



STUDENT GOVERNMENT
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

1 University Station, A6210 · Austin, TX 78712-0810
(512) 471 – 3166 · Fax: (512) 471-3408 · <http://www.utsg.org>

Student Government Assembly Meeting

November 1, 2011

- I. Call Meeting to Order 7:05
- II. First Roll Call
- III. Approval of Minutes
- IV. Guests
 - a. Gretchen Ritter, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and Faculty Governance
 - i. This is a big initiative that has been taken over by the provosts office, it is in its pilot year, the goal is to overtake the big gatekeeper courses in which we have both a real opportunity to help set students on a good path for their college careers and courses where students have quite a bit of trouble. We see these as a key part of the transition from high school to college, so this is a big initiative. We have just started it this year with three course sequences: biology, chemistry and statistics, and next year we will be doing three more courses, it takes about a year for three courses, we have found.
 - ii. The instructors in these courses (faculty teams) are trying to think about how we think about the key ideas and key skills learned in these classes. How do we build around them, how can we use technology to help build around them, and how do we create personal learning environments in these 500 people classes?
 - iii. The overall vision for the course transformation program is to help students master those skills and master the disciplinary concepts. There have been a lot of studies about what the growth of information technology means for these classes. The best approach to this is a hybrid approach (we think), where some of the course is online and the rest uses technology to enhance the learning environment.
 - iv. What are the benefits to students? You should see a real difference when you walk into a class that is part of the course transformation program. You should see a class in which students are talking to each other, working on problems, interacting with clickers and programs. You will know much more quickly if you are getting it and doing well in the class, so that if you aren't, you can go to the instructor and get help getting on the right track. Deeper learning increases retention. If students are learning deeper, they will retain that information, wont forgot what they just heard, and will have a foundation. We think it will improve academic progress. You are going to hear from Dean Musick about some of the work going into the 4-year graduation rates. We can contribute to this by helping our students succeed in the introductory classes. Imagine the number of courses



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- xv. Love: Do we have any idea of the costs of these students failing these classes is to the University?
 - xvi. Ritter: I cant quote any numbers, but we need to provide resources for students so that they don't hit that early roadblock which can ruin their college career. If we can provide resources to make up that gap, we can serve students better and reduce the costs to the University at the same time
 - xvii. Lee: I have heard some discontent with this program in chemistry? Students had asked for their professor to lecture rather than not, and she told them that she wasn't allowed to. What options do they have, what options do they have to provide feedback?
 - xviii. Ritter: I'm not sure what the instructor meant when they said they aren't allowed to, because we aren't telling faculty how to teach their classes, but students may be uncomfortable with these implementations, because if you learn how to learn a certain way, and you are met with a new way, even if it is a better way, you will have some level of discomfort.
 - xix. Desai: You talked about this program maturing and growing the next few years. 10 classes? More? Less?
 - xx. Ritter: I think we are talking about doing 3 a year, ultimately 15-16. Schools and departments that don't have these large gateway courses are seeing some of the work that is being done and are creating their own mini versions for some of their courses. We hope that this is a leading edge for a more broad change in education. We hope it will be wide spread
 - xxi. As a freshman considering UT, one of the drawbacks was the impersonal freshman and sophomore experience in contrast with the ones that are offered at some of the private and IVY league schools. Will this program address that?
 - xxii. Ritter: I think it is a very positive step in that direction. It is hugely beneficial. One of the things we know from experience here and other universities is that students need to know that peers are key instructional tools in education. If I explain my research to you and skip a few steps, and then one of your peers explains that to you, they wont forget those basic steps that I may have skipped. Also, when you articulate something to a peer, you get a better understanding of what your strengths and weaknesses are. It makes it a less anonymous and more of a community experience
- b. Marc Musick, Associate Dean for Student Affairs, College of Liberal Arts
- i. Every day is a good day to be a Longhorn. You are the student body government, if there is anyone on this campus, you should be a cheerleader for this campus.



