

# Student Government Association

## The University of Texas at Tyler

- I. Call to Order**
  - a. Time: 5:22 pm
- II. Roll Call**
- III. Approval of Minutes**
  - a. Unanimously approved
- IV. Open Forum**
  - a. No one present
- V. Speakers Podium**
  - a. Shawn Rogers
    - i. My name is Shawn Rogers. I am a certifying official for the MVSC. I am a UT Tyler alum. We're currently located in UC 3440. We still have 7 week 2 to consider, but we have 521 total that are using a veteran benefit, including Hazelwood and federal benefits. There's a 50-50 split between the two, as well as between dependents of veterans and veterans themselves. Josh Neaves went with us to SVA NatCon, it was a good turn out for us; we learned a lot. The Colmery Act will be updated. The Texas Veterans Commission has approved the UT Tyler 2019-2020 catalog. This will allow students to go into new programs and still receive military benefits. The merger will also cause us to need to update some things. The "Forever G.I. Bill" will benefit the HEC campus only. They're doing it by zip code so they will receive some compensation since the cost of living is higher.
    - ii. We're going to do a green zone training for faculty and staff. We're prepping for summer 2020. We just found out that the nursing program is going to 14 weeks. This is good and bad. Up to 13 weeks is considered a quarter and 15-19 is a semester. Where does 14 fall?
    - iii. We have new logos, events, and meetings for the SVA Thursday's at 12:30 pm.
    - iv. We would like to have more collaborations between these two groups. Some ideas that I had were a meet an SGA member event, outreach, etc. I will continue to promote SGA participation within the SVA.
    - v. Senator Brooks- What would be the difference if it was quarters versus semesters?
    - vi. That is what we're still working on.
- Officer Reports**
  - b. President Menhennett
    - i. I've had several meetings with Cody Brooks, discussing the Task Force. I've also been working on reviewing the powerpoints about fee increases. I'll be presenting about both and giving you guys an idea of what you can do to help educate students. We had another commencement meeting on Friday; they brought up some really cool ideas. Reminder: Next Wednesday will be our meeting with President Tidwell at 5 pm. If y'all could share about that, that would great. This Friday, we have planned another meeting. Senator Bauder, Senator Long, and I will also be meeting with the president directly.
  - c. Vice President Cooper
    - i. Announcement: For those of you who are new or aren't on Engage, all of you have been sent an email asking you to accept your membership. If you would do that, it would be helpful so that constituents can see who you are. I'm working on that search committee, which is coming to a close soon, and then all of the dates for the rest of the year:
    - ii. Midnight Breakfast (March 25<sup>th</sup> at 10 pm, we will get there at 9:45)
    - iii. Pizza with the Police (April 8<sup>th</sup>, 11-1)
    - iv. The Big Event (April 18<sup>th</sup>)
    - v. If anybody wants to help run the SGA table at Patriot Premiere on March 28<sup>th</sup>, that would be great. It's a good way to get student involvement. During homecoming week, I recommend that you go to all of the events, but there is one in particular that I would like us

to attend. Saturday morning, there will be a golf cart parade so we'll need people to help decorate the golf cart and drive it around in the parade.

- vi. Next is the SGA Banquet on April 26<sup>th</sup> at the OAC.
  - vii. Finals weeks bags will also be April 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, probably in the UC and in the library. They have like a pencil, eraser, and a snack bar in them.
  - viii. Senator Reid and I talked about doing an Earth Day-style event. Once we have more details, I'll announce it. It will probably be at one of the housing complexes and we will do some sort of gardening, planting, something to do with environmental sustainability.
  - ix. President Tidwell is next week. April 18<sup>th</sup> will be Dr. Louann Berman. It will be a busy week when we get back.
  - x. Senator Green- What exactly is the Big Event?
  - xi. It's a joint service event between the Tyler colleges and we are still ironing out the details, but I'll send it out to y'all when they're solidified.
  - xii. Advisor Neaves- Registration will begin at 9. They'll start organizing soon after that because we're expecting 300+ participants.
- d. Secretary Jennings
    - i.
  - e. Treasurer Rawashdeh
    - i. Not here
  - f. Parliamentarian Ray
    - i. Most of my time has been spent on the rules. I'm moving through them very quickly. That's been my main goal over the last few weeks.

