



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 November 30, 2022

A. CALL TO ORDER - Speaker Bove called to order at 6:35pm.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Bailey, Barbosa, Bose, Bove, Breene, Buono, Chadronet, Collins, Confessore, Cronan, Del Bonis, Galliano, Gibson, Goswami, Johnson N, Johnson V, Mehorter, Mayers, Milner, Montoya, Palmer, Peckham, Perrone, Piacentini, Rathbun, Reyes, Rudolph, Scotti, Stahl, Summerson, Tyson.

Absent: Breese, Broccoli, Hernandez, James (excused), Oyedele, Sutton, Waryas.

Guests: Kiernen, Gamache, Hoover, Campbell, Uhuru Sasa.

C. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Summerson motioned to approve the agenda. Seconded by Senator Buono

Motion Passes.

D. READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Senator Breene motioned to approve the minutes. Seconded by Senator Peckham.

Motion Passes.

E. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Speaker Bove recognized and thanked several senators for their outstanding hard work over the last week. He recognized Senator Bailey for her work and performance in last night's dance show, and he recognized Senator Peckham for her newly amended attendance resolution and remarked that Vice President Reynold's said it was one of the most well written resolutions she had ever seen. Finally, he recognized Chair Chadronet for his campus cleanup yesterday.

Chair Tyson recognized Senator Del Bonis for her narcan training on Monday.

Speaker Bove declared the Senate in recess from 6:40pm - 7:05pm due to technical difficulties with the Senate's projector.

F. PUBLIC FORUM

Members of Uhuru Sasa gave an impassioned presentation requesting that the Senate overturn the cabinet's decision in regards to their annual fashion show, and allow them to hold the event this academic year. They disputed several points in the Memorial Union Building Manager's report detailing the incidents of the April 30, 2022 fashion show. They concluded by expressing their feelings that the Senate, as the student body's representatives, has a greater responsibility to protect the rights and interests of student organizations over those of the Memorial Union and its staff.

G. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

- Student Organization Committee

Chair Gibson reported that her committee has two recognition bills on the floor tonight. She also encouraged everyone to take a moment and breathe.

- Academic Affairs Committee

Chair Summerson reported that there is a final exam rights flier on the committee's instagram. She asked senators to repost it, share it with their friends, and overall help spread the word. She also commended Senator Peckham for her work on the new attendance resolution and encouraged all senators to support it.

- External Affairs Committee

Chair Scotti stated that he hopes everyone had a nice Thanksgiving.

- Cultural Affairs Committee

Chair Tyson recognized Senator Breene for his work on the Hillel fashion show, Senator Del Bonis for putting together this week's narcan training, Senator Bailey for putting together last night's dance show, and Senator Goswami for her performance in the show. Additionally she asked that all correspondence between the Senate and Uhuru Sasa be shared with the entire General Assembly.

- Campus Affairs Committee

Chair Chadronet reported that at yesterday's campus cleanup event volunteers pulled over 40 bottles outside of the pond. He also reported that he has reached out to Director Joe Paradise to discuss snow removal, and also that he is requesting a one on one meeting with Director St-Germain to discuss next year's dining plans.

- Executive Committee

President Kiernan commended everyone for how they conducted themselves during the Uhuru Sasa presentation. She stated that the cabinet would be meeting to discuss this issue, and gave her assurance that all correspondence with Uhuru Sasa will be shared. She also apologized to the Senate for not bringing forward this issue earlier in the semester. She reported that she recently met with the Narragansett 2100 about getting more student-friendly people on the Town Council. She further reported that she wants to work with the Senate to form a risk plan to help make sure that students are making better choices when partying. She concluded by commending the Cultural Affairs Committee on all of their hard work on the events they have been throwing.

Vice President Gamache echoed President Kiernan's remarks and encouraged anyone needing support to come and speak to her.

H. REPORT OF THE COURT

I. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

J. SPECIAL ORDERS

Nominations and Elections for At Large Representative (1)

Senator Stahl nominated Rebecca Sama. Seconded by Senator Palmer.

Total Votes: Sama: 28 Abstentions: 0

Nominations and Elections for Off Campus Representative (1)

Nominations and Elections for College of Nursing Representative (1)

Nominations and Elections for College of Health Sciences Representative (1)

Nominations for the Elections Committee (5)

Chair Chadronet nominated Speaker Bove. Seconded by Chair Gibson.

