



Minutes of:

## The Student Senate

Thursday, November 5, 2020

11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Briggs Tople, chair, Student Senate, called the meeting to order at 11:32 a.m.

### 1. Administrative Response to Senate Actions (*Information*)

- There are no pending responses.

### 2. Approval of the Minutes for Previous Student Senate Meetings (*Action*)

*Briggs Tople, chair, Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) and Student Senate*

**Motion:** To approve the minutes from the following Student Senate meetings:

- [April 23, 2020, Regular Meeting](#)
- [June 23, 2020, Special Meeting](#)
- [September 19, 2020, Special Meeting](#)
- [October 21, 2020, Special Meeting of the Twin Cities Delegation](#)

**Hearing no further discussion, a vote was taken, and the motion was approved.**

### 3. Assembly/Association Updates (*Information*)

*All members of the Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC)*

- Annie Counihan, Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) member, University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD), said the UMD Student Association has been working hard to reform the group to make it more inclusive to students of color. This work includes proposed resolutions for bias training for officers and working with University administrative leadership. Additionally, they have been working with senior administration to extend the S/N grading deadline for students to utilize.

- Manpreet Singh, SSCC member, Crookston Student Association (CSA), stated that the Crookston campus recently decided to eliminate spring break so that students would not leave a return to campus, which could increase the risk of transmitting COVID-19. Additionally, CSA has been working on updating their governing documents in order to better reflect student gender identities.
- Erika Swant, SSCC member, Professional Student Government (PSG), said that PSG's major initiatives are the ongoing work of their campus safety task forces as well as advocating for expanded COVID-19 testing sites on campus.
- Agléška Cohen-Rencountre, SSCC member, Council of Graduate Students (COGS), said that COGS recently passed a resolution calling for expanded COVID-19 testing on the West Bank and St. Paul campuses.
- Jack Flom, SSCC member, Minnesota Student Association (MSA), said that MSA recently passed a resolution requesting the extension of the S/N grading deadline to November 30, 2020. Additionally, they have been advocating to keep the five day spring break as well as a 3% tuition refund.
- James Farnsworth, SSCC member, Senate Committee on Finance and Planning (SCFP), stated that the SCFP recently wrote a letter to President Gabel regarding the hiring of a new senior vice president for finance and operation, Myron Frans, and Frans recently attended his first meeting with the committee.
- MyLe Luong, SSCC member, Rochester Student Association (RSA), stated that RSA recently had a discussion with their chancellor about safety and equity. Additionally, there are several renovations and expansions happening on campus.

#### **4. Student Senate/Student Senate Consultative Committee Chair Report (*Information*)**

*Briggs Tople, chair, Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) and Student Senate*

Tople reported that he attended a number of meetings recently, including those related to the search for the vice president for student affairs, the weekly fall 2020 scenarios advisory meetings, the weekly COVID-19 consultation with Twin Cities campus student associations, and additional governance consultation meetings on public safety, Title IX, and S/N grading.

Tople further reported that the Student Senate and SSCC have been at the forefront of consultation since summer and have advised on a number of issues, including Title IX changes at the University, changes to spring break, administering a student survey related to COVID-19, and starting the work of a task force to deal with institutional racism. He additionally commended the work done by several SSCC members and student senators to update the body's governing documents, including the Student Senate handbook.

Scott Petty, student senator, College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS), asked for further clarification on the Student Senate's role in selecting students to the Sexual Misconduct Hearing Committee (SMHC) and its selection group which was created as a result of the changes to Title IX regulations. Gunnar Frahm, vice chair, SSCC, responded that the SSCC received a request from the SMHC office to assist in appointing those students and would be acting on this item in the next few days. Petty opined that it is important for students to have their own say in who is appointed in this process.