## VI.

### Student Voice Reports

- a. College of Arts and Sciences
  - i. Senator Green- I really don't have anything to report right now. We just submitted our Archer Fellowship applications, and I just got an interview. We're getting ready for Model UN conference in New York.
  - ii. Senator Nepal- There's no printer in the CAS building. I asked the administration and they said that the only one available for the polling center.
  - iii. Senator Thomas- I've been reaching out to various organizations and letting them know that they can let me know if they have any issues.
  - iv. Senator Nepal- Also, there's a new study room in the CAS building, next to 141.
  - v. President Menhennett- Something that might help is to meet with the Dean, especially because of their connection with the faculty.
  - vi. VP Cooper- Update me on the construction on the CAS building.
  - vii. Senator Nepal- They completed the one that they started in the winter, but they're supposed to do more in the summer.
  - viii. VP Cooper- I know there was paint and dust everywhere. Is that gone?
  - ix. Senator Nepal- Yes.
- b. University Pines
  - i. Senator Roberts- We had some talks of roaches in a particular building. That's one thing I'm taking note of. Also, there are some dryer issues going on, which I will be looking into. We have our town hall meeting this Thursday at 6 pm.
  - ii. Senator Mineko- The washers are also not working, they barely work and that limits students from being able to do laundry. It was also brought to my attention, I live on the first floor, and the puddles have caused a mildew smell all over the buildings. If that's a problem, that would cause allergies to flare up. So, that's all I have to report.
  - iii. Senator Astbury- I had a student from Liberty approach me with an issue with parking. She didn't like not being able to use parking until 5 on campus. Basically, she's not able to use her parking permit on campus until 5 because we need space for off-campus students. She feels like she's paying for the same amount of parking, but off campus students get more use. She also said that it wouldn't be an issue if the shuttle still ran. Apparently the faculty

told her that she doesn't need that because she already has a guaranteed spot at Liberty Landing.

- iv. President Menhennett- I'll bring it up to the people in charge of that, because I can understand.
- v. Senator Astbury- It might be nice to have that shuttle going again so that students can ride.
- vi. Senator Green- If you stay on campus, you have to buy a parking pass?
- vii. President Menhennett- Yes.
- viii. Senator Astbury- It's \$100 for a semester?
- ix. President Menhennett- It's \$90 for the whole year, as opposed to a lot more at other UT system campuses.

## VII. **Committee Reports**

- a. Student Life Committee
  - i. VP Cooper- A lot of what we discussed in my committee is what I talked about in my report. For midnight breakfast, we want to do giveaways. We did giveaways before, so we brainstormed prize ideas, like a couple big ones and few smaller ones. We talked about speakers, blankets, pencils, midnight breakfast shirts, etc. We discussed banquet, and award ideas. Everyone will get an award; might be silly, but an award nonetheless.
- b. SGAC
  - i. Not present
- c. Rules Committee
- d. Infrastructure Committee
  - i. I will be merging the two. We'll split the tasks and spend half the time on each. For infrastructure, we had 6 people. We talked about things from the crosswalk to some lights, fast moving vehicles, signage, the volleyball nets, and the lights around volleyball. I think that one would be pretty important. The net is basically nonexistent by the lake, which could be a potential senator project. It might be something to do when the weather is better. I'm working on getting our requests taken more seriously, by allowing us to say that it is for SGA so that it will get it taken care of. We've talked about getting IT involved in infrastructure. We're trying to see where the bottleneck and what SGA can do to help that. One we didn't mention was dangerous stairs around campus, which is something that we can't fix right now but we want to take care of. One thing I did during the committee was to work on the focus group. We spent an hour doing that and there was some excellent discussion. She did come and she had encouraged us to talk to the hierarchy. One thing that I made clear was that the course evaluations are our voice. That is us bringing up a problem.
- e. ESC
  - i. So, a few cool things happening coming up. We had a meeting with Bonnie Davis and Terry Rhame. Bonnie does energy management and Terry does the grounds. We met with them and told them what we wanted SGA to be in terms of sustainability. Eventually we're all going to graduate, but we want SGA to set a precedent of being here to help with sustainability. It was a good meeting to say that we will be here to link the student body to them. We also talked about the Green Fee.
- f. Communications Committee
  - i. Decorations for banquet and Freeze! Let's Talk About Fees
- g. Housing Committee
  - i. We talked about fire alarms, raccoons, and recycling. This week, we are working with Parliamentarian Ray. I'm changing the Housing Committee time to Thursday from 2-3. RHA is looking to conduct some events as well as a letter from them about partnering with SGA for Midnight Breakfast. Senator Roberts read the letter. (attached at the bottom)

## VIII. **Old Business**

- a. Nothing to add

## IX. **New Business**

- a. Fee Education Presentation and Discussion
  - i. Motioned by Sen. Reid, seconded by Sen. Bauder