Senator Palmer nominated Senator Stahl. Seconded by Chair Tyson.

Chair Summerson nominated herself. Seconded by Chair Tyson.

Chair Summerson nominated President Kiernan. Seconded by Chair Tyson.

Senator Montoya nominated himself. Seconded by Chair Tyson.

K. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

L. NEW BUSINESS

SS-22/23-31 – BILL CALLING FOR THE IMPOSITION OF A FINE ON UHURU SASA FOR THE EVENTS THAT OCCURED AT THEIR 2022 SPRING FASHION SHOW EVENT

Whereas, the Student Senate recognized organization, Uhuru Sasa, held their annual Fashion Show event on April 30th, 2022, and

Whereas, the events that occurred during the Uhuru Sasa Fashion Show violated multiple event agreements, garnered police involvement, violated contractual agreements, caused damages to the Memorial Union, and disrespected numerous Memorial Union Faculty and Staff, and

Whereas, on November 16, 2022, Director Hoover ordered the Student Senate Accounts Office to impose a fine on Uhuru Sasa in the amount of \$6,410 which is to be paid out of their programming budget, and

Whereas, the intent of this action was to allow the Student Senate to reclaim funds which were originally allocated to cover the costs of Uhuru Sasa's planned 2023 fashion show, as the Student Senate Cabinet believes the appropriate response to the incidents which took place on April 30, 2022 is to not allow the Uhuru Sasa to hold the fashion show for this current academic year, and

Whereas, Uhuru Sasa will be allowed to host all other of their regularly held events with the exception of the fashion show, and

Whereas, assuming that all other Uhuru Sasa events are held without incident for the remainder of this academic year, the suspension on the fashion show will be lifted for the 2023 - 2024 academic year, and

Whereas, Article 3, Section 3, Part 1, Line 3.15 of the University of Rhode Island Student Senate Bylaws requires that the Vice Director of Treasury introduce legislation which must be approved by the General Assembly in order for any and all fines issued by the Director of Treasury to take effect, now therefore be it,

Resolved, that, in accordance with Article 3, Section 3, Part 1, Line 3.15 of the University of Rhode Island Student Senate Bylaws, the University of Rhode Island Student Senate General Assembly hereby approves and consents to the Director of Treasury's actions and orders that a fine in the amount of \$6,410 be imposed on Uhuru Sasa, which is to be paid from their programming budget for the 2022 - 2023 academic year.

SPONSORS: Treasury Committee
BILL HANDLER: VDOT Bose (Director Hoover)
DATE: November 30, 2022
RECOMMENDATION: (2 - 0 - 0)
EXPIRATION: Valid Until Next Budget
ACTION: Vote Next Week

SS-22/23-32 – BILL CALLING FOR THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF “Self Defense Club” AS A SENATE-RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATION

Whereas, the “Self Defense Club” mission statement is, “to offer a safe space for individuals who feel like they would benefit from the knowledge of how to defend themselves”, and

Whereas, the Self Defense 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 Self Defense Club as a recognized organization, and be it further,

Resolved, that Self Defense Club is provided with the first-year financial benefits package of \$75 which is to be paid out over the course of the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

SPONSOR: Student Organizations Committee
BILL HANDLER: Chairwoman Gibson
DATE: November 30, 2022
RECOMMENDATION: (9 - 0 - 0)
EXPIRATION: Valid Until Next Re-Recognition
ACTION: Vote Next Week

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

Motion Passes.

Bill Passes.

SS-22/23-33 – BILL CALLING FOR THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF “URI Triathlon Club” AS A SENATE-RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATION

Whereas, the “URI Triathlon Club” mission statement is, “to provide competitive and social opportunities for URI athletes of all abilities and interests to experience and enjoy triathlons and related multisport events. The Club seeks to provide knowledge, peer support, motivation, and connection for URI triathletes to encourage the development of life-long engagement in endurance sports”, and

Whereas, the URI Triathlon 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 URI Triathlon Club as a recognized organization, and be it further,

Resolved, that URI Triathlon Club is provided with the first-year financial benefits package of \$75 which is to be paid out over the course of the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

SPONSOR:	Student Organizations Committee
BILL HANDLER:	Chairwoman Gibson
DATE:	November 30, 2022
RECOMMENDATION:	(9 - 0 - 0)
EXPIRATION:	Valid Until Next Re-Recognition
ACTION:	Vote Next Week

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

Motion Passes.