##### **5. Resolution Regarding Tuition Protection (Action)**

*James Farnsworth, student senator, College of Education and Human Development (CEHD)*

Farnsworth introduced a resolution regarding tuition protection and provided an overview of the legislation. He acknowledged that this work was started by former ranking student senator, Isaiah Ogren, with additional input from Scott Petty. Farnsworth explained that the resolution aims to create protections for students from overly burdensome tuition raises and asks for the following:

- The Student Senate to endorse the principle of tuition protection for newly entering University students indexed to their programs of study;
- The Student Senate requests that the Senate Consultative Committee refer to the Senate Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP) a request for a compendium of appropriate time to degree metrics covering all students at the University organized by degree program categories;
- The Student Senate requests that the Senate Consultative Committee refer to the Senate Committee on Finance and Planning (SCFP) a request to explore the practicalities of implementing a system of tuition protection for all newly entering University students freezing their tuition rates for a period of time equal to the time to degree used to metric program-level performance and then report back to both the Senate Consultative Committee and the Student Senate.

Ryan Machtmes, student senator, College of Education and Human Development (CEHD), asked why the resolution seemed to only focus on undergraduate tuition and not graduate student tuition. Petty replied that graduate and professional programs often set their own tuition rates and the intent was not to be exclusive, even though they are focusing on non-resident non-reciprocity tuition.

**Hearing no further discussion, a pending motion was made to adopt the resolution. The motion was seconded by Petty, a vote was taken, and the motion was approved.**

## **6. Student Senate Statement for Principles Regarding Any Legislation on Public Safety, Equity, Access, and/or Diversity (Action)**

*Briggs Tople, chair, Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) and Student Senate*

Cohen-Rencountre moved to postpone this agenda item until the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Student Senate. The motion was seconded by Mattea Allert, student senator, College of Science and Engineering (CSE). Proponents of the motion stated that they wanted more time to fully discuss this item at a future meeting. **Hearing no further discussion, a vote was taken and the motion did not prevail.**

Tople then proceeded to present the proposed Student Senate statement for principles regarding any legislation on public safety, equity, access, and/or diversity. Tople explained that these principles seemed like a good framework to apply to any type of legislation for the year and could serve as a guide for other senators as they work on letters or resolutions. Multiple senators suggested adding language that recognized marginalized communities as well as clarifying native and indigenous populations. Tople agreed to incorporate those changes into the statement.

**Hearing no further discussion, Tople moved to adopt the statement. The motion was seconded by Flom, a vote was taken, and the motion was approved.**

## **7. Discussion of Resolution on Student Mental Health (Information)**

*Sydney Bauer, ranking student senator, Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) and Student Senate*

Sydney Bauer, ranking student senator, Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) and Student Senate, presented a draft resolution on student mental health for information. Bauer stated that she has been working with multiple co-authors on the resolution which is primarily focused on providing increased access for students to mental health care resources, especially telehealth opportunities on system campuses. She stated that once she receives further consultation from the administration and other student senators, the resolution could be moved forward at the next meeting of the Student Senate.

Swant appreciated this resolution and asked if the authors had considered privacy or other logistical concerns when asking for Zoom lectures to be recorded by faculty. Bauer replied that she had not considered that, but will take that suggestion under advisement. Adam Sychla, student senator, College of Biological Sciences (CBS), noted that the first half of the resolution seemed to focus on student mental health and the second half emphasized classroom experiences and structures to ease student burdens. He asked if it would make sense to divide the resolution

to which Bauer responded that it was her intention to keep this in an omnibus style so that all of these items would be addressed at once.

## **8. Discussion of Resolution on Disarmament and Demilitarization of the Police on Campuses (Information)**

*Briggs Tople, chair, Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) and Student Senate  
Jack Flom, SSCC representative, Minnesota Student Association (MSA)*

Tople presented a draft resolution on disarmament and demilitarization of police on University campuses for information. He acknowledged that this work was started in the spring by former ranking student senator, Isaiah Ogren, and has since been working with Flom to consult with multiple committees and stakeholders on the issue. Flom added that this resolution was recently endorsed by MSA and would ultimately like to see it go before the full University Senate. Tople added that the aim of the resolution is to create a more welcoming campus environment, especially for students of color.

Farnsworth noted that it has been difficult to get accurate information regarding the University of Minnesota Police Department's (UMPD) inventory of weapons and Tople added that he has been working to get this information. Petty added that this information may have to come through a data practices request and he would be willing to assist in that process.

