

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION



UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT CONGRESS Session CI

General Body Meeting
7:00 pm, Tuesday, March 12, 2019
Devon Hall 120

Session CI

Roll Call – 7:02pm

Flag Salute – Representative Douglas

Approval of Minutes

Representative Chism seconded by Representative Liu

Chair's Report – It's been a hectic week since we last saw each other and a lot has happened, so I have a lot to say tonight. First of all, as you all may be aware, last week an anonymous twitter account named Jam Googly released screenshots of terribly racist, sexist, xenophobic, and generally horrible conversations happening within the College Republicans GroupMe. These screenshots demonstrate something that activists and students of color have been saying all semester, through the myriad of high-profile racist events we've seen on campus and that is: these high-profile events aren't the only racist things happening on campus. I've consistently heard since the first blackface incident that a lot more is happening that makes campus threatening and unwelcoming that doesn't make its rounds on social media. Students have talked about hearing racist comments in class, on the South Oval, walking down Lindsey or Chautauqua or Boyd St, or in "private" GroupMe's that make them feel like they aren't wanted or welcome on campus. Photo proof that this was happening in a relatively prominent group on campus's official GroupMe should make it abundantly clear to anyone who didn't already believe them to believe them now. I think this raises a lot of questions for us to ponder as a community and as an institution. I've almost lost count of how many times this year, or during my time at OU that racist events like this have happened—and I wasn't even on campus yet when SAE happened. We need to think, is this what we want our reputation as a university to be? And we need to accept that the steps we've tried to take as a university to address this campus culture simply aren't working and aren't enough. It is pretty easy to say that, but it is much harder to then follow up and say "so these are the concrete steps we are going to take to fix this." I'm encouraged by President Gibbs' diligent work in creating the Multicultural Advancement Committee, bringing together passionate people from all over campus to have deep discussions about all aspects of campus life and working together to come up with solutions to these deeply entrenched problems. Frankly, I've been disappointed by the way some prominent people on campus have reacted to all of these events, and that disappointment grows deeper and deeper with every news story that breaks with another OU racist incident. So that's why I think we as SGA also need to do the hard work of looking into what we can affect within our realm of control. We have several members of various committees working on projects addressing bursar policies, the student code of conduct, and on-campus required trainings. However, one area that we can take a much bigger role in affecting on campus is funding and student organizations. I've asked the HD committee to look into developing an "RSO Code of Conduct". Currently the Code Annotated says that organizations are only eligible for funding so long as they maintain "good standing" with SGA, but we never define what good standing means. I've asked the

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committee to look into where we can toughen up rules that require RSOs, and their leaders specifically, to ensure that they create welcoming environments for any student. I believe we should look into creating the strongest protections we can, within the confines of the law, against RSOs being hostile working, learning, and living environments. Additionally, related to funding. Graduate Student Senate saw AB-08 (the Auxiliary Funding bill we saw last week) and split the question, advancing all organizations except College Republicans and sending the CR request back to the Budgetary Committee for further consideration in light of the news and the changes to their organization. After getting an official opinion from the SGA General Counsel, they do not consider this to be an amendment. So, all the organizations we saw last week will be presented to the President except CRs, who will be sent back to WAM for reconsideration. If you have any questions about this, please ask. And we can discuss this as a body tonight if there is interest. There are many questions involving anti-discrimination laws, student conduct, and the RSO's continued status at this University that would be tough for us as a body to consider on the floor tonight. By sending the group back to Committee, we can ensure that we do the due diligence that good financial stewardship of students' fees would require and don't rush to any decision without all the available information. Back to the topic of Jam Googly's screenshots, there is an obvious elephant in the room that I want to address as well. As I mentioned in the message I sent to the Congress GroupMe, Jam posted a screenshot of me leaving the OU College Republicans GroupMe after news of the racist conversations within the group broke. Like many of you all, I have been a member of a lot of GroupMe's which I mute and never really check. I would only participate in the GroupMe when I would be notified that SGA was being discussed to read or to pass along information that I would pass along to any other student org. I did this last week when the group was expressing its displeasure with our WAM committee's funding decision. I am deeply offended by the messages which I learned about on twitter, and completely and unreservedly denounce them. The Regents are meeting tomorrow about the annual Student Activity Fees budget. We were able to fund over \$70,000 for a university councilor to work with a smaller number of students who are regularly facing the same challenges. This will hopefully open up the other councilors to work with other students in a more timely manner. There is some funding for the OU Travelers and the SGA has received additional funding for Student Legal Services, as well as an increase in funding for RSOs. If you have any questions about this, please let me know.

