



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.uts.org>

Student Government Assembly Meeting
January 31, 2012

- I. Call Meeting to Order 7:02
- II. First Roll Call
- III. Approval of Minutes Approved
- IV. Guests
 - a. Jim Walker, Director of Sustainability
 - i. Sustainability is pretty easy to find from the UT Homepage, we will link this to the registrars office in the next couple weeks and do a hard launch during the fall registration, if you have ideas for this it would be great, we just got an agreement to start a new UGS speaker series, Pennebaker and Daley are going to speak about sustainability and how the word has reached meaninglessness, but it does mean important things globally and how you will shape the world, and we will dig into that
 - ii. Green Fee, March 2010 is a 5 dollar a semester fee that, raises .5 million a year, student majority council decides where the money goes, application is open until march ninth, projects are on the website. John Lawler and Phillip Devine are the SG reps, two at large spots that we will need to fill, we will send that info out
 - iii. Campus Master plan, no website for that yet, we want you all to get involved in the master plan.
 - iv. I am available to speak upon request, almost every faculty member opens up with the meaningless of the word sustainability debate, it is usually interesting, if you have any issues with anything you can contact me
 - v. Thayer: What project at UT are you the most proud of regarding sustainability?
 - vi. Walker: The Green Fee is a pretty good thing. We have one of the largest in the country and we are implementing it in a way that involves the tower and our staff, getting staff involved and really funding some great projects
 - vii. Ethics and leadership flag will have sustainability flag, will be a big accomplishment
- V. Open Forum
 - a. Lucian Villasenor
 - i. Tonight, SG will vote on whether or not to have a tuition referendum, which will hold no binding power, but will go down on the record. The whole process was not made to accept student input. Online student surveys and TPAC open forums is not a way of gathering student opinion. That wasn't talking to students. If you wanted to get student opinion, you would have done



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what we do out on the south mall. The university has lots of money, but doesn't allocate it correctly. We paid 6,000 dollars to get a fake ice skating rink to entertain 400 students, while some of us are struggling to buy books and feed ourselves. This university works as a business model and not as a model to provide the best education for students. We are the backbone of this University. Our voice needs to be heard. Why not let the democratic process speak for itself? Hold the referendum, and allow students to voice what they really want.

b. Daniel Person

- i. I am a 5th year music education major in the college of fine arts, I am fortunate enough to have a lot of my tuition paid for, but some students are not that fortunate. A lot of us just want a voice and a level of transparency in how funds and tuition is allocated. That bugs me, not to say that it is malicious in any sort of way. We want to have a voice in how it's being spent. Enacting this referendum and giving us this voice allows us a chance to change history and do something that no one does, which forces our higher-ups to listen to us. We just want well-rounded information so we can use our voice correctly. I ask you to take a hard look at this referendum and allow the democratic process to speak for itself.

c. Billy Yates

- i. I want to speak tonight to the official representation of the students for the students that cannot be here. Those that are working 1,2,3 jobs, don't have time to read Plato, talk about student government. Working families in Texas subsidize UT. I want to speak on the Democratic process. Say you are one of those families who are trying to get by and finally get their student to come to UT, but their student is living on riverside, working 1,2,3 jobs, students are working their best but have little say with what's being done. As students this is our university. We own it and run it. We pay tuition. When you vote on this tuition take time to think about the democratic process and do your best to represent the students who do not have the time or energy to be here right now, make democracy the most successful things. If what starts here changes the world, then what starts in this room changes the world, and the democratic process needs to be respected. Pass this bill and allow the referendum. That is your job as representatives.

d. Ryan Mill, ICC, Inter Cooperative Council

- i. Open membership, we elect people to represent us, we have learned how to run an organization and have responsibility and power and how a voice can



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really affect change. This referendum excites me because I can see that the democratic process still works, so I encourage you to support this.

e. Viridiana Medellin, Swing Out Awards

- i. I am one of the co-chairs, applications for swing out awards went live a week ago, its an opportunity for your organization to apply for one or more of the categories and try to win 300 dollars or 1000 dollars for most outstanding. If you are part of an organization that is interested, please apply. You can enter any of the divisions, and you can be in multiple ones, including

f. Sam Lam, Texas Revue

- i. We just started auditions, info session in this room 3.116, slam poet, Chinese yo-yoer, chance to win money

g. Jannah Deis, Spirits and Traditions Council

- i. I am a former LLA and SG rep for Spirits and Traditions Council
- ii. February 6th watch party at pluckers for UT A&M game, it's a pluckers, theres 500 dollars worth of free wings
- iii. Free ring apps are due February 21st
- iv. On February 27th, 75th anniversary of the tower, we will have cake, tower sing happy birthday, come by 11-1

h. Terrance Moss

- i. I am Terrance, I am a computer science student, I am from NY, I pay out of state tuition, but I consider myself lucky because I don't have to work myself through college, the Texas legal code says that the state of Texas shall provide public free schools, and it is far from that. Tuition just gets higher and higher, this needs to come to a vote, and students need to be able to express a yes or no answer.