Counihan asked if it were possible to add language to the resolution to offer protection to protestors who may be arrested, as recently happened on November 4, 2020. Tople acknowledged that sort of language would help make a more inclusive campus, but might be better addressed in a separate resolution. Machtmes added that the resolution may not be appropriate due to the fact the Twin Cities student body voted on a similar issue in 2019 and rejected the proposal to disarm the police. Tople replied that this resolution is a bit different in that it does not ask to fully disarm the police and is very much in response to the experiences that students have had over the past six months since the killing of George Floyd.

## **9. Student Senate Constitution Amendment (Action)**

*Briggs Tople, chair, Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) and Student Senate  
Gunnar Frahm, vice chair, SSCC and Student Senate*

Gunnar Frahm, vice chair, SSCC and Student Senate, presented a proposed amendment to the Student Senate Constitution. Frahm noted that this amendment was passed by a majority of all voting members of the Student Senate on September 19, 2020, however, it did not pass by a two-thirds majority. The amendment can be passed and ratified today if it receives 29 votes in

the affirmative. Frahm indicated that the amendment is largely technical in nature and makes mostly grammatical corrections.

**Frahm moved to approve the proposed amendment to the Student Senate Constitution and the motion was seconded by Flom. Hearing no further discussion, a vote was taken, and with 35 votes in the affirmative, the amendment was approved.**

**10. [Proposed Student Senate Bylaws Amendment #1 \(Technical Fixes\) \(Action\)](#)**

*Briggs Tople, chair, Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) and Student Senate  
Gunnar Frahm, vice chair, SSCC and Student Senate*

**Comment:** This amendment can be passed and ratified today if it receives 29 votes in the affirmative. If the vote falls short of the 29 vote threshold but is approved by a majority of those present and voting, it will be placed on the December meeting docket for further vote and ratification.

Frahm presented proposed amendment #1 to the Student Senate Bylaws. He indicated that this amendment was mostly technical in nature and makes necessary corrections to the Bylaws.

Swant asked for clarification on the change to the name of the Health Sciences Student Consultative Committee. Chris Kwapick, senate associate, University Senate Office explained that this change was made due to the fact that the Academic Health Center (AHC) no longer truly exists after the restructuring of the Health Sciences colleges, centers, and offices.

**Frahm moved to approve amendment #1 to the Student Senate Bylaws and the motion was seconded by Flom. Hearing no further discussion, a vote was taken, and with 38 votes in the affirmative, the amendment was approved.**

**11. [Proposed Student Senate Bylaws Amendment #2 \(Good Standing\) \(Action\)](#)**

*Briggs Tople, chair, Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) and Student Senate  
Gunnar Frahm, vice chair, SSCC and Student Senate*

**Comment:** This amendment can be passed and ratified today if it receives 29 votes in the affirmative. If the vote falls short of the 29 vote threshold but is approved by a majority of those present and voting, it will be placed on the December meeting docket for further vote and ratification.

Frahm presented proposed amendment #2 to the Student Senate Bylaws. He indicated that this amendment was meant to address what is commonly called the rule of good standing which

outlines criteria for which a student senator could be removed from their seat. He noted that this language was drafted in conjunction with MSA to allow for student senators to work with campus student associations in establishing guidelines for active participation.

Leif Anderson, student senator, College of Liberal Arts (CLA), asked what response would be needed from MSA if this amendment were to move forward. Flom replied that MSA is not looking to respond to this but added that student senators who are members of MSA are still required to attend MSA's forum meetings. Farnsworth and Sarani Rangarajan, student senator, Law School, added that this proposal will allow for better control of the Student Senate's membership.

Swant proposed an idea of adding the recently passed statement of principles into the bylaws. Tople appreciated the sentiment of the idea, but would require much further discussion and consultation for that sort of change.

**Frahm moved to approve amendment #2 to the Student Senate Bylaws and the motion was seconded by Counihan. Hearing no further discussion, a vote was taken, and with 30 votes in the affirmative, the amendment was approved.**

**12. [Proposed Student Senate Bylaws Amendment #3 \(Elections and Officers\)](#) (*Action*)**

*Briggs Tople, chair, Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) and Student Senate  
Gunnar Frahm, vice chair, SSCC and Student Senate*

**Comment:** This amendment can be passed and ratified today if it receives 29 votes in the affirmative. If the vote falls short of the 29 vote threshold but is approved by a majority of those present and voting, it will be placed on the December meeting docket for further vote and ratification.

