



Congress Agenda
April 5th, 2021 | 6:00 pm
Kirby Ballroom or [Zoom](#)

- 1. Call to Order** 6:00pm
- 2. Roll Call** 6:00-6:02
- 3. Approval of the Agenda** 6:02-6:05
 - a. Eli motioned, Daksha seconded.
 - i. Vote: Approved
 1. 0 Nay's
 2. 0 Abstentions
- 4. Approval of the Minutes** 6:05-6:07
 - a. [Minutes 3.29.21](#)
 - i. Bob motioned, Nam seconded.
 1. Vote: Approved
 - a. 0 Nay's
 - b. 0 Abstentions
- 5. Introduction of Guests** 6:07-6:12
 - a. Grace: Rep at large excited to be back on campus.
 - b. Ben: Sustainability director, excited for in person classes next semester.
- 6. Dr. Erwin** 6:12-6:20
 - a. Dr. Erwin: Welcome to everyone that is new! Excited to work with you. Congratulations to this Congress for what you have accomplished this year as well! I have sent out two emails regarding vaccines on campus. We should have vaccines on Campus next week! We have 500 J&J doses on the way. Thank you to Essentia for supporting this project as well. We hope to demonstrate demand for more on campus clinics with this first round of on campus vaccinations.
 - b. Eli: How does the fact that more students are getting vaccinated affect Fall 2021?

- c. Dr. Erwin: We think it is positive news in terms of having a more in person fall semester. We do not yet have guidance from MDH however. We are paying very close attention to the MDH and also working alongside them to figure out future plans as well.

7. Speaker's Spotlight 6:20-6:25

- a. Alex: Thank you to all the graduating seniors, thank you for all that you have done, wish you all the best!

8. Open Positions

- a. **CLA Senator**
- b. **Chief External Affairs Officer**
- c. **Representative-at-Large (2)**

9. Old Business 6:25-6:27

10. New Business 6:27-6:47

- a. [S/N Grading Extension Resolution](#) (15min)

- i. Parker motioned, Eli seconded.

1. Parker: *Read background whereases and therefores.*
2. Neal: What does passing this resolution mean?
3. Parker: Passing this resolution indicates that we would like S/N grading options to be extended to after finals and that professors should set aside time to talk to their students about what S/N grading is.
4. Neal: Why now?
5. Parker: Obviously modality has not changed but stress has. We have been with COVID for a year and a half leading to more and more stress on students. It was brought up in academic affairs a month ago but it was not brought up early enough. However, it is not too late. We can do it now.
6. Ben: As a student that took a semester off due to the online modality this feels like a "get out of jail free card". I used S/N grading as a way for me to look better. It doesn't feel fair to students in the past or future to have this opportunity even though we are in a pandemic.
7. Eli: Part of me says that if you allow this to happen it will encourage professors to make harder exams. Professors want students to know the content and if you encourage S/N grading switches that late it will promote professors to make harder exams.
8. Shireen: For S/N grading you get the credit or you don't. An "S" grade states that you have a C technically. This is why I don't feel like it is a "get out of jail free card". In order to get an "S" you still need to pass. This pandemic is stressful and I disagree that this is a "get out of jail free card." I also don't see professors making exams harder either, I think professors are struggling just as much as students. I can see where some

people are frustrated that this hasn't been an option in the past or future, but we are in a very very stressful time right now.

9. Emma: I think it is important to choose S/N grades so that you can focus on learning instead of the grade. I think moving the deadline will not allow for the use of it to enhance education, it will only be used to cover bad grades. But I do like the idea.
10. Sandi: I don't think that this is a "get out of jail free card." To say people use this to cover bad grades I feel is a bit insensitive. Some people don't learn as well online as they do in person.
11. Griffin: We shouldn't think about this as covering up a bad grade. Other universities are switching to S/N grading after finals as well.
12. Parker: Stress has led a lot of students to make mistakes in this tough time. If this passes it isn't a guarantee that it will go through. But it is our job to pass resolutions that the students want and this is something that they have shown they want.
13. Jonathan called the question, Annie seconded.
 - a. Vote on resolution: Passed
 - i. 19 Yes
 - ii. 0 No
 - iii. 0 Abstain

b. [Balla Award Renaming](#) (5min)