VI. Ex-Officio Reports

a. Carisa Nietsche, Senate of College Councils

- i. The Honor Code Task Force had its first meeting on Saturday, the wording is the first thing, the second is the Student Judicial Services process, and the third regards penalties for academic infractions.
- ii. The invest in Texas meeting this Sunday has been cancelled due to the Super Bowl
- iii. Election Code was passed last week
- iv. Textbook Legislation over SB 33 Legislation was tabled, if you are interested, come by
- v. I wanted to voice my thoughts on AR 27, I know I voiced my hesitation, but I have been sitting on the committee meetings and I am happy with the three compromises, it has my support, good luck debating that



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- b. Reid Long, Graduate Student Assembly
 - i. Next meeting is a week from tomorrow, we hope to introduce a resolution honoring dean Rodriguez
- c. Cameron Allison, Student Event Center
 - i. Thursday Drive will show at 6 and 9pm in the auditorium
 - ii. Thursday at 7 the lunar new year will be in the SAC Ballroom

VII. Appointments

- a. Graduate Representative - Nadia Al-Aubaidy
 - i. Sorry this has taken so long, very excited, she is enthusiastic, been excited to talk to her, want her to introduce herself
 - ii. Nadia: I am from Iraw, PhD Candidate, my major is Civil Engineering, Structural Engineering Project Management. I was working for the US Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq, it was an interesting experience, I gained a lot of leadership interaction with American and other cultures. It was challenging in terms of that I was the only woman engineer in the office and my life was in danger, It was not acceptable for a female in Iraq to work with Americans in Iraq. Since students come from different academic backgrounds they have different opinions. My engineering background and leadership background will bring a new opinion to SG
 - iii. Love: As an Iraqi citizen, do you think the war in Iraq was a good or bad thing?
 - iv. Nadia: I have been asked this question several times. No one likes their country to be occupied, but for me, I thought it was necessary. No one could get rid of the Hussein Regime but the United States. I think our country needed help from an advanced country like the United States, and I think that our alliance will bring a better future for Iraq and the United States, both of my countries.
 - v. Appointment Approved
- b. Diversity and Equity Student Advisory Council - Damilola Olatayo
 - i. This is one of those groups that I was asked to sit on, my class schedule conflicts, I am excited to appoint Damilola, she will represent us well
 - ii. Damilola: I go by Lola, I am a third year neurobiology premed student. I have had the privilege to be involved in several organizations and bodies that have been involved in minority issues around campus, especially recruitment and retention
 - iii. Approved
- c. Registrar Strategic Plan Working Group - Allison Ginger



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- i. The Registrar wanted someone who had leadership in SG, she contacted me, she will do a great job
- ii. Ginger: I have already sat in on two meetings, they just want student opinion, my main goal on this committee is a functional website
- iii. Desai: Can you tell us about what is being addressed at these meetings?
- iv. Ginger: Goals, social networking, staff training, things like that
- v. Approved

VIII. Deputy Advisor Report

- a. Melinda Sutton, Deputy to the Dean of Students – msutton@mail.utexas.edu

IX. Executive Reports

- a. Natalie Butler, Student Body President – natalie.e.butler@gmail.com
 - i. If you have thought on trademark and liscensing, let me know and shoot me your ideas, I want to get as much input as possible
 - ii. UT System Student Advisory Council is meeting this week, 2 day meeting, talking about a lot of things, tuition will be a big talk, I will bring this referendum to them
 - iii. The Committee I told you about last time first meeting is set for the first week in February
 - iv. If you want to run for union board, those spots are open, if you have issues with policies, Underground, reservations, let me know
 - v. I stand by the TPAC recommendations, we did a lot of work, the University is in troubled economic times, it's the right direction to go, if you want to dive into that issue with me, I like the referendum idea, I like the two questions. I always have an open door, find me, SAC tomorrow
- b. Ashley Baker, Student Body Vice President – ashleyv.baker@gmail.com
 - i. Next Monday at 7:30 pm in the SAC ballroom we will have an information session, if you want to get involved, come out to that
- c. Andrew Townsell, Chief of Staff – andrew.townsell@gmail.com
 - i. Civic Engagement, things are going well, pipeline, dana and her team have been working hard, fun events
 - ii. Advocacy: Feb 18th, link is live for student leadership summit, great way to connect and start dialect
 - iii. Health and Wellness: Longhorn Run is going well, promo events are being planned, link is live. Saferide project is going well, more meetings, funding and liability, it's a long term goal, pleased with progress to date
 - iv. Leadership and Service: Ut Elementray project is ready to launch, look out for an email. LLA and FLO are doing well..
- d. Sydney Fazende, Communications Director – sydneyfazende@gmail.com