- ii. A couple of weeks ago, we had speakers about tuition changes, fees, and the reasoning behind them. What I've been speaking to Josh on is what are the best ways to educate students. We need to make sure that we are communicating effectively and answering questions. I went through the powerpoints and tried to address the questions that students might have. First thing is, are the questions good and do they cover what we need? Most of this information you already know, but I want to look through here and make sure that this is going to educate students well. President Menhennett went over the Tuition and Fee Changes (attached at the end of the document)
- iii. **Notes**
  - I. **SCH – per semester credit hour clarification**
  - II. **Possibly add an example, with a concrete example (how much with 12 hours be in Fall 2020 v 2021?)**
  - III. **Or just take Unit Base out and put it per hour.**
  - IV. **You could do a bar graph or trend line graph, from what it has been to what it will be.**
  - V. President Menhennett- We're putting this on the website soon, hopefully to minimize the questions that students have.
    - 1. **Notes**
      - a. **You might want to write down a comparison of UT system schools**
      - b. One of the things is that we're going to do tabling and what if we had a chalkboard so that students can guess. Sometimes, it doesn't seem like things have credibility online.
- I. **Notes**
  - a. **Clarify HC meaning**
  - b. **Clarify whether it's per semester or per credit hour**
- II. We're going to do tabling with popsicles, and we'll be educating students
- III. Motion to close discussion by Sen. Reid, seconded by Sen. Astbury
- b. Task Force Findings Presentation
  - i. Motioned by Sen. Reid, seconded by Sen. Bauder
  - ii. Senator Brooks- We started this about 2.5 weeks ago. Our goal was to research schools similar in size and whether they do summer commencement. The reason we're doing this now is because the accelerated nursing program means that there will be a lot more students graduating during the summer. I wasn't in SGA at the time, but I believe that students have come to ask for a summer commencement ceremony. We reached out to about 34 schools, national peer institutions, which are campuses that we're looking to be similar to.
  - iii. President Menhennett- These schools are in a similar scope as us. Two of our HECB peers have summer commencements and one of our aspiring national peers is as well. If these are schools that we're looking to be like, we should consider what they do.
  - iv. Senator Brooks- The schools who said yes were varying in size and the number of summer graduates. The smallest ceremony cost \$7500 and the largest cost over \$20,000.
  - v. President Menhennett- I want to point out the difference between how many graduated during the summer versus how many actually showed up to the ceremony. That's to show that only about half of the showed up to the summer commencement. SFA's cost is higher, but they do two commencements during the summer. Before I present this to the President, we will fill out the rest of the data that we are waiting on.
  - vi. Senator Brooks- The reason why we're waiting is because we're getting official documents. SFA's was also more expensive because they did it off-campus. We wanted information about why the other campuses do not host it and whether they had previously considered it. We want to reach out to the schools that said yes and ask them what pushed them to do so. We are also waiting to hear back from the organization the deals with commencements in our area and how they do so. Some reasons schools have decided not to is low funds, students primarily off campus, and low attendance. We are wanting to reach out to NAACO.

- vii. Senator Bauder- Do we have information about whether they have trimesters?
  - viii. Senator Brooks- That is a good question; almost all of them said that they just have Fall and Spring.
  - ix. President Menhennett- So y'all think that this is a good representation?
  - x. Senator Astbury- So what are we going to tell the students that have come to us?
  - xi. President Menhennett- This is my fear when I meet with the administration. They will be deciding whether to do it and many schools have decided not to because of the cost.
  - xii. Parliamentarian Ray- Is our question whether to do a summer commencement forever or just for this summer?
  - xiii. President Menhennett- I will include that question. Our job is to report the data.
  - xiv. Parliamentarian Ray- This would also remove some of the pressure on commencement on the Plaza.
  - xv. Senator Mays- Was your question about whether it will be recurring? From what I understand, everyone who starts in the spring and fails would graduate in the summer and people would also be starting in the summer, so there will always be a full cohort graduating in the summer.
  - xvi. President Menhennett- Right now, our goal is to allow the president to decide whether it will be a solid investment.
  - xvii. Senator Bauder- It might be helpful to look at schools with similar populations and trimesters.
  - xviii. President Menhennett- If you look much further, the ratio will mostly stay the same. Schools in the same size are mostly private, which would affect the cost representation and sources.
  - xix. Parliamentarian Ray- If you're going to look at others, find ones that have trimesters, irrelevant of size.
- c. Review and Feedback of Outdoor Safe Use Policy and Environmental Health and Safety Policy**
- i.** Motioned by Sec. Jennings and seconded by Sen. Bauder
  - ii.** Pres. Menhennett- It is up to y'all to figure out how we review this. Our job is to provide a student perspective.
  - iii.** VP Cooper- Motion to table it, send it out, and then discuss next week. Seconded by Sen. Mays. Approved unanimously.
  - iv.** Sen. Reid- Let us know the purpose of reviewing these.
  - v.** Pres. Menhennett- Basically these are the documents that will contribute to the HOP (handbook of operating procedures). I encourage you to read those if you want to die of boredom. They have asked me to read through them and bring a student perspective so that I can talk about them in meetings. If something comes up, the EHS will be able to decide what happens. Basically, we should suggest what needs changes, if anything.
  - vi.** They do a really good job of reviewing them, but I encourage you to read them, because you will be more educated. Motioned to close discussion by Sec. Jennings and and seconded by Sen. Bauder.
- I.** Senator Roberts- Is the letter that I talked about something to discuss?
  - II.** VP Cooper- There wouldn't need to be a vote on it; you could come to me after so that we can talk about it.
  - III.** President Menhennett- I think those are good points.
  - IV.** Parliamentarian Ray- I know it's an opportunity to meet SGA. We could easily do something like Pizza with the President where they can meet us within our own organization. That way, people have a chance to meet us. We might want to do a faculty of the week awards as well.
    - a.** Third thing, some schools do scholarships for SGA senators.
    - b.** President Menhennett- This would be a student fee advisory committee question.
    - c.** Just finding out more information would be good. We struggle to fill seats and that would be a good way to do so.
    - d.** President Menhennett- The best thing to do would be to reach out to the chair of the Student Fee advisory committee, which is Aya, and ask her about that.

