
The University Senate

FACULTY · STUDENT · P&A · CIVIL SERVICE

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC)

September 22, 2023

Minutes of the Meeting

These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions or actions reported in these minutes reflect the views of, nor are they binding on, the senate, the administration, or the Board of Regents.

[**In these minutes:** Welcome and Introductions; Student Senate Consultative Committee Updates; Approval of Docket for September 28, 2023, Student Senate Meeting; Student Senate Retreat Agenda; Other Business]

PRESENT: Pavan Guttipatti (chair), Taiwo Aremu (vice chair), Ethan Ion, Mia McGraw, Kaitlyn Roers, Pete Smith

REGRETS: Natalie Bennett, Jovany Betancourt, Madeline Schneider, Paisley Sierra

ABSENT:

GUESTS: Matthew Croft, executive director, Disabled Student Cultural Center; Mary Kate Wolken, representative, Council of Graduate Students; Megan Sweet, senior advisor for strategy and operations, Office of the President

OTHERS: Chris Kwapick, former senate associate, University Senate Office

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Pavan Guttipatti opened the meeting and welcomed members. Members of the Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) introduced themselves.

2. Student Senate Consultative Committee Updates

Guttipatti asked representatives from each Recognized Student Governance Association (RSGA) to report an update from their organization/group.

Council on Graduate Students (COGS)

Mary Kate Wolken attended the meeting and reported for COGS in the absence of Natalie Bennett. Wolken reported the COGS had a successful first meeting. The general assembly for COGS is scheduled for October 12, 2023. They will be setting their advocacy priorities at the general assembly. COGS hopes to focus on other priorities during 2023-24 because labor and pay is no longer the purview of COGS.

Undergraduate Student Government (USG)

Mia McGraw reported USG had their first forum where they discussed the issue of the food desert on the Twin Cities campus. There are currently two main grocery stores on campus, however, they are overpriced and difficult to access in terms of transportation. The goal is to establish a more permanent and affordable grocery store. They are scheduled to meet with administrators to discuss if the solution is feasible.

McGraw also reported that USG, COGS, and Professional Student Government (PSG) have drafted a joint statement to the Board of Regents (BOR) requesting two student representatives from each group be included on the Presidential Search Advisory Committee (PSAC). McGraw asked SSCC to possibly endorse the letter to the BOR. McGraw will present the letter at the Student Senate Retreat.

University of Minnesota Duluth Student Government Association (UMDSGA)

Ethan Ion reported UMNDSGA recently completed the freshman representative elections. Members that were not elected to the six freshman seats will be asked to fill the remaining open roster positions. The Education and Human Service Professions senator position is still open and needs to be filled.

Ion also reported that UMDSGA is working to establish digital and physical drop boxes across campus for students to share complaints/concerns and ideas related to the Duluth campus.

Professional Student Government (PSG)

Pete Smith reported PSG is working to plan and establish goals for the 2023-24 year.

Rochester Student Association (RSA)

Kaitlyn Roers reported RSA closed its election nominations and voting process will begin within the next week. The full board will be established in two weeks time. Roers is working with the student senator to create a survey to send out to students. The survey will focus on the new meal plan. An additional student survey will focus on general safety.

3. Approval of Docket for September 28, 2023, Student Senate Meeting

Guttiapatti asked SSCC members to view the [agenda](#) and opened the floor to questions or comments. There was a motion and a second to approve the agenda as written. Motion carried.

4. Student Senate Retreat Agenda

Guttiapatti reported that the [agenda](#) has been updated and will include two small group breakout sessions, one in the morning and the second in the afternoon. Guttiapatti opened the floor to feedback on the changes to the agenda. No discussion.

Guttiapatti explained that the small group breakout sessions will be facilitated by SSCC members. Chris Kwapick shared with the group the [small group topics](#) (see slide 23), which were of highest interest on the student survey.

Kwapick opened the floor to feedback on the small group topics. He also asked for SSCC members to volunteer to facilitate the breakout sessions. Members assigned to facilitate the session topic are listed below in bold.

- Public Safety - **Pavan Guttiapatti**
- Student Engagement/Communication/Outreach - **Taiwo Aremu**

- Food/Housing Insecurity (incl. Meal Plans) - **Mia McGraw**
- Transportation - **Pete Smith**
- Physical and Mental Health & Wellbeing - **Madeline Schneider**
- Accessibility & Disability Services - TBD
- Tuition & Student Finances - **Ethan Ion**

Kwapick also asked a representative from each of the associations to share a brief report on their RSGA at the retreat. Guttipatti opened the floor to questions or comments concerning the retreat. Smith asked for the number of attendees at the retreat and for an estimated number of participants in each of the breakout session groups. Kwapick reported there will be about 40 attendees and each breakout session participant size will vary, but may range from two to ten participants.

5. Other Business

RSGA Joint Statement on PSAC

Wolken and McGraw further explained the RSGA statement to the BOR concerning student representation on PSAC. Wolken said that COGS has already sent their own letter, however, the RSGAs plan to also issue a joint statement expressing their concerns. McGraw and Wolken asked SSCC to advise on the next steps taken to request and receive additional endorsement on the letter. Guttapatti said that the letter is more from the perspective of RSGA, therefore, the endorsement of SSCC may not be appropriate. Kwapick explained that, typically, letters and endorsements need to go through the proper motion if they are being endorsed by a group entity. He also added that it is not recommended for individual senators to sign on with their ranks. Kwapick said he thinks it would be a good idea to share the statement with the RSGA representatives attending the Student Senate Retreat to receive feedback and input. Guttipatti and John Lof will follow up on the endorsement of the statement within the next two weeks.

Office of the President Liaison

Guttipatti welcomed Megan Sweet, senior advisor for strategy and operations, Office of the President. Sweet introduced herself and explained that she is the liaison between the Office of the President and the student governance. She regularly attends the Student Senate meetings as well as the SSCC meetings, and she is a resource available to all RSGAs, as well.

With no additional business or discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

Erin Piel
University Senate Office