Vice Chair's Report – I opened applications for PR Directors which are like Communications Assistants. Sara Haugland and Thangam Varghese are the PR Directors. They are going to help me with events, merchandise, etc. You can ask them questions about these things and about events generally. Thank you to everyone who applied. We have an implicit bias training coming up on March 31st. This is only required for Congressional Administration and Human Diversity, but this is a great way for you as Congress members to start to address the problems of implicit bias in student government. This will be catered, so please come to this. Mahak will speak more about it. Also, elections for these positions are coming soon, so if you want to be Vice Chair, please come talk to me and ask me questions. You should be fully informed.

Secretary's Report – Hey everyone! Don't forget to complete your Congressional Service requirements for the month of March. There will be Trash Walks, a Voter Registration Drive, Light Walks, etc. If there is ever an opportunity, I will put it in the email with the minutes, so you need to be paying attention to those! If you are having an issue completing your requirement, let me know as soon as possible so that we can figure out a solution!

Committee Reports-

- **Congressional Administration:** We saw CB-101-26 and it got a rec of do pass.
- **External Affairs:** We talked about the voter registration drives and we will have more of those moving forward.
- **Human Diversity:** We talked about the resolution for the equal pay disparity in the journalism college. I also went to the diversity panel and the PR last night if you have questions. Don't forget to attend bias training!
- **Problems and Projects:** We are wrapping up the student concerns about water quality in Price, vaping policies and e-cigarette use which don't have policies, and we are looking at the international student deportation prevention resolution for the next few weeks.

- **Sustainability:** We are working on our projects and our sustainable funding bill passed GSS with unanimous consent.
- **University Policy:** There were research updates and there will be bills in a few weeks.
- **Ways and Means:** We saw Auxiliary Allocation 18, we distributed \$2,800 to five organizations, and we have about \$10,000 left. The GSS referred College Republicans funding back to us. We are starting Primary Funding soon.

Liaison Reports

Special Orders

Student Concerns

Danko: Last Thursday we saw the naked bigotry and violent language put forward by members of OU College Republicans. We also saw the failure of the College Republicans as an institution to combat racism within their own ranks. On a single instance of bigotry, out of the many instances that have been documented, two members were removed. The President of OU College Republicans added the two back less than a day later after she sent a perfunctory request for input to the rest of her executive team. She got one response to that request, and that was the end of the conversation. There was not a thorough process like she claimed. However, even this feeble, altogether insufficient, response could not be mustered on other instances of bigotry. No action was ever taken in any other instance. There was no action taken even when two members threatened violence against a faculty member. The silence of the College Republicans when threats were openly espoused in their chat speaks volumes. The organization, as an institution, failed to address or report this behavior. The individuals are responsible for their words, but the institution is responsible for allowing this behavior to continue unabated. The College Republicans should be held accountable by denying them additional auxiliary funding and revoking their charter with the University. Let me be perfectly clear: this has nothing to do with conservative ideas, policies, or principles. If a group came forward to start a Republican reading group, or even an organization that was identical to the College Republicans, who showed a commitment to preventing this bigoted and threatening behavior, it would be perfectly fine to give them fair auxiliary funding and a charter. However, this particular conservative organization has failed through repeated iterations to address this behavior. When confronted publicly about their malfeasance, the response was to put out a demonstrably false statement to cover their tracks and to pretend to be disgusted by the remarks. It was only after public shaming that the President said she was disgusted. Not when she first read them in the group chat, but when she read them on Twitter. She and the organization still have not taken responsibility in any adult sense for providing a platform for naked bigotry and threats of violence. That all stems from the very visible things we saw, but what about the internal workings of the organization. The following comes from the public statement of Joseph Howard, a former executive member of College Republicans who resigned on Thursday: “I, along with some in the executive committee, attempted to reform the institution from the top down several times. These attempts were defeated, and to my surprise, retaliation for speaking out was threatened. This revealed to me a deep-set institutional issue (I have recently been shocked at exactly how high up the institutional hierarchy such issues extend).” To give full context to his statements, Mr. Howard added later in the statement that he thinks College Republicans can be revived on campus. However, I believe his account belies that. Attempts at reform have been frustrated and threatened with retaliation. There is no reason to suggest that the organization at an institutional level is going to have a change of heart now. It should also be noted that as executive officer Mr. Howard himself was complicit in that institutional failure by putting out a statement condemning the bigotry only after it was publicly exposed, not before. You might very well ask why the organization’s charter must be removed, why can’t the organization be reformed? A perfectly reasonable question, with a new leadership team and a fresh start perhaps they could do better. Except OU College Republicans is a subsidiary of the Oklahoma College Republicans, the leadership of which has their own laundry list of bigotry that has been aired out to dry. The statewide executive team promulgated images making humorous references to violence against gay individuals and also to deportations. There are a couple other incredibly Islamophobic remarks documented that are difficult to explain without pictures, but the screenshots are all available and I would be happy to demonstrate to any of you how to view them if you would like to see them with your own eyes. Let us not mince words: the leadership of the Oklahoma College

