C

Student Government Association

The University of Texas at Tyler

*September 21st, 2021*

1. **Call to Order 5:30pm**
2. **Roll Call**

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| **President Jennings** |  |
| **Vice President**  **Stavinoha** |  |
| **Secretary Mattern** |  |
| **Treasurer Limbrick** |  |
| **Chief of Staff Smith** |  |
| **Senator Arnold** |  |
| **Senator Barria** |  |
| **Senator Chawner** |  |
| **Senator Collins** |  |
| **Senator Dix** |  |
| **Senator Govea** |  |
| **Senator Harrison** |  |
| **Senator McNamara** |  |
| **Senator Melendez** |  |

1. **Approval of Minutes**

**Let the record show that the minutes were unanimously approved.**

1. **Open Forum**

**James Hescock:** Thank you guys for having me, thank you madam president. My name is James Hescock. I have been a student here before back in 2015 and I now live within the community. The reason I am here tonight is to because like many of you, I care about a healthy society and I figured out the best way to contribute is by being invested within my own community. Since I have connections with the University, and I was very involved as student and paid attention. The reason I am here specifically is because later on in the meeting, I believe you will have a chance to consider the constitution. And I tried to email you (referring to Chief of Staff Smith) but the website did not have your email on it. Anyways, later on you will have a chance to review the SGA constitution in its entirety and as new rules come up and I would like to ask you to use a chance to review the student ballot initiative in the constitution and consider whether you should strike that out of the constitution. I have a couple of reasons why. One first, before I tell you why let me inform you of what it is. In the constitution, there is a provision for students to collect enough signatures to have the agenda changed where you have no say in it. It allows students to effectively go around and set the agenda for what the student body effectively puts their attention to. I would like you to consider striking this out of the constitution because it is best if there is a healthy student government in which you all engage in better conversations. It can be a tool for irresponsible or impassionate people and SGA has no say. There is a potential for these people to take over the agenda and potentially be destructive to the relationship, people who are radical, polemic, or not invested in the community. If there are troubles, be more involved.

**President Jennings:** I would like to entertain a motion to allow James to briefly recap what he just said because the microphone went out.

**Vice President Stavinoha:** Carried said motion.

**Chief of Staff Smith:** Motion seconded.

**James Hescock:** Okay the senate carried a vote to make me chancellor of the entire student government. No they didn’t actually. Briefly what happened was that I am a member of the community and my goal is to make positive contributions to you. I think it is important for all of us to be invested in our local area, where we have connections in. I said that there is an opportunity today for you to take up considerations to amend the constitution and while that is on the table, I would like you to consider opening a discussion to possibly strike the student ballot initiative out of the constitution. It was something that was added after but the reason I say this is because I believe it is best that student government represents the student interests. I believe it is healthy for everyone. I think everyone should be involved with student government rather than go around student government. And this is important to you because there are people who have very passionate issues who want to make it to the center of a conversation that may not have everyone’s collective interests of this community. I recommend you strike that to the senate.

1. **Speaker’s Podium**
   1. **None**
2. **Officer Reports**
   1. **President Jennings**

This week, I have been getting stuff set up for our UTSSAC committee, as well as having meetings. This week I have the strategic planning committee, staff senate and there’s one other. Basically, some big meetings. The strategic planning committee has been really interesting to be a part of. That is essentially working on creating the new strategic plan for the combined campus now that we are merging with the health science center. That has been a really interesting experience and having student representation is really important.

* 1. **Vice-President Stavinoha**

So, Tammy Hill used to be in charge of Sudexo but she now works at UTEP. I have been trying to get ahold of her for two weeks regarding midnight breakfast and potential Halloween activities. So, I have a meeting set up with her counterpart, as well as the chef and two other sudexo employees. We are going to be helping out with that. I also spoke with Ashley Davis from the student accessibility and resources center. We are going to be doing sort of a similar thing as the counseling center where they already have events set up, they just need students present. I do not have that list of events yet but that will be added to our calendar. Those will be activities that count towards your event points.

