



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 March 9, 2022

**A. CALL TO ORDER** - Speaker Bove called the meeting to order at 6:32pm.

### **B. ROLL CALL -**

Present: Alryati, Asante, Beazley, Blake, Bose, Bove, Breene, Chadronet, Cushman, Del Bonis, Eustis, Gamache, Gibbs, Gibson, Goswami, James, Johnson N, Johnson O, Kiernan, Montoya, Murray, Palmer, Peckham, Rizk, Scotti, Shindler, Siegle, Thiel, Tyson.

Absent: Aidala, Buono, Collins, Kittel (Excused), Rider, Williams (Excused).

Guests: Hoover, Stiles, Reynolds.

**C. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA** - Chair Shindler motioned to approve the agenda. Seconded by Chair Kiernan.

**D. READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES** - Chair Shindler motioned to approve the minutes. Seconded by Senator Peckham.

### **E. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Speaker Bove reminded senators to purchase their formal tickets.

Speaker Bove wished Senator Peckham a Happy Birthday.

Director Hoover asked senators to respond to his poll in the GroupMe chat.

### **F. PUBLIC FORUM**

Vice President Ellen Reynolds, Interim Vice President of Student Affairs, Director of URI Health Services.

- Vice President Reynolds gave an update on the national search for a new VP of Student Affairs. She thanked the senate for their advocacy around masking.
- Speaker Bove asked VP Reynolds why masking remains in classrooms despite the relaxation in all other campus locations.
- VP Reynolds said that there are many students who still feel uncomfortable with removing masks and that the University is trying to respect the diversity of opinions on this issue. Masking in classes will be revisited after spring break.
- Director Hoover thanked VP Reynolds for consistent communication with the senate. He raised the issue of inconsistent enforcement of masking in classrooms with some professors allowing students to go maskless.

- Senator Montoya asked why the university couldn't wait one more week to make changes to the mask policy in order to keep cases down ahead of spring break?
- Senator Del Bonis expressed her concerns that students have not been complying with the mask mandate remaining in effect on university shuttles. She asked how students can report non compliance to the university,
- VP Reynolds said there is an anonymous reporting page on the Dean of Students Office.
- Update on RIPTA relating to Bill SS-21/22-04
- VP Reynolds reminded the senate of the existing 50% subsidy on bus passes in the bookstore and shared that she is working with Speaker Bove to implement the free pilot program.
- Director Hoover expressed concern about the sustainability of the program and stated that the senate cannot permanently fund the program.
- Speaker Bove stated that this is a one time expenditure.
- Housing Update
- VP Reynolds informed the senate of the process for returning students to request housing.
- She stated that voluntary tripling will be allowed by HRL.
- She shared that there are 5,400 total spaces available for housing assignments, and they expect 3,200 of those spaces to go to first year students, with the remaining amount going to returning students.
- Speaker Bove expressed his gratitude to HRL for following the senate's recommendation exactly how it was written.
- Dining Update
- VP Reynolds stated that there will be three dining plans available for purchase next year for campus residents, and that the university is eliminating "GrabNGos" to return to a dining dollar system.
- Speaker Bove expressed his frustration with Dining Services on this issue. He said that the switch to dining dollars devalues dining plans and over complicates things. He further stated that it was unacceptable for Dining Services to make these changes without consulting the Student Senate/
- VP Reynolds stated she would share that feedback with Dining Services.
- Director Hoover asked why unused GrabNGos don't roll over between semesters.
- Speaker Bove stated that 2022-2023 dining plans are the most expensive he's ever seen while offering the least value.
- VP Reynolds said that she would ask Director St. Germaine to speak with the senate about these concerns
- Senator James asked if changes to the dining plan were made with the current economic climate for students in mind.
- VP Reynolds stated that the economic climate is always considered.
- Further Updates.

- VP Reynolds gave a report on the progress of the construction of a new Student Health Center, and renovations to the Memorial Union.

## **G. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

### **- Student Organization Committee**

Chair Siegle reported that SOC has completed stipend review and re-recognition and thanked her committee members for their outstanding hard work.

She further reported that the re-recognition bill will be coming to the floor on March 23rd along with recognition bills for four new clubs.

### **- Academic Affairs Committee**

Chair Shindler stated that she expects to receive a significant amount of academic complaints relating to midterms and reminded people to submit complaints in advance and not the day before an exam.

### **- External Affairs Committee**

Chair Kiernan stated that once Senate Assassins gets down to 10 people it will be a free for all.

### **- Cultural Affairs Committee**

Chair Tyson announced that Cookie For a Cause will be held on March 22nd from 9:30am - 12:30pm and March 23rd from 10:00am - 1:00pm. The committee will be selling baked goods donated by local bakeries. Sales are cash only.

She also reported that the Cultural Committee will be offering narcan training with community first responders March 31st from 6:00pm -7:00pm in Kirk Auditorium. Students will get a free certification and will receive free narcan.

### **- Campus Affairs Committee**

Chair Gamache reported that the Bluelight Walk will be held on March 24th at 6:00pm.

She also reported that an Aunt Flow booth the week after spring break.

### **- Executive Committee**

Director Hoover reported that the FY23 Budget will be finalized by Friday at 5:00pm.

Director Njeru reported that his transition into the cabinet has gone well.

## **H. REPORT OF THE COURT**

## **I. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

## **J. SPECIAL ORDERS**

## **K. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

## **L. NEW BUSINESS**

### **SS-21/22-36 – BILL CALLING FOR THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF “KOREAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION (KSA)” AS A SENATE-RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATION**

Whereas, the “Korean Student Association (KSA)” mission statement is “to promote Korean culture on campus and in the community. It is a great place to make lasting friendships, destress, and connect with Korean cultural heritage.” and

Whereas, Korean Student Association (KSA) 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 Korean Student Association (KSA) as a recognized organization, and be it further,

Resolved, that the Korean Student Association (KSA) 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: March 9, 2022

RECOMMENDATION: (5-0-0)

EXPIRATION: Valid Until Next Re-Recognition

ACTION: Vote Next Week

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

*Motion Passes.*

*Bill Passes.*

#### **M. GENERAL DISCUSSION AND OPEN FORUM**

Dr. Stiles reminded senators to be safe during spring break and to use this time for selfcare.

**N. ADJOURNMENT** - Speaker Bove adjourned the meeting at 7:21pm.