Republicans has institutionalized bigotry. The executive team have shared sentiments that in many cases were more severe than the ones we saw from OU College Republicans on Thursday, and I think we all recognize that those statements were bigoted. No matter what path that the OU College Republicans takes going forward, it will be a subsidiary of the Oklahoma College Republicans and their entrenched bigotry. I would like to re-emphasize that my objection is not to Republican groups in general, but to this very specific Republican group, with a specific track record, and specific leadership. If the state organization for this group did not have a documented record of bigotry, I might well say that the organization could be reformed. That is not the case, and its charter should be revoked. It is not enough to speak out only after you have been embarrassed. There were steps along the way to correct the problems that we're talking about and opportunities to remove these individuals from the organization. It's time to stop saying that these events are antithetical to our values. It's time to act like it. OU College Republicans failed as an institution every step of the way. The organization should be defunded and its charter should be removed.

Chair: I'll refer that concern to the Ways and Means committee.

Williams: I park at Lloyd Noble Center, and recently there has been a large accumulation of dog poop near the bus stop. There are no bags to pick it up, so maybe we could talk to facilities management to see whether bags could be provided. Headington Hall had a Sports Clips located there but they had to move. The people employed at the Target location now were the ones located at Headington. An employee was told that they were moved because the parking availability was destroyed during the Cross Neighborhood construction. There have been similar conversations going on at Qdoba and Einstein Bagels. The person I spoke to told me that the people had to park further away and would get ticketed before they could get their parking passes. I don't know what we could do about it, but I wanted the body to be aware.

Chair: I'll refer that to the Problems and Projects committee.

Rojas: The lights today in the classroom were not functional for morning classes.

Chair: I'll refer that concern to the Problems and Projects committee.

Papanicolaou: There was mold found in the AC in the dorms. I think that this problem is still occurring because people in Couch are still getting sick. The AC units are very old to beginning with and dysfunctional, so they should be replaced.

Chair: I'll refer that to the Problems and Projects committee.

Old Business

Items to Be Considered

AB-101-11 Auxiliary Allocation 18 Act of 2018-2019 (Patton) (WAM → rec of do pass)

Representative Merchant seconded by Representative Patterson

Patton: We saw five organizations and funded \$2,795. We have a little over \$10,000 left in the Auxiliary account, which is okay.

Motion to go to a roll call vote

Representative Powers seconded by Representative Merchant

Passed by a roll call vote 33-0-0

CB-101-26 SGA It's On Us Taskforce Reform Act of 2019 (Powers) (ConAd → rec of do pass)

Representative Stack seconded by Representative Kuketz

Powers: This is adding structure to the It's On Us Taskforce. This is a campus chapter of a national movement that aims to revamp the ways that colleges address sexual assault. The goal is to take the blame off of the victims and make sure that we are all taking responsibility for the safety of students. The Code Annotated was very vague so it has been struggling to function well for the past few years. There are now attendance requirements that will hold people more accountable.

Williams: I am concerned about Section 35. Why should the appointment of the Chair be left to the President?

Powers: The Chair is now appointed only by the President. This language puts people through the same process as other appointments.

Cordova: You say that the Taskforce members are required to attend two events each semester. How many are there outside of the Week of Action?

Powers: The Week of Action is the second week of April. This will incentivize them to host more events throughout the year, especially in the fall. They are supposed to host one body meeting to inform students and staff about what they are doing on campus.

Kuketz: Section 39a talks about the 2/3 scheduled meetings being required. Does that mean two out of three meetings or two thirds of meetings?

Powers: Two thirds

Rojas: Section 35b1 says they must regularly update the SGA. What is regularly?

Powers: I am leaving this up to the Chair. I left this vague on purpose.

Nadolski: What is your thinking behind Section 38b about the campaign behind the Red River game and coordinating with the University of Texas.

Powers: Hooked on OUr Safety is pretty well-established. Our taskforce works with the comparable organization at UT. They compile resources and create graphics for the game. I want that to continue, but I don't want it to be too specific in case it can't happen.

Williams: A lot of the decision making outside of the Taskforce is left to the President. Why is the President the constitutional officer entrusted with this?

Powers: The President and Vice President have always been the people who oversee the Taskforce. The Chairs of Congress have worked on it in the past, but I don't want them stretched too thin.

Cordova: Would you add a subsection that would require the taskforce to submit an annual budget for approval?

Powers: Yes

Passed by unanimous consent

CB-101-27 Act Amending Committees for Session 101 (Cassidy) (Exec → rec of do pass)

Representative Williams seconded by Representative Bell

Cassidy: This is a bill amending committees because there are members who consistently can't make their meeting times, so we want to accommodate them. I would take a friendly moving Trinity Guido to Congressional Administration.