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government, we need senate, and we need other student organizations to come together in a way that has never been done before. This is our task. We have been given a gift, and now it is our turn to step up to the plate and see what we can do. One of the things that always bothered me when I was a student here was that I felt very disconnected from the University. When students come to this university, they are hit with a very unfriendly experience. I took Chemistry 301. I got a C. When I came here, I was bombarded with very unfriendly classes, and I felt like I wasn't part of this university. That changed in many ways: My job at Recsports, my participation in undergraduate research. A lot of students come here and don't take those opportunities. We as the leaders of this university need to make sure students are taking advantage of these opportunities. Do you think that is a worthy goal? I do. Because the moment that you step on campus, you are a member of my family. We are longhorns. We bleed orange. We have to turn that corner. Everyone on this campus is our brother and sister. They need our help. When these recommendations come out, you are going to see a number of recommendations about helping students. I can't tell you what they are, but I sincerely hope you will approach these recommendations with an open heart. Even though this is something that the president decided to do, this is something we have to do. We have to do this together. It is our moment

- iv. Desai: How can we show students the benefits of graduating in four years, and how do we challenge that notion?
- v. Musick: The task force is currently working on messaging. We are running focus groups on students, pulling them from different parts of campus and asking for their inputs on our messaging. A lot of students think that if they have to graduate in four years, they have to sacrifice something. We think that you can do everything that you want to do in four years. We are hearing a resistance to this message in this focus group. It saves you money and a year in your career.
- vi. Desai: You talk about the drop-off this past year, do we know why that happened?
- vii. Musick: We don't know how that happened. I will write a report by the end of the year
- viii. Desai: Academic and Social Integration?
- ix. Musick: I have my own opinions about this. One of the things I think we should consider doing is to rethink orientation and do something called calf camp. Does anyone know what fish camp is? It works. Many of students say fish camp is one of the most important experiences in their academic career. We have a version of that called Camp Texas. Why not has a camp texas for everyone? Why not create



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integration. Many students believe that if you take more hours its going to hurt you in some way, but there is anecdotal evidence and research to show that it is in face untrue, and that a heavier load results in academic integration, which results in more success.

- xx. Desai: Has anyone ever done a study on the dual-degree relationship with study abroad and other programs like there, which are harder to do when students are pursuing a dual degree?
- xxi. Musick: It's a complicated issue. The typical student on campus has 25-30 hours, already has a year under their belt in transfer and credit by exam. Someone with no extra credit has four hard years with little flexibility. Those that come in with credit have a lot more flexibility. Are yall on board? This is your time. Everyone in this room wants to leave their mark on campus. This is your chance.

V. Open Forum

- a. Carisa Neitsche – There will be a Spirits and Traditions Council meeting Monday Nov 2nd at 4pm in the Alumni Center, Margaret C Berry will be there. Information will be in the newsletter
- b. Veronica Seng, Texas Spirits – Band Jam, Benefits Make-a-wish, 10 dollars presale, 15 at the door. Broke Wheel is opening. We grant 3-4 wishes with the money we raise. Contact me, Sydney, or texaspiritsbandjam.com to get more info

VI. Ex-Officio

- a. Carisa Neitche, Senate of College Councils – Last Saturday we had Ready, Set, Go, it was a huge success, we had about 100 or so 9th and 10th graders, as well as their parents from central Texas come out and learn a little bit about what it takes in high school to prepare for college, we are doing a program in February for 11th graders, so stay tuned if you are interested in that at all. Last week we passed legislation on transparency and input in learning outcomes, we are following up on that, it's a slow but sure process. We are also following up on the future of course instructor surveys, if you have feelings or thoughts about that, let me know. Next week we are voting on three pieces of legislation, one on study abroad being taken into consideration for tenure decisions at the University, basically to open up more study abroad opportunities for students, voting on a consistent peer review process among faculty members, and also voting on the creation of a health professionals humanities certificate, which would be a chance for students who are interested in becoming a health professional, like pre-med students, to diversify their resume through a humanities certificate available specifically to them. Lastly, I have really enjoyed



