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# SG Sixth General Session

*Tuesday, November 10, 2009*

12:20 pm – 1:10 pm | Room 320

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12:30 Session called to order, Vice President Katie Bruggeman presiding. [President Elette Fortune was attending Building Committee meeting as the 3L rep.]

## I APPROVAL OF PROPOSED AGENDA

- Motion to approve proposed agenda by 2L Member Becca Olson.
- Motion by [?] to move scheduling Emergency Session on new building issues (item #2 on proposed agenda) to the end of the Session. Motion was seconded by many and carried unanimously.

## II CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – PLENARY CONFIRMATION OF INTERIM APPOINTMENTS

- Interim appointments (1L Member Morgan Hollister, 3L Member Latoya Matthew, 3L Bronyn Heubach) by President Elette Fortune.
- Member Olson reported on the appointees' activities and contributions to date.
- Member Olson explained that the proposed confirmation by the SG General Body would make these appointees voting members of the Curriculum Committee for the remainder of the academic year.
- Member Olson moved to confirm SG Member appointees Matthew and Hollister as voting members of the Curriculum Committee for the remainder of the academic year. Motion was seconded by many.
  - o Vote: 10 aye (unanimous) in favor; Members Matthew and Hollister thereby confirmed, effective immediately.
- Member Olson moved to confirm appointee Bronyn Heubach as a voting member of the Curriculum Committee for the remainder of the academic year. Motion was seconded by many.
  - o Vote: 10 aye (unanimous) in favor; Bronyn Heubach thereby confirmed, effective immediately.
- 3L Member Alissa Hull commented that the SG should be careful about allowing faculty to choose the students who sit on external committees. The Members present agreed.

## III SG WEBSITE – MAKING OPERATIONAL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

- 3L Member Bright Limm explained that many content decisions have been made by the Communications Committee, but that lack of skilled website design and maintenance labor has kept the site from becoming operational. Limm stated that it is crucial to get the website up and running as soon as possible for three reasons: (1) so that students, and the school community as a whole, can see all the activity in which the SG has been and is currently engaged; (2) so that people can see what stage of action a particular matter is at (e.g., whether a particular external committee proposal is in committee or ready to be brought to and voted upon by the faculty at the next faculty meeting); and (3) information about new

building issues and other important school matters that do not fall neatly into pre-existing governance categories can be disseminated easily to the student body and the school at large. Limm stated that we needed to raise money to hire professional to put up content, at least at the outset, since reliance on volunteers and low bono folks had resulted in ongoing delay. He suggested that we try to raise several thousand dollars within the next week or two, which would give the professional enough incentive to put up all the content we currently have within a week or two.

- 3L ex-Member Dave Eisenstein was granted 2 minutes to speak. Eisenstein stated that there is info going around on the move and other issues not available to students, such as the recent news that Deans Burton and Gomez-Velez are going to return to teaching jobs. These memos don't go out to the students, the details don't get told to everyone; the website is a way to share this information so that students who wish to organize around particular issues can make informed decisions.
- Presiding officer Katie Bruggeman then opened up the floor for discussion.
- Some questions raised included:
  - o Login capability?
  - o Create related listserv to enable announcement messages?
  - o Editorialize or just share information?
  - o Permit anonymous posting?
- 2L Member Amanda Heikkinen returned the discussion to the subject matter of raising funds to operationalize the site. She asked how much money would we need.
- Member Limm stated that it's probably best to think in terms of market rate for web designers, and therefore \$2,000-3,000 would be a good target amount in order to get content up within a week or two after raising that money.
- [?] asked whether money currently in SG's account can be allocated to pay web designer. Limm replied that the Business Office only allows 10% deviation from approved budget for each line item without submitting new application to the LSA. For this year, several hundred dollars (perhaps about \$500) was allocated for website design and maintenance, so that money + 10% could be used for this purpose without procedural delay. Anything above that would have to come from fundraising.
- Olson suggested that the Budget & Finance Committee work with the Communication Committee to formulate plan and then submit to the General Body for approval. Limm responded by saying that while Olson's suggestion reflects the proper process, given the urgency of the situation he hoped that the body could develop and then commit to at least some plan before the end of this Session, and that subsequent/additional plans could be developed according to the process suggested by Olson.
- Presiding officer Bruggeman proposed two fundraising ideas: (1) providing food at night here like CAP did before; and (2) throwing party. She then opened up the floor for other suggestions.
- Member Hull stated that the best bang for your buck is straight-up personal donations. In particular, ask faculty members to donate in face-to-face meetings.