Bill Passes.

SS-22/23-34 Resolution Calling for Faculty Senate Action to Address Student Attendance Policy at the University of Rhode Island

Whereas, while COVID-19 Pandemic restrictions have loosened, attendance policy at the University of Rhode has varied among a many offered courses, and

Whereas, taking precautions to prevent the spreading of infectious diseases is still necessary despite the reduction of COVID-19 infections, and for this reason there is still a discomfort amongst many students in regards to attending class when sick, and

Whereas, if a student is feeling unwell, going into a classroom setting puts other students at a heightened risk of

contracting infectious diseases or illnesses, and

Whereas, due to the variety of attendance policies it is sometimes difficult for students to have their absences excused when they are feeling sick or unwell, and

Whereas, creating a minimum attendance policy for unexcused absences creates fair and equitable treatment of all students in each classroom setting, and

Whereas, sick days are granted in a work-related environment without question, and

Whereas, not allowing students a degree of unexcused absences does not accurately prepare students for real-world experiences when the expectation for classroom attendance is detrimental to students' learning experiences and academic performance, and

Whereas, creating a tiered minimum unexcused absence policy will be beneficial for preparing students for the real world and acknowledging that students may experience outside conflicts or illnesses that may interfere with class attendance, and

Whereas, there have been several reported incidents of individual faculty members refusing to accept documentation from medical professionals stating that it is medically necessary for a student to miss class, now therefore be it,

Resolved, that the University of Rhode Island Student Senate formally requests that the Faculty Senate implement a tiered and universal attendance policy allowing for students to accrue between 4 – 6 absences for courses following a Monday/Wednesday/Friday meeting schedule, 3 – 5 absences for courses following a Tuesday/Thursday meeting schedule, and 2 – 3 absences for classes meeting once a week or less, be it excused or unexcused, before a grade penalty may be imposed, and be it further,

Resolved, that the University of Rhode Island Student Senate requests that the Faculty Senate take steps to prohibit individual faculty members from requesting medical documentation from students, unless the student in question will need to miss class for a prolonged period of time due to medical reasons, and be it further,

Resolved, that the University of Rhode Island Student Senate additionally requests that the Faculty Senate take steps to prohibit individual faculty members from rejecting medical excuses should a medical professional feel the need to excuse a student from a class owing to medical concerns, and be it further,

Resolved, that the University of Rhode Island Student Senate requests that this action be taken immediately, and be it further,

Resolved, that the passage of this legislation terminates and replaces Senate Resolution **SS-22/23-23**.

SPONSOR: Academic Affairs Committee

BILL HANDLER: Senator Peckham
DATE: November 30, 2022
RECOMMENDATION: (6 - 0 - 0)
EXPIRATION: Valid Until Reviewed
ACTION: Vote Tonight

Senator Peckham explained the intent of the resolution and encouraged all senators to support it.

Speaker Bove motioned to add the word "Island" to follow " University of Rhode" in the first whereas line. Seconded by Senator Peckham.

Motion Passes.

Senator N. Johnson asked if this bill will apply to professors who do not mandate attendance.

Chair Summerson explained that this resolution is meant to set a bare minimum standard for equitable attendance policies, and that it does not apply to professors who already have an attendance policy in place which is more generous than what is prescribed in the resolution.

Bill Passes.

M. GENERAL DISCUSSION AND OPEN FORUM

Chair Tyson asked when she can expect the Uhuru Sasa documents to be shared with the Assembly.

President Kiernan replied she expects them to be shared by Friday.

Senator Buono stressed the importance of hearing the merits of Uhuru Sasa's case, and stated that as a predominantly white group, the Senate has to take extra care to ensure they are not acting out of bias.

Senator Bailey stated that the Memorial Union staff were rude to her during yesterday's dance show.

Senator Goswami stated she'd like to see more information about this situation.

Speaker Bove stated that regardless of the case at hand, Uhuru Sasa's conduct during their presentation was unacceptable.

N. ADJOURNMENT - Speaker Bove adjourned the meeting at 8:38pm