- i. Neal motioned, Nam seconded.
 1. Neal: I don't know how long it's been called the Balla award.
 2. Dr. Smyth: At least 7 years.
 3. Neal: 7 Years too many. I understand change is hard. Luckily Bhakta is close to Balla. If it is renamed I will send a high 5 every monday to the winner.
 4. Eli: We've called it the Balla for several years. Why should we change it?
 5. Neal: I think it's important to break tradition.
 6. Grace: Is that a laser tag trophy?
 7. Neal: Paintball.
 8. Dr. Smyth: The paintball club donated as a thank you for an SOG allocation. It was passed around for the first time as a joke. It has come to stand for something important.
 9. Emma: Can we get a speech on why it should be named after you?
 10. Neal: I've served in SA for 4 years and I've had success due to the people around me. I think it should be Bhakta because it is similar to Balla.
 11. Jonathan: How big is your ego? Your name is on a plaque. Why the award?

12. Neal: Tradition needs to be broken and they sound alike.
13. Annie: Can you give a brief background of the Balla?
14. Neal: It is passed around every week to recognize a member who has been doing great work.
15. *Neal read whereases and therefore.*
16. Eli called the question, Annie seconded.
 - a. Vote on resolution: Passed
 - i. 16 Yes
 - ii. 1 No
 - iii. 0 Abstain

11. Discussion 6:47-6:50

12. Governance Reports 6:50-6:52

- a. Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM)
- b. Assessment
- c. Facilities
- d. Liberal Education
- e. Athletics
- f. Strategic Planning and Budget
- g. Student Experiences (SE)
- h. Teaching and Learning (TLC)
- i. University Coordinating Council (UCC)

13. Executive Reports 6:52-7:31

- a. Chief Student Life Officer - Riley Tuft (7min)
 - i. Oral Report
 1. Riley: Thank you to everyone for a great year, I appreciate everyone's hard work. Sad to say goodbye to the graduating seniors. Thank you to everyone who came to the Band Together event. I'm hoping the event will continue to grow. Got good feedback on the event as well which was nice to see. Meeting with counselors on Wednesday to debrief the event as well. Thank you for a great year.
- b. Chief Academic Affairs Officer - Parker Schultz (5min)
 - i. Oral Report
 1. Parker: I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize all seniors. Thank you all so much for this last year it has been great working with you all. If anyone is interested in AA please email me.
- c. Chief External Affairs Officer
- d. Chief Financial Officer - Jonathan Wolenec (15min)
 - i. Go pick up your stipends
 1. Jonathan: I hate getting daily emails go pick up your checks. We currently have 5 SOG checks in our possession if you are part of

those orgs please talk to the president to go pick up your checks. The checks will be voided in two weeks.

e. Rep. to the Board of Regents - Abdi Ali

f. Vice President - Annie Counihan (7min)

i. Oral Report

1. Annie: Spring retreat will be postponed till August 22nd-August 23rd optional overnight on the 23rd to the 24th. Daksha will still be doing onboarding. Transition binders need to be done by next Monday! I will be putting cabinet appointments in Slack before next Congress. Senate disability task force meeting this Wednesday. Free speech website committee met Friday and the website will be live by the end of the semester. Meeting with Sharon Dzik, Director of Community Standards, to discuss the arrested protestors resolution. Also meeting with Dr. Erwin and Dr. Jackson soon. Advocating for equitable funding for UMD with Senator Voss. Stop Asian Hate task force met last week and emailed APAA. Next year SA is looking to provide financial support to MC orgs. Daksha and I will be having weekly office hours every Tuesday from 12 to 1. Final thing, thank you seniors for providing leadership and direction you will be missed!