- Member Olson also suggested setting up table to solicit donations from people in the hallways. Gave example of playing a recorder like folks in NYC subways and having people drop money in a cup!
- The following SG Members volunteered to approach faculty and/or plan and perform outreach to students.
  - o Outreach to faculty:
    - 2L Member Amanda Heikkinen,
    - 3L Member Alissa Hull,
    - 3L Member Mike Leonard,
    - 2L Member Katie Bruggeman, and
    - 3L Member Bright Limm.
  - o Outreach to fellow students:
    - 2L Member Amy Hager,
    - 2L Member Amanda Heikkinen, and
    - 3L Member Mike Rivadeneyra.
- Each of the outreach groups will coordinate by email following this Session. Bruggeman will email SG Members of this plan so that we can solicit the absent Members for help.
- Body set an initial target amount of \$2,000 and a tentative deadline of Friday, November 20 for hitting that initial target.

#### IV TUITION HIKES, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- Member Limm spoke for five minutes on issue of tuition increases. Began by stating that throughout most of the semester so far we've focused a lot on establishing and practicing various procedures to help get us more organized, and that while he thinks this is very important and good, people may be feeling a bit discouraged or frustrated because we haven't really been addressing "substantive" issues yet. So today he wanted to make sure that at least one substantive issue was put on the table.
- For Limm, low tuition is the key to educational access for working people and the single most important and effective way to protect the mission of the school.
- CUNY was free until about 1975, in large part because students organized and fought in the late sixties and early seventies to keep CUNY tuition-free.
- Race, class, and gender issues are at the core of the fight to keep tuition low.
- The work we put into procedural matters will pay off as we see how these practices help us more effectively organize and mobilize around a substantive issue like tuition. With regard specifically to the tuition issue, we can do the most effective organizing through the USS, organizing ourselves to help the USS mobilize students CUNY-wide against tuition increases. CUNY Law students are savvy and skilled and can provide the expertise and activist energy needed to get this mobilization going. CUNY law students have the ability to shape these policy positions and we can use USS to craft policy positions and generate media coverage about tuition hikes.
- There are lots of other important substantive issues, all of which pertain to the mission of the school – e.g., the new building, the academic standing policy – but affordability is the most important.

- Let's bind ourselves to making all this procedural work worth it to mobilize and organize on these substantive issues.
- On the tuition issue, successful pressure on the Board of Trustees and state officials will consist of media campaign. USS has the resources and media contacts necessary to make this happen. Moreover, if our USS Delegate Andrew Lisko wins the position of Chairperson, we will be in an even better position to organize such campaigns.
- Day off on Election day?
- [?] added that CUNY Law should move towards being a resource and advocate for students CUNY-wide.

#### V ONLINE CALENDAR

- Presiding officer Bruggeman entertained motion to table. Member Limm moved to table; motion was seconded by many and approved unanimously.

#### VI TIME FOR AN ADDITIONAL SG SESSION ON NEW BUILDING ISSUES

- Purpose of the Session is for the SG to determine how to proceed as a body on the numerous issues pertaining to the move / new building. Such issues include how best to share information, whether to adopt by resolution positions on certain design and/or planning issues, and to set organizing priorities.
- 3L Member Mike Leonard volunteered to create Doodle page to schedule date and time for Emergency Session. Member Limm moved to permit Leonard to select proposed dates and times at the latter's discretion. Motion was seconded by many and carried.

1:10 Session adjourned.