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- i. Send me internal newsletter items
 - ii. Twitter, tweet positions
 - iii. Will send tabling schedules out
 - e. Madison Gardner, External Financial Director – jmgardner22@gmail.com
 - i. Excellence fund applications are due February 12th at 5pm, we want to support a lot of orgs and events
 - ii. Longhorn run expo went well, Texas Thon ran the most and won the prize. There will be another expo within a few weeks, encourage your friends to sign up, if your org wants to volunteer there is a tab on the website.
 - f. Ilse Quijano, Internal Financial Director – quij.ilse@gmail.com
 - i. Appropriations are Open, First Deadline is February 8th, we have 5,000 dollars in special projects budget, I would encourage you all to apply.
 - ii. As an assembly you chose to increase appropriations amount, I would encourage you to help do interviews, we need all the help we can get, yall chose to prioritize appropriations as an assembly. I have two sign up sheets, sign up
 - g. Louis Armendariz, Administrative Director – louis.m.arm@gmail.com
 - i. 7th 8th and 9th are the tobacco talks, add it to your calendar, free opportunity for students to talk about tobacco on campus, free speech wall on Tuesday, we will need help tabling and maintaining events, support the Tejas Club and SG and Student Org Safety Board next Thursday night at 9pm. Don't ignore or avoid my tabling email.
 - ii. External Appointments Director Nicholas Taas has finished his report and my interest is to have people look at those reports. Read this binder, its in the office. IF you have questions, let me know.
- X. Agency Director Reports
 - a. Billy Calve, Civic Engagement
 - i. Last semester we did Politipalooza with over 20 political organizations, was a unique opportunity, we have been thinking of ways to keep that going. We are excited to announce the politic engagement council. Once we have a set meeting time, I will let you know, we are first looking at Hook the Vote under Dana Henning
- XI. Representative Reports
 - a. Martinez: We are looking at absences, please respond
 - b. Pugliese: Student Affairs is meeting Thursday at 7:00 in the SG office
 - c. Ragsdale: Inviting you all to UBC Speaker Series, Thursday from 5:30-6:30 in Jester Auditorium



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- d. Lawler: I want to thank the assembly for going through that debate, its time to educate, Ive already reserved a place on the tower steps the week before elections for educational material distribution, let me know if you want to help. Next Tuesday at noon UAP has a meeting. There have been a lot of issues we have been working on, Im looking to institute a student platform for student housing and neighborhood issues to compile issues, if this peaks your interest, shoot me an email
- e. Desai: Liberal Arts CTBAC released another set of recommendations on budget issues, weve been working on that, if you are interested in that please come see me or Janette or Billy
- f. Goodson: I don't know if any of you remember but I told you about revamping the student handbook, ive been meeting with people, we be meeting with Dean Lilly, we will see how that goes
- g. Lee: Finance Committee will be meeting tomorrow at 8pm, come

XII. Unfinished Business

- a. AR 27 – In Support of a Campus-Wide Referendum on Tuition
 - i. Desai: I want to thank everyone for coming out, we had a really robust conversation, talked for 2-3 hours, I think everyone was happy with the compromises, I wanted to let you know the changes
 - ii. We added a survey that will go out after elections that will get more scientific polling of the effect of tuition increase on students and what strain it would cause, and allowing them to give more input and add comments to get an in-depth opinion
 - iii. We wanted to open it up and give Natalie some more leeway so that they can put it in full context when representing us to the Board of Regents, looking at tuition and budget cuts
 - iv. Carlson: This is one of the most important things that we can do as a student government. We are expressing an opinion on student opinion, about an issue we should control. As of right now, we do not have any formal student opinion on this issue. The TPAC and CTBAC issues were not an official student body Divided and Conquered, Find a Student that agrees, Senate, Butler, our branches of student governance. We can have a chance to let the students speak on their own tuition money. Its fine to put a survey in the mix. There is no reason to take the referendum out. A survey is not an opinion at all. We don't make our decision on polls. We talk to people and do what we are supposed to do. I think this bill is long way, we have an important chance to let the administration know that you cant divide and conquer us.
 - v. Leonard: I would like to move the two referendum questions to the survey