g. President - Neal Bhakta (5min)

i. Oral Report

1. Neal: Never got confirmation about Glensheen tours unfortunately. If you did show interest in the alumni event on the 28th you should've gotten an email, if not let me know. There is a lot I could say about this organization, but thank you! Thank you to everyone that I've served with, there have been some lows but mostly highs. This org has given me a lot. I've been in this org since early freshman year. My Monday's have always been busy with something SA related. I've made mistakes during my terms, use my mistakes as motivators for you in the future. Many things you accomplish here, students won't feel the impact right away. I hope I have made an impact in my time here. Thank you to this organization, I am really grateful, I don't know what my life would've been like without SA. I only applied for SA because my nickname was pres and here I am now. My first Congress I could not wait to get out honestly. Something happened and I stuck around. Buy in to this organization, ask questions, and don't be afraid to look stupid. I want to give 3 special shoutouts. First to Corb, almost like a father figure to me thank you for the help over the years. Another shoutout to my 2 vice presidents Delaney and Annie. All my success is because of you two. Thank you for challenging me to be the very best. Annie I have two things for you,

the first is a Bulldog pin. When I found out I won the presidency the first time I was at Morris and Mike gave me this pin. Second is the American flag that was given to me at Support the U day. Thank you all so much for everything.

14. Director and Student Personnel Reports 7:31-7:33

- a. Public Relations - Mahjur Ahmed
- b. Bulldog Lyft - Delaney Anderson (2min)
 - i. [Here](#) is a quick run down on ridership August-now! Thank you to all who have helped with advertisements for the several launches we've had this academic year. If anyone has any questions about this position do not hesitate to reach out.
 - ii. Delaney: Total of 729 rides in March which is an all time high. We gave ridership credits to international students and that has totaled 99 rides since January. If anyone is interested in this position please reach out to me. Thank all of you for all your hard work. I've spent every Monday of my college career in Congress and I wouldn't have it any other way.
- c. Diversity & Inclusion - Elizabeth Rypa
- d. Rules and Elections - Emma Neidviecky
- e. Systems Administrator - Jordan Watts
- f. Sustainability - Gabbie Raymond
- g. Chief of Staff - Shane Gullikson

15. Advisor's Minute 7:33-7:40

- a. Dr. Smyth: If you're going to be in SA next year stand up. All those standing are the glue that will hold this org together. If you are new to SA please stand up. This is the leadership that will help shape us into a new organization. All those leaving stand up. These are the people that have been in the same positions you are about to be in. I'm proud of how successful you have been this year. One thing we have missed is the cultural traditions SA has that we missed. Executive breakfasts, hanging in the office, tabling, spring retreat last year and this year. Missing those didn't affect the work that we put in. You all remained connected with each other. I've never texted students so much before. I'm really proud of our work, and I'm looking forward to getting back to our ritualistic events.

16. Open Announcements 7:40-7:50

- a. Eli: Freshman reps are still freshman reps until the end of the year, if you hold another position you have dual positions.
- b. Shireen: Due to health issues I am unable to attend in person Congresses but thank you all for an amazing year. COVID hit as soon as I was elected but I did get to meet several of you in the SA office. I would like to thank Hollin, Eli, Riley, Gabbie, and Dannah for being so welcoming and warm. To the other seniors, we made it, I love you all very dearly, I hope nothing but the best for this Organization. I know you will crush it. Thank you for everything!

- c. Dannah: I wish I would've had the opportunity to experience SA in person. I am so happy that I was able to be a part of this organization. I have had so much personal growth from these experiences. Learning how to reach out or speak up or handle tough conversations. We've all learned so many skills from this experience, be proud of yourself. I wish I would've had more years with SA, you all can. Be proud of yourself.
- d. Emma: I am very grateful for my time in SA. I made so many friends and I learned a lot. I got way better at a lot of different skills. I am really grateful for R&E. Thank you to Corbin for being a great advisor as well.

17. Bhakta Award 7:50-7:55

- a. Bob: I'd like to give the first Bhakta award to Annie for everything she has done and will continue to do for this organization.

18. Adjourn 7:55

- a. Eli motioned, Jonathan seconded.
 - i. Vote: Approved
 - 1. 0 Nay's
 - 2. 0 Abstentions