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- iv. TPAC open forum is Wednesday the 16th of November, either in Main 212 or Avaya Auditorium
- v. Wellness Network, check out the website
- vi. To everyone in the room, you are all here, and there were a lot of people who want to be where you are, so you should see this as a privilege and not a chore. You were popularly elected; you need to be involved in conversations across campus. In the next few weeks Hegarty, Powers, and UTPD will be here, please be engaged and keep your laptops closed
- b. Ashley Baker, Student Body Vice President – ashleyv.baker@gmail.com
- c. Andrew Townsell, Chief of Staff – andrew.townsell@gmail.com
 - i. Shoutout to civic engagement, politipalooza was a huge success, hats off to that team
 - ii. Student Leadership Summit has been moved to February for a number of reasons, will allow us to plan for that a lot more and do exactly what it was that we wanted to do, let me know if you are interested
- d. Sydney Fazende, Communications Director – sydneyfazende@gmail.com
 - i. Shoutout to my LLAs for dressing up like me
 - ii. Jester Satellite Office, thanks to everyone for signing up for that, every Tuesday
 - iii. Internal Newsletter – Send me your deets, especially meeting times, holla at your girl
 - iv. Outreach points – John David Roberts is currently winning
 - v. Thank you for all of you have submitting your outreach
- e. Madison Gardner, External Financial Director – jmgardner22@gmail.com
 - i. Excellence Fund Applications were due Monday, we got about 13, which is exciting, we will be reviewing those next week, thanks for those of you who helped get those out
 - ii. The next philanthropy focus we will be doing is helping with Orange Santa, which is a program to help UT affiliates who won't be able to get Christmas presents be able to do so, we would love all of you to help with this, it will start in about a week and run until the first week in December
- f. Ilse Quijano, Internal Financial Director – quij.ilse@gmail.com
 - i. For those of you who have applied for funding, Veronica and I will be hosting spending workshops, look out for the times and dates in the internal newsletter, please attend those, and if you can't go let me know



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on their ID cannot vote in the district they currently live in. Speaker Straus is looking into this and we will be working on providing a lot of student feedback

- d. Ragsdale – I wanted to ask for yalls help on a current initiative, which is to allow Business students to schedule advising appointments online, if your college does this, let me know, send me a link, help me out
- e. Bernadette de la Cruz – I have been working with the Fine Arts CTBAC and we were going to send a letter to the Provosts office voicing our tuition opinions. The students of fine arts do support tuition increases to combat inflation rates, but also want to see more scholarships for fine arts students, we will be sending that letter to the provosts office
- f. Hicks: TSTV has expressed interest in filming our meetings, if you have objections, opinions, or suggestions, let me know. There have been talks within SSBC to have presentations to student government, if you are interested, talk to Ashley. Outlines have been out for a while, it's a great tool for you all to have your initiative planned out so that you don't get behind or not fulfill your promises. There are so many ways for you to get involved, and it is your responsibility, so take advantage of these opportunities and do what you were elected to do.

XII. Unfinished Business

- a. AR 21 – Fall 2011 Round 2 Appropriations
 - i. Lee: We as a finance committee met this week to go over appropriations; the only thing that changed was the single line item from Delta Sigma Theta, which increased from 50 to 100 dollars.
 - ii. **Vote: AR 21 Passes**
- b. AB 3 – Legislation and Agenda Date Changes
 - i. IA met this weekend, we had a 1 minute meeting to pass this, it hasn't changed, it will allow us to send out agendas and legislation 24 hours earlier
 - ii. **Vote: AB 3 Passes**

XIII. New Business

XIV. Announcements

- a. Louis Armendariz – November 14th-18th is international education week, which promotes study abroad, international education, I will be sending out information on how to get involved, if you want to write a resolution, you can
- b. Laurel Pugliese – SA will be meeting at 7 on Thursday to finish our tuition breakdown