shuttles that go around campus

Should not have to wait more than 8 to 10 minutes for a shuttle

Tracker available online

RIPTA

The University currently subsidizes 50% of RIPTA bus fare

In RY2021, this represented a subsidy of \$168K (April & May were basically 0 due to Covid)

Tickets/passes on sale at MU

Student Senate and Student Affairs have generously donated \$10,000 to provide completely free bus passes

RIPTA plans to migrate URI from paper product to the WAVE smart card or mobile app

When this is launched, the 10k could be used to issue a credit to students' WAVE card/app using a lottery controlled by the Student Senate

Coming soon: Rhody Rides

In final testing for our On Demand service, Rhode Rides.

URI single sign on has been integrated with the TransLoc On-Demand app.

Students will be able to go to the TransLoc app (same one that tracks our shuttle), create and account, and log in to request a ride

We initially expect to launch this service during....(remaining information on slide)

Traffic To and From Campus

We are currently studying the traffic coming to and from campus

At our request, SOT has been timing and adjusting the traffic lights at 138 Upper College Road and 138 and Route 110 (Plains Road)

In the afternoon, it may help to use Plains Road to Route 138 or Route 2, or Old North Road to Route 2 or 4, to leave campus rather than Upper College Road

VP Rider asked for suggestions of how to fix the issue of traffic bunching up at the top of campus

VP Rider said they cannot take the faulty parking spots out of FAC because they cannot "change working conditions without negotiating with the union."

They are taking a census each day, and over time they will have more data.

Questions:

Director Hoover said parking services has been aggressively ticketing. He asked if there is any way to know whether or not this style of ticketing will continue in the future.

VP Rider said tickets depend on the violation. She suggested issuing warnings to students, particularly new students who may not necessarily know where they should park. She suggested making "parking hacks" videos so people can start thinking about parking prior to the start of the academic year.

Director Hoover asked why the Plains Lot was only 80% full at its peak.

Director Hoover said he did not agree with the amount of freshmen who have cars on campus. He asked if that was due to COVID or if it was something new.

VP Rider said her office does not make those decisions--Student Affairs does. She said she doesn't know all the reasons freshmen would have cars. She suggested talking to Vice President Collins or Dean Graney.

The existing policy is that freshmen students are allowed to have cars on campus if they have a valid reason to do so.

Chair Shindler asked if Rhody Rides is a free service. VP Rider said yes.

Senator Bose asked about the "full" sign in front of the FAC lot. He suggested adding parking features onto the Rhody Connect app.

VP Rider said they're looking into using Rhody Connect to post when lots are full, especially at the beginning of the year.

Senator O. Johnson said the parking in fraternity circle is a nightmare. VP Rider said she was unaware, but she is going to mention that to the enforcement people.

Senator Beasley asked if there are efforts to create more housing on campus to prevent the parking and traffic issues.

VP Rider said yes. They are currently doing a study to look at housing demands. She said they are looking at what the whole housing market is in order to decide if they should build on campus or an appropriate style of apartments nearby. She said there are faculty and staff housing issues as well--she said there's a housing shortage they are actively trying to address.

Speaker Bove asked if there is going to be a u-pass program in the future because the senate cannot afford to pay for it every year.

VP Rider said she didn't know because they are waiting for RIPTA to change their system in order to begin negotiations. She said she is hopeful to get that in place but she does not know when.

She also said RIPTA is putting a bus hub on campus on Plains Road. RIPTA is reconfiguring their bus lines to follow existing traffic patterns. They got a \$10 million federal grant to make it happen.

Speaker Bove asked if a program could be launched to distribute free passes at the bookstore. VP Rider said maybe.