* 1. **Secretary Mattern**

I have gotten caught up on the minutes. We got our t-shirts in that y’all are wearing. I do not know if y’all like them, but I do, I think they’re cute. I had to email the tablecloth lady for a revision on the purchase order. That is about it for this week.

* 1. **Treasurer Limbrick**

Report for this week, thank you KC and the other e-board members for joining me to meet with the organizations for requests. We have two organizations who we will be meeting with tomorrow morning. We have one meeting at 8:00am and the other at 8:45am. There are 4 requests, so I tried to split them up. Hopefully the meeting tomorrow goes well. And that is all.

* 1. **Chief of Staff Smith**

This past week, I have worked on the finalization of the changes to the constitution. I went ahead and sent it to Josh who then sent it to his boss to make sure it is okay. Soon, we will be voting on it to approve it. Other than that, I met with Katie Hernandez over recycling and an engagement project we have going on. We also discussed new ideas to hopefully get people more involved with recycling.

1. **Committee Reports** 
   1. **Events**

**Senator McNamara**: What I was going to say is that we just talked about how Tammy is at El Paso now. Are we getting a replacement? Oh, we already have one, okay.

* 1. **Communications**

**Senator McNamara**: We just talked about making posts for the elections, if you see anything on Instagram, repost it so we can get the word out.

* 1. SGAC
  2. **Rules**

**Chief of Staff Smith:** We are actually going to meet right after this meeting. We didn’t have much to discuss last week.

* 1. **ESC**

**Senator Harrison:** We actually did not meet yesterday. We are going to be meeting Thursday. Kind of related, ESC is going to be discussing the recycling project with Katie. I am currently doing some research related to other campuses to see what is encouraging recycling.

* 1. **GSA**

**President Jennings**: I am going to host the first one on Thursday by zoom. If any of y’all are interested in attending that, I will be glad to send you the information. That is graduate student committee. It is primarily for the purpose of getting graduate student feedback from students who are unable to attend these meetings. I know, especially on the health campus, all of their classes are from 6pm-9pm so there is literally no way they could attend the general assembly meetings.

1. **Student Voice Reports**
   1. **Houston Engineering Campus**

**Senator Barria;** There isn’t much but what I did figure out is that the HEC is on the second floor of our campus and they are having trouble filling up our water bottles because of COVID. Last week we ran out of water bottles. So, I am thinking of ways to solve this problem.

**President Jennings**: Thank you for bringing that up. How are you guys doing with all of the bad weather you guys have been having?

**Senator Barria**: I think everyone is doing okay. Everyone is back in school and stuff, so we are returning to normal.

* 1. **College of Nursing and Health Sciences**

**Senator McNamara:** I mentioned this idea to Justin, Ashlyn and Jennifer. Our advising has not been good anywhere, especially within the nursing program. It has been really bad. There is 2 advisors and they are not answering phone calls or emails. It is really hard to get ahold of them regarding simple questions like what shots do I need and stuff like that. So I had an idea to maybe make student advisors who could answer questions that we need answers to. Simple questions where you can email them and get a response right away. Vice President Stavinoha has mentioned logos in the honors program. Which is essentially the same thing, where if you cant get ahold of a higher up, the students can help you. I really want to implement this in this nursing program because I feel as if it would help a lot.

**Senator Melendez:** I don’t have nay concerns at the moment. Me and Valerie did talk about the idea and I think it is a good idea.

* 1. **Student Body at Large**

**Senator Collins**: I do not have anything to report this week, sorry I am really busy at work.

1. **Old Business**
   1. **None**
2. **New Business**
   1. UTSSAC Discussion

**President Jennings:** I would like to entertain a motion to open up a discussion about UTSSAC.

**Vice President Stavinoha**: Carried said motion.

**Senator Govea:** Motion seconded.

**President Jennings**: Basically, with this discussion, I wanted to bring you up to date on the system level. It pertains to quite a few things you guys have brought up, especially advising. So, that you guys are aware, it would be helpful for you to provide feedback. At the system level, there are basically 4 big problem, academic success, career success, campus climate and student health and safety. They are broad on purpose to have big discussions. In academic success, advising is one thing we are looking at. We are considering different roles, peer advisors has been brought up frequently. Some schools already do this and have success, some schools are considering implementing it. As well as academic format, whether our classrooms are equipped with things for those who are sick and stuff. Career success is an area where UT Tyler excels, other campuses are struggling with this a lot. We are able to do research, and provide feedback. If you have any thoughts, comments or questions about that?