Williams: I notice that the bill currently strikes two members from Sustainability and leaving it with just six members. This is the smallest committee by far. Are you confident in the size of the committee moving forward?

Cassidy: Sustainability has been a small but mighty committee. Even though it used to have eight members, two members consistently could not go. Even though I would want better distribution, I do not want to pull members from other committees and be disruptive.

DeAngeli: The members on the committee right now have been very productive. Shihui has done great work and Veli was never able to attend a meeting. I can absorb some of the responsibilities.

Merchant: Would you accept a friendly amendment moving Trinity Guido to Congressional Administration?

Cassidy: Yes

Passed by unanimous consent

Follow-Up Reports

Williams: The OSGA Conference was last weekend. I am the outgoing president of the organization. We had some successful elections. The Executive Branch appointed Rosa SanRoman as the Student Advisory Board Director. We oversaw successful elections and I am now done overseeing the organization. It was the largest conference that we have ever had, and I am happy to have been a part of it.

Items for Future Agenda

Announcements and Comments

Chism: In terms of Greek diversity and inclusion, Panhellenic had a panel of people to talk about diversity with the individual chapters. I heard that it went really well. If you were wondering what the Greek organizations were doing to fix the situations, ask me or Vice Chair Cordova.

Merchant: The Executive Branch is meeting with Greek representatives tomorrow about initiatives, and there is another talk on April 12.

Papanicolaou: Register for The Big Event by this Friday!

Rojas: We have the official date for Eve of Nations. The theme is 195 Shades of Unity for 195 countries. The event will be April 12 at 6:30pm. It will be lots of fun!

Nadolski: If you were sad about missing the open house for TOG, good news, there's another presentation at 8:15pm. Come after the meeting or ask one of us about applying.

Motion to skip Final Roll Call and Adjourn

Representative Powers seconded by Representative Hart

Final Roll Call

Adjourn – 7:46pm

Chair: Thomas Cassidy

Vice Chair: Mackenzie Cordova

Secretary: Richard Holt

Session 101	General
Alpert, Lucy	x
Bell, Aspen	x
Biškup, Emma	x
Bonić, Karla	x
Bouch, Malachi	x
Bridwell, Trey	ex
Chism, Hennessey	x
Cordova, Mackenzie	x
DeAngeli, Emma	x
Del Rio, Paulina	x
Douglas, Zoe	x
Felkner, Katy	x
Gau, Dalton	ex
Guido, Trinity	x
Hardt, Peter	ex
Hart, Harrison	x
Haugland, Sara	x
Hobson, Sarah	ex
Holt, Richard	x
Kim, Jiyeon	x
Kolker, Sephra	x
Kuketz, Tim	x
Liu, Shihui	x
Matthews, Will	ex
Mayes, Mark	x
McCans, Hunter	ex
Merchant, Mahak	x
Mosley, Jordan	x
Nadolski, Karley	x
Papanicolaou, Peter	x

Patterson, Savannah	x	
Powers, Shayla	x	
Quick, Samuel	x	
Rojas, Julio	x	
Sallee, Sophie	ex	
Schneider, Caitlin	x	
Spangler-Day, Santana	ex	
Stack, Hunter	x	
Thompson, Gabriela	x	
Vanderford, Elliot	ex	
Wegrzynski, Abbey	ex	
Williams, Dan	x	
Wilson, Taylor	x	
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		0
10		

Session 101	AB-101-11	CB-101-26	CB-101-27
Alpert, Lucy	y		
Bell, Aspen	y		
Biškup, Emma	y		
Bonić, Karla	y		
Bouch, Malachi	y		
Bridwell, Trey			
Chism, Hennessey	y		
Cordova, Mackenzie	y		
DeAngeli, Emma	y		
Del Rio, Paulina	y		
Douglas, Zoe	y		
Felkner, Katy	y		
Gau, Dalton			
Guido, Trinity	y		
Hardt, Peter			
Hart, Harrison	y		
Haugland, Sara	y		
Hobson, Sarah			
Holt, Richard	y		
Kim, Jiyeon	y		
Kolker, Sephra	y		
Kuketz, Tim	y		
Liu, Shihui	y		
Matthews, Will			
Mayes, Mark	y		
McCans, Hunter			
Merchant, Mahak	y		
Mosley, Jordan	y		
Nadolski, Karley	y		
Papanicolaou, Peter	y		

Patterson, Savannah	y		
Powers, Shayla	y		
Quick, Samuel	y		
Rojas, Julio	y		
Sallee, Sophie			
Schneider, Caitlin	y		
Spangler-Day, Santana			
Stack, Hunter	y		
Thompson, Gabriela	y		
Vanderford, Elliot			
Wegrzynski, Abbey			
Williams, Dan	y		
Wilson, Taylor	y		
Yes			
	33	0	0
No			
	0	0	0
Abstain			
	0	0	0