## **X. Advisor Comments**

- a. The scholarship isn't a bad idea, but I would want to see more accountability with senator projects, town hall meetings, etc. My level of expectations would be a lot of higher if we were to vote for that. I love the idea of faculty or staff of the week. I think it's a good opportunity to increase awareness and build a better relationship with faculty and advisors. There weren't any questions for Shawn's presentation. What he talked about is very important, and their office is unique. They do both the financial side of things as well as assisting military families face-to-face. They consistently do a lot for our community. I would encourage y'all to go check it out and get to know SVA. They want to build a relationship and it's hard. 3 years ago, there was a significant SVA presence and it was a beneficial relationship.
- b. As far as commencement, the communication plan is coming out next week. Personally, I'm excited. It will solve all of the problems that they've had with previous years.
- c. Chief Medders has been in public service for 30 years. The system that is in place is to ensure that on campus students have a guaranteed spot. The way it is now makes an effort to keep both on campus and off campus students able to park. It does occur to have Chief Medders come and speak about the system behind it. If there are truly not enough spots, then it is a problem. Hopefully, before fall, there will be 280 additional spots next to Liberty Landing.
- d. On the fees, I still don't know what y'all's stance is on the fees. You're not telling people how to vote, you're just letting them know what y'all think. That can help with the educational efforts.
- e. Good work on the task force. The institutions that I told them to look at are sister schools and schools that we aspire to be similar to.
- f. We value student input on the policies because there could be things that you guys don't agree with. We have policies for all sorts of things just in case it ever happens and anyone challenges us on the rules. You've got the HOP which is for faculty and students and then the MOP which is primarily for students.

## **XI. Announcements**

- a. Focus Groups
  - i. Monday, Feb. 24<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-6 pm on Zoom. The meeting ID is 641-085-818.
  - ii. Tuesday, Feb. 25<sup>th</sup> from 7:30-8 am in the UC 2<sup>nd</sup> floor seating area around Honors
  - iii. Wednesday, Feb. 26<sup>th</sup> from 12:30-1 pm in UC 3322
- b. SGA Officer Candidacy Meetings (3/2 at 12:30, 3/3 at 12:30, and March 4 at 4:30)
- c. Meeting with President Tidwell (3/4)
  - i. Dress business casual. No polos or jeans. Dress nicely.
- d. Headshots (2/28 11-12)
- e. Headshots (3/19 8:30-2:30)
- f. Tabling for Fee Education
- g. BANQUET (yay!) (evening of April 26<sup>th</sup>)
- h. Senator Forster- Just an announcement, someone got arrested on campus. Just be aware of your surroundings.
- i. Senator Bauder- SCOB is having a forum tomorrow and a follow up from the previous one from 12:30-1:30 in COB 103
- j. Senator Ramirez- Apparently someone was arrested because he stabbed someone.
- k. Senator Mays- I feel that as senators and E board members, it's kind of our duty to vote. All voting ends on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Go vote. It's important.
- l. VP Cooper- We're hosting Senior Prom on May 7<sup>th</sup> and we'll need volunteers for that. We need people to escort with elderly ladies and gentlemen. Let me know if you want to be involved.

## **XII. Next Week's Student Voice Reports**

- a. Freshman Senators
- b. Soules College of Business
- c. Student Body at Large

## **XIII. Second Roll Call**

## **XIV. Adjournment**

- a. Time: 7:26 pm