**Secretary Mattern**: I do not know if I am allowed to ask this question but has anyone experienced trouble with the police, in general? Not like you are doing illegal things but anything other than that? I believe our police here are pretty good, I just wanted to make sure.

**Senator McNamara**: My car battery died I had to call the police. They said they weren’t allowed to jump it with their own car and they had to use another jumper and it didn’t work. That is the only issue I have had but I think they’re good.

**President Jennings:** In terms of broad student-police relationships, I feel like we are good.

**Secretary Mattern**: I was just like a somewhat big issue when we went so obviously it is happening around and I didn’t think we had any but I was just making sure.

**President Jennings**: I entertain a motion to close this discussion.

**Vice President Stavinoha**: Carried said motion.

**Secretary Mattern:** Motion seconded.

* 1. Budget Presentation

**President Jennings:** Moving on, I would like to entertain a motion to have treasurer Limbrick present the budget.

**Vice President Stavinoha**: Carried said motion.

**Secretary Mattern**: Motion seconded.

**Treasurer Limbrick**: For this year’s budget, I believe it is based on some of the things which happened last year. Just to recap, one of the big things that comes out of the budget is the events, or SGAC. This is the committee where the organizations come to request for money, so this is a big part of the budget. I am not sure about the regular events, I will have to ask Josh. Anyways, the total budget for this semester and next semester is approximately $29,000. One thing I am also curious about is the proposal for the disc golf course. I believe the e-board already approved funding for that, so this budget is subject to change. But based on that, there will be a rearrangement because a significant amount if being taken out. Also, Josh has informed me that there has already been money taken out so I will need to redo the budget with that. I will probably have the more updated budget next week but this was just an overview to see where we are at and how it will look.

**President Jennings**: To clarify, the events item is for events that we host. So midnight breakfast would be an example. I also have a question. You said that this budget did not include the second half of the disc golf course?

**Treasurer Limbrick:** Right because I was not sure if that was already taken out from last year’s budget. I just remember you telling me that we just entered a new fiscal year so I was not sure if it would be taken out of this year’s budget.

**President Jennings**: Yes, it will. So, the disc golf budget was voted on last year’s senate and it was approved. The way it was set up, we would pay for the first half for the 20-21 budget and then the other half in the 21-22 budget. By doing this, we essentially signed an agreement with the contractor stating we would for sure do the second half the second year. We are essentially contractually obligated to take it out of our budget.

That was really good, I will give you time for next week to show us the final proposal.

I entertain a motion to close discussion on that topic.

**Vice President Stavinoha**: Carried said motion.

**Chief of Staff Smith:** Motion seconded.

* 1. Constitution Presentation

**President Jennings**: I would like to entertain a motion to have Chief of Staff Smith present the potential changes to the constitution.

**Vice President Stavinoha:** Carried said motion.

**Senator Govea:** Motion seconded.

**Chief of Staff Smith:** We have already all agreed to the changes we made, we are just now voting to add these to the constitution. It is not anything that is super huge that we are voting on. Now James did present to maybe change the referendum policy, but I think it is better to save that discussion for another time. I think what we are voting on right now is relevant. I have not had enough time to look over the referendum policies. But, as you can see, during the summer, the e-board and such, voted on suspended the eligibility policies. This is basically a note stating it was suspended.

**President Jennings**: It is suspended until only December 31st, 2021.

**Chief of Staff Smith:** I did not know about that, but we can add that. And then, right here is just an addition to adding the health science campus as a satellite campus. The constitution did not have this. Right here, there was some confusion about housing senators, so we added more clarification. It was confusing because people would think that there would only be 2 housing senators, but it really meant 2 housing senators per resident hall. This will clarify and anytime a new senator from the resident hall is added, it will not need to be changed. And then, so we previously had, for the judicial board, 1 chief justice and 8 justices but in all honesty, it did not reflect the size of our school so we cut it down to 4 justices. The reason being is that one, it does not reflect the size of our school, and 2, that is a really hard board to fill. There isn’t any forth-coming people that want to step into this spot. Hopefully we can fill those spots soon, right now there is 1 chief justice and 2 justices. And then, the final change that we made was the addition of the environment sustainability committee as a permanent standing committee. Right here, it describes the job. Really, it is just making it permanent. And that is all of the changes we have made thus far. I believe the only thing we would change is the notice of article 1.2 is being suspended to December 31st of this year.