J. SPECIAL ORDERS

Senator Aidala Expulsion Appeal

Senator Aidala's written appeal:

To Chris and the rest of the senate,

In case you don't know me, my name is Vincent Aidala, but most people call me Vin. I'm writing this in order to appeal my position as a student senator. My position needs to be appealed because I have missed too many general assembly meetings. This is because I have a class that meets once a week on Wednesdays from 6-8:45pm. I thought I was excused from general assemblies due to this class but there was a misunderstanding. I wish I could attend the meetings and if I did not have this class, I would. I hope you can all see from my perspective and reinstate me back into my position. Thank you for listening to me and your time.

Sincerely,

Vincent Aidala

Discussion:

Chair Shindler said she is Senator Aidala's committee chair. She said he is active in the committee and does his part, and she thinks he should not be removed from the senate. She said he wants to make a change and be there for the student body, which is exemplified in committee meetings. She said the class that he is in does not have any other time slots, so there is no way he could have scheduled his class at another time.

Chair Kiernan said she agreed with Chair Shindler. She said Chair Shindler has told her of Senator Aidala's commitment to the Academic Committee, and she does not think he should be penalized for taking an important class for this major that is going to benefit him and his academic career. She said that while senate is important, academics needs to be put first.

Senator Eustis agreed with both Chair Shindler and Chair Kiernan. He said Senator Aidala is a friend of his and knows he is a hard-worker.

Senator Gibson said the policy makes sense and if there is someone else who wants a position, however if there is no one else that needs Senator Aidala's position then he should not be removed. She said it should be taken into consideration that we need voting members present to meet quorum.

Senator Bose said that we need to be careful to not make exceptions to rules all the time.

Chair Shindler said that Senator Aidala is the engineering representative and the class he goes to during the time of General Assembly is required for his major.

Senator Kittel said that from his own experience he knows there are points where there are no other options for class times. He said academics are a priority.

Senator Gibson said there are other positions open, so if there are other students who want the engineering representative spots perhaps Senator Aidala should take another position.

Senator Bose said there should be an amendment to the rule.

Speaker Bove said that when you run for a senate seat, you are expected to uphold the responsibilities of the senate, which includes attending General Assembly meetings. He cautions against changing the rules so we don't end up in a situation where we don't have quorum.

Chair Kiernan said most of the work in senate is not done at General Assembly meetings. She said if he is going office hours and being active in his committee then he should be able to continue doing that.

Senator Summerson yielded time to Director Hoover, who said that it is important to do well in academics and there is a lot of work that goes on outside of a meeting. He said you can still do your job as a senator without coming to General Assembly. He suggested creating an exception to the absence rule for classes.

Chair Siegle asked what happens with this appeal. Speaker Bove said we vote whether or not to keep Senator Aidala in the senate. She motioned to call the appeal to question. Seconded by Chair Kiernan. The motion to vote immediately passes.

G. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

- Student Organization Committee

Chair Siegle gave no report

- Academic Affairs Committee

Senator Blake gave no report.

- External Affairs Committee

Chair Kiernan said to please try not to get a sticker on your house, since many houses have been stickered lately.

- Cultural Affairs Committee

Senator Gibson reported that this Friday from 8-10 is the Paint a Pumpkin event for breast cancer awareness. Must sign up on the URI Events page.

International students should contact Chair Tyson.

- Campus Affairs Committee

Chair Kiernan reported that Chair Gamache thanks everyone who attended the Blue Light Walk. Aunt Flow products are going to be put in the Women's Center. There are going to be new transportation routes for busses. She is meeting with Kathy Collins about the health services department.

- Executive Committee

Director Hoover reported that he and Cheryl are hosting a senate finance training required for charis and exec. He said that if you want to know more about finances to let him know, and that the treasury committee is always recruiting.

Senator Gibson asked if the training was multiple days. Director Hoover said it would be like 30 minutes long.

No other executive reports

H. REPORT OF THE COURT

I. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Elections Committee:

Speaker Bove reported that elections are postponed until further notice.

K. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

L. NEW BUSINESS

SS-21/22-11 – BILL CALLING FOR THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF “NATIONAL SOCIETY OF COLLEGIATE SCHOLARS” AS A SENATE-RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATION

Whereas, the “National Society of Collegiate Scholars” mission statement is “to recognize and elevate high-achieving students by providing career connections, graduate school connections, leadership opportunities, and service opportunities.”, and

Whereas, National Society of Collegiate Scholars meets the requirements to be a senate-recognized student organization, and

Whereas, it is custom for the senate to do so, now therefore be it,

Resolved, that the University of Rhode Island Student Senate acknowledges National Society of Collegiate Scholars as a recognized organization, and be it further,

Resolved, that National Society of Collegiate Scholars is provided with the first-year financial benefits package of \$100 which is to be paid out over the course of the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

SPONSOR: Student Organizations Committee

BILL HANDLER: Chairwoman Siegle

DATE: October 20, 2021

RECOMMENDATION: (4-0-1)

EXPIRATION: Valid Until Next Re-Recognition
ACTION: Vote Next Week

Chair Siegle motioned to immediately consider the bill. Seconded by Senator Gibson

Motion Passes

Bill Passes

SS-21/22-12 – BILL CALLING FOR THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF “GEOLOGY CLUB” AS A SENATE-RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATION

Whereas, the “Geology Club” mission statement is “to provide URI students with fun and interactive ways to learn geology, including weekend excursions to natural history museums, hiking trips, paint nights, planetarium nights, plant terrarium nights, movie nights, study nights, and so much more. We also have volunteering opportunities, such as beach clean ups and educational events for local scout troops. In addition, students will be able to interact with and get to know the URI Geosciences department. This club is not major specific and very inclusive, everyone is welcome!”, and

Whereas, Geology Club meets the requirements to be a senate-recognized student organization, and

Whereas, it is custom for the senate to do so, now therefore be it,

Resolved, that the University of Rhode Island Student Senate acknowledges Geology Club as a recognized organization, and be it further,

Resolved, that Geology Club is provided with the first-year financial benefits package of \$100 which is to be paid out over the course of the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

SPONSOR: Student Organizations Committee
BILL HANDLER: Chairwoman Siegle
DATE: October 20, 2021
RECOMMENDATION: (5-0-0)
EXPIRATION: Valid Until Next Re-Recognition
ACTION: Vote Next Week

Chair Siegle motioned to immediately consider the bill. Seconded by Senator Gibson.

Motion Passes

Bill Passes

SS-21/22-13 – BILL CALLING FOR THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF “iGNiTE @ URI” AS A SENATE-RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATION

Whereas, the “iGNiTE @ URI” mission statement is to “inspire and encourage womxn of all political affiliations to come together to learn about one and others view points and build skills, knowledge and networks needed to be

successful citizens, collaborators and office-elects post graduation. iGNiTE is a movement of young women who are ready and eager to become the next generation of political leaders. Our goals are as follows: To increase the political and civic engagement and leadership of women on college campuses across the country, to provide college/university women with a network of like-minded, ambitious women leaders, to help young women position themselves for actual bids for candidacy, to build the next generation of women political leaders.”, and

Whereas, iGNiTE @ URI meets the requirements to be a senate-recognized student organization, and

Whereas, it is custom for the senate to do so, now therefore be it

Resolved, that the University of Rhode Island Student Senate acknowledges iGNiTE @ URI as a recognized organization, and be it further,

Resolved, that iGNiTE @ URI is provided with the first-year financial benefits package of \$100 which is to be paid out over the course of the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

SPONSOR: Student Organizations Committee

BILL HANDLER: Chairwoman Siegle

DATE: October 20, 2021

RECOMMENDATION: (4-0-0)

EXPIRATION: Valid Until Next Re-Recognition

ACTION: Vote Next Week

Chair Siegle motioned to immediately consider the bill. Seconded by Senator Gibson

Motion Passes

Bill Passes

M. GENERAL DISCUSSION AND OPEN FORUM

N. ADJOURNMENT

Gamache, Palmer, and Tyson left Early (Excused)

Adjournment: 7:45pm