Frahm presented proposed [amendment #3](#) to the Student Senate Bylaws. He indicated that this amendment was meant to address proposed changes to officer elections and duties. He noted that it provided for the three officers of the Student Senate to all come from different campus student associations, unless no one runs for those positions.

**Petty moved division of the amendment and asked that the language in section 3a be voted on separately from the remainder of [amendment #3](#). Rangarajan seconded the motion, a vote was taken, and the motion prevailed. (This created a new amendment known as [amendment #3a](#).)**

Tople then proceeded to open discussion on [amendment #3](#), now revised. **Frahm moved to approve amendment #3 to the Student Senate Bylaws and the motion was seconded by Flom. Hearing no further discussion, a vote was taken, and with 32 votes in the affirmative, the amendment was approved.**

Frahm moved to approve [amendment #3a](#) to the Student Senate Bylaws and the motion was seconded by Flom. There was discussion by the body regarding the advantages and disadvantages of this amendment in that it may increase diversity in leadership among the different types of students. **After discussion concluded, a vote was taken, and the motion passed with 27 votes in the affirmative.** Since the amendment did not receive an affirmative vote by a majority of all voting members of the Student Senate, Tople indicated that the amendment will be placed on the agenda for another vote at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

### **13. [Proposed Student Senate Bylaws Amendment #5 \(Officer Eligibility\) \(Action\)](#)**

*Sarani Rangarajan, student senator, Law School*

**Comment:** This amendment can be passed and ratified today if it receives 29 votes in the affirmative. If the vote falls short of the 29 vote threshold but is approved by a majority of those present and voting, it will be placed on the December meeting docket for further vote and ratification.

Rangarajan presented proposed [amendment #5](#) to the Student Senate Bylaws. She indicated that this amendment was meant to propose changes in who can be an officer on a year-by-year basis. The amendment would essentially disallow students from the same campus student association in serving in the same role in consecutive years. Rangarajan and Petty opined that this would allow for greater diversity in leadership, especially since the chair position is often filled by a Twin Cities undergraduate student.

Rangarajan moved to approve [amendment #5](#) to the Student Senate Bylaws and the motion was seconded by Petty. **Hearing no further discussion, a vote was taken, and the motion passed with 21 votes in the affirmative.** Since the amendment did not receive an affirmative vote by a majority of all voting members of the Student Senate, Tople indicated that the amendment will be placed on the agenda for another vote at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

### **14. [Proposed Student Senate Bylaws Amendment #4 \(Preamble\) \(Action\)](#)**

*Mattea Allert, student senator, College of Science & Engineering (CSE)*

**Comment:** This amendment can be passed and ratified today if it receives 29 votes in the affirmative. If the vote falls short of the 29 vote threshold but is approved by a majority of those present and voting, it will be placed on the December meeting docket for further vote and ratification.

Allert presented proposed [amendment #4](#) to the Student Senate Bylaws. She indicated that this amendment was to create a preamble to the Bylaws that would indicate the members of the Student Senate are elected representatives of students and have autonomous legitimacy. Sychla asked what this language means in relation to the campus student associations. Allert explained that it means members of the Student Senate are senators first and not necessarily beholden to the will of other associations. Machtmes stated his opposition to the language in that it could be in conflict with the Student Senate Constitution. Rangarajan opined that there was no discrepancy between the governing documents.

Allert moved to approve [amendment #4](#) to the Student Senate Bylaws and the motion was seconded by Flom. **Hearing no further discussion, a vote was taken, and the motion passed with 22 votes in the affirmative.** Since the amendment did not receive an affirmative vote by a majority of all voting members of the Student Senate, Tople indicated that the amendment will be placed on the agenda for another vote at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

#### **15. Old Business**

There was no old business.

#### **16. New Business**

There was no new business.

#### **17. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 1:36 p.m.

Chris Kwapick  
University Senate Office