**President Jennings**: My only comments on this are when we voted to suspend this, we voted for a temporarily suspension through December 31st. The only reason we allowed for this suspension is so that members who have not been in the senate long enough could take positions. At the end of the year, everyone will meet these requirements and we will not have to vote to reinstate it, it will automatically be reinstated. My other comment is, we did discuss potentially adding the GSA committee as an ADHOC in the constitution, I did not see that on here. Does that need to be on here?

**Chief of Staff Smith**: I spoke with Josh and he said we did not need to add that.

**President Jennings**: Great, I would like to entertain a motion to have Secretary Smith to add the wording regarding the temporary suspension prior to a vote. It is up to y’all, do you want him to do it now or table this for next week

**Vice President Stavinoha**: Motion to add to the wording that the suspension is temporary.

**Secretary Mattern**: Motion seconded.

**President Jennings**: Okay Chief of Staff Smith you can get that done. In the meantime, do we have any other discuss items on this?

**Senator Harrison:** I know I am on the rules committee and I have had plenty of opportunities to mention this but I think on the ESC, we should mention that they specifically oversee recycling initiatives directly. So that way, they are involved instead of just asking if we are being environmentally healthy and just getting back a response. Am I being just too concerned about it, can someone tell me and I won’t bring it up again?

**Secretary Mattern:** If we do decide to elaborate on the ESC, would we have to postpone the vote?   
**President Jennings:** Yes, just to have proper time.

**Senator Harrison:** Could we come back to it later? I think it is good now, I just think it might need more on the ESC.

**President Jennings**: You could motion to table a discussion which effectively puts it on hold until next week. So, if you guys know what you want to do, you can motion it.

**Senator Harrison:** But would it have to be for the entire constitution? Or just this?

**President Jennings:** It is best if we vote on it as a whole.

**Senator Harrison:** I think, in that case, it is not that big of a deal, I think it is important that we get this out, get it down and out of the way. I really don’t think it is a huge issue.

**Chief of Staff**: I think it is safe to say that what is on there, the overview of recycling, as a standing committee, it does show that there will be an overview of recycling programs.

**President Jennings:** No, I think it should be adding since I have been on this committee. I think the jobs should be elaborated so it is taken more seriously and there are things happening.

**Chief of Staff Smith**: I’m just asking a hypothetical question, what would you change the language to in that case?

**President Jennings:** A point, with that verbiage.

**Chief of Staff Smith:** What verbiage?

**President Jennings**: Essentially, I don’t know. Collaborate with university staff to ensure proper implementation of university wide recycling initiatives.

**Secretary Mattern**: Okay, so since he has already done all of this, can we just maybe elaborate later and vote on the changes now.

**President Jennings**: As I said, we need to have plenty of time to review this, prior to voting on it. If we are going to make changes, I would rather postpone this.

**Senator Govea**: Motion to table the discussion until next week.

**Vice President Stavinoha**: Motion seconded.

**President Jennings:** I entertain a motion to close discussion on this topic. \

**Vice President Stavinoha:** Carried said motion.

**Senator Govea**: Motion seconded.

1. **Advisor Comments**
   1. **Advisor Neaves was not present.**
2. **Announcements**
   1. Suicide Awareness Walk on Sept. 29th, 10-2 on Harvey Deck
3. **Next Week**
   1. College of Arts and Sciences
   2. College of Business
   3. Patriot Village
4. **Adjournment**

**President Jennings:** I entertain a motion to adjourn**.**

**Vice President Stavinoha:** Carried said motion.

**Chief of Staff Smith:** Motion seconded.

**Let the record show it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.**

**6:19pm**