

**STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
FIRST MEETING
AUGUST 24, 2008
7:00 PM - OFFICE OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA – TV STUDIO.**

I. Roll Call

Present: President A. Rook, Vice President B. Guiliano, Secretary Y. Beamon, Sgt. at Arms L. Nettles, Treasurer C. Olivier, Senator D. Felix, Senator M. Van Vossen, Senator B. Tate

Absent: BOT D. McFarland

Audience Members: Cynthia Thompson, Dr. Marcellus Leonard, Steven Black.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

- Pledge of Allegiance taken by all SGA committee members.

III. Approval of Agenda

- Agenda for today's meeting was approved.

IV. Administrative Reports

- Cynthia Thompson: Welcomed the SGA to a great new semester. Hoped everyone had a great summer and are ready to work. There are a lot of Student Life events going on including Welcome Week, encouraged all to check out the schedule and participate. Very excited about the direction of SGA. Has been talking to Ashley about wonderful new initiatives. Very excited to see SGA get started and active again. Feel free as always to stop by her office, she is here to help and she will help you wherever she can.

V. Office Reports

- President – A. Rook:

Welcomed all back and excited to work with each one of you. Believes that there is a good year planned. Please contact her about the Involvement Expo this Wednesday, August 26, 2008 3-6pm. Some have already volunteered to work it and if anyone else has a change in their schedule and would like to help out that would be really great. Recently trained in Contribute so most of the new information is up on the website. Election, meeting dates, new Senators and members added so you have not sent in your information and picture please do so soon so that it can be put up right away. Plan to post new bios for Senators and members after this meeting so everything on the website should be current.

- Vice President – B. Guiliano
Brandon welcomed every one back as well. To those that are returning, he looks forward to a new year and to the new student he then congratulated on being elected to the position. Pointed out that we are going to work and have a little fun as well. The important part is that the student body is served. Finally he looks forward to the coming year.
- Secretary- Y. Beamon
Welcomed everyone and encouraged everyone to get involved in other openings of offices that are going on through out campus. The Diversity Center's Grand Opening is on Tuesday, August 27, 2008 12-2pm. Then the First Year Student Programs is new on campus as well. Finally, encouraged everyone to really get involved with the new offices on campus.
- Treasurer- C. Olivier
Also welcomed everyone and is ready to work. Pointed out that Brandon and Yolanda pretty much covered everything that he wanted to say. Thanked them both.
- Sergeant at Arms- L. Nettles
Welcomed everyone and is really excited about this year. Thinks that we have a really good executive board and awesome Senators and is excited to work with everyone. Encouraged all to get involved. Pointed out that the previous SGA discussed a lot about the Center for First Year Programs. Dr. Leonard wants it to be a "one stop shop" for students to come one place and get direction and feedback for different offices on campus.

VI. New Business

- *Fall Timeline*
All meetings will be held in the Office of Electronic Media unless otherwise noted. The dates are worked around important dates such as Labor Day and Thanksgiving. There was no discussion on the meeting dates.
- *Election Timeline:*
Established that filing forms would be available on the 27th of August and this year is the first year that they will be handed out at the Involvement Expo. Hopefully, this will give students more of an incentive to get involved. Have been getting a strong response from students, new and transfer about running for positions. We are having the filing forms due September 7, 2008. This gives every one the weekend to get their materials together and bring them to the candidates meeting. Date for the Candidate's forum hasn't been set yet. Campaigning will be in both LRH and Founders. *Cynthia suggested that Election timeline and meeting timeline be approved so that they are in the minutes for future reference.* Successful candidates will be installed in time for our September 28th meeting. But there will be a formal inauguration at the soccer

game. The chancellor will be present. Both the fall meeting schedule and election timeline were approved.

➤ *SGA Bylaws*

Most recently undated about 3 or 4 years ago. Currently there is a lot of SGA customs that are not written down formally. These would be helpful if they were implemented into the bylaws. Also consider requirement changes for Senators and officers. Year ago there was a requirement that a certain number of events had to be attended by SGA members while wear their SGA t-shirt. Helps visibility in the community and to students. Examples as such should be included in the by-laws. Choose to put these things in the by-laws would require a vote by majority by current membership. Whereas if they are put in the constitution they are a lot more finite and require us to pass by majority and also put to a vote by the student body in a referendum. Latrice would be head of this committee because she is the Sergeant at Arms.

➤ *Leadership Retreat*

Ashley and Cynthia talked about a more substantive retreat for SGA members. Learning about how campus governance works and how to write resolutions are really important aspect to be included in such a retreat. This would need to be after the new Senators, so that everyone is on board. Maybe a day long or weekend event. Combining it with something interesting like a going to a retreat center on an outdoors trip.

What would be helpful?

- ✦ Resolutions...new and old senators will be more aware when an issue arise on campus
- ✦ Constituent work should not wait until people come to us. Keeping communication open on campus so that students can address issues that need to be brought to the table.
- ✦ Overview of Robert's Rules of Order will make SGA meetings more formal.
- ✦ Working closer with different colleges and deans.
- ✦ How to build relationships with administration to write effective resolutions.
- ✦ Holding workshops

Mandatory for SGA members and voluntary for other people. Diversity issues need to be addressed.

➤ *Campus Committees*

There is a brief list of campus committees in your packet. Typically SGA members serve on 2 committees. You can do more if you want. Brandon is in charge of committee assignments. Email Brandon with committee decisions.

➤ *Voter Registration Drive*

Brandon and Ashley have met with some executives of the different partisan groups on campus. Coming election voter registration is paramount. SGA should play an active role with getting information out to people on campus. We will be setting up a voter registration drive. Planned to combine voter registration with homecoming week. A lot of students are not from Sangamon County. Will there be education for students registering to vote outside of their home county. Will there be education on absentee ballots. There will be an educational component and potentially hosting local candidate debates on campus. Depends on candidate schedules and homecoming schedules.

VII. Audience Participation

- Marcellus Leonard – Dr. Leonard is the newly named Director of the Center for First Year Students. Here to meet everyone and learned a lot about what the SGA does and looks forward to working with the SGA in every way he can. Center for First Year learning is intended to be a “one stop shop.” Trying to work with all the services on campus to have information in one place. Where any student can come into the center and be directed to a specific individual that they are trying to get to. Hope to sponsor some activities out of the Center for First Year Learning, including the Gospel Choir, Writer’s Forum. Accepting any advice and suggestions. The complete focus will be academic advising and improving retention rates. Marya Leatherwood and Dr. Leonard will be attending a Retention Conference to learn about what is needed in order to keep students here. The kinds of academic and social adjustment would be best used. Flyers and brochures are in circulation to publicize. Intend to have display boards and T.V spot and other ways to publicize. Connecting with faculty for recommendations was suggested. UNI 101 and UNI 103 are courses that are sponsored through CTL. The Center is not inclusive for transfer students but will discuss with the committee. Faculty referrals are strongly encouraged. The Center is located at Brookens Library 461

X. Adjourn

- Next Meeting on September 14, 2008