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- vi. Thayer: I think all of this is great ideas and I want to know how the student body feels about it, but these questions are leading towards what you want them to answer, if we do want to get a fair representation of opinion. I don't think anyone would answer that first question
- vii. Lawler: AS you know originally we only had one question and it was if they supported the recommended tuition increase, but we have gone through several layers of compromises, and I think the second question was a good compromise, it was supported by Natalie and Carisa, it was added in committee and it would provide a better context. You know me, I just wanted the referendum with one question.
- viii. Leonard: Remove the first be it resolved, the first be it resolved be removed, the second be it further resolved be removed, strike the word referendum, be it further resolved that SG will work, change referendum to survey in all instances.
- ix. Hicks: Amendment Considered Withdrawn
- x. Pugliese: Point of information: Do yall feel like these two questions are completely neutral?
- xi. Desai: We worked on this wording for a long time, the questions cant be neutral without being misleading, it does the best jobs of explaining the complexity of the issue.
- xii. Pugliese: If I was going to be completely neutral I would say what do you think about this? Why does it say tuition increase instead of tuition recommendations?
- xiii. Lawler: We recognized through thecommittee process that this bill could not be neutral. We are trying to obtain opinions in the survey. We awknowledge that the referendum will be biased?
- xiv. Zhao: Is there any way you an avoid Yes/No questions, like bothquestions, leading the witness?
- xv. Lawler: I will reference the chair of the assembly, who was at our committee meeting and we talked about this for thirty minutes, if there was anything other than yes or no on the ballot it will change the process
- xvi. Hicks: That was my understanding
- xvii. Carlson: Butler?
- xviii. Butler: It has to be a clickable response
- xix. Zhao: Could you have some sort of scale?
- xx. Lawler: Jannah who isn't in SG besides an external appointment, mentioned talking about level of increase, we though about that long and hard but we realized that it changed the whole idea of the referendum



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- xxi. Rosenthal: Just looking at the way the question was worded, was there any discussion as to whether there could be a scale of agreement? Support and scale?
- xxii. Stewart: That was part of the point of the survey
- xxiii. Lawler: this is another great question. At the end of the day TPAC made a black or white decision. In this situation, I think we can support
- xxiv. Leonard: Strike First three whereas, be it further, change all references to “referendum” to “survey”, Seconded
- xxv. Terry Adams: Can everyone raise your hand if your parents pay for your tuition. This survey idea is crap, it assumes that everyone is affected equally, the only way this survey will be valid is if it goes with the question of who is paying tuition, especially if your parents don’t tell you, leave the referendum. The survey isn’t right, do we want It, yes or no
- xxvi. Lawler: Taylor don’t kill this resolution by doing this amendment, dont try to kill it some backwards way
- xxvii. Ragsdale: I do value student opinion, if I didn’t I wouldn’t waste my time in Student Government, I sent an email to the reps. Lets start with the fact that I missed the point of having Natalie and Carissa on TPAC, their opinion was meant to be representative of the student opinion. The real argument here is one side doesn’t believe in the way that the TPAC is structured or the role of SG and Senate Presidents, but we should address that, not this. This determines our universities cash flow and its ability to function. Student opinion should be considered, but it should be an informed student opinion, it took over three months
- xxviii. Jannah Deis: College of Communications CTBAC wanted the increase, adding the compromise of budget cut questions, if we don’t increase we will have to cut funding, its not okay to not have a student voice
- xxix. Leonard: Yield to Dave Player
- xxx. Dave Player: I am not opposed to the amendment; this is an empty amendment that doesn’t say anything. If you ask a student a question about something bad, they are going to give you the right answer. This will not be feedback. It needs to be mutually exclusive, and for students to take five seconds and click a response, it will not be a representative opinion.
- xxxi. Carlson: Were kicking it down the road, throwing in a student opinion. I want to introduce and amendment that asks do you support/approve of the TPAC opinion, students can make an informed decision. We should kill this amendment, because it kills the bill and isn’t responsible



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- xxxii. Stone: Were not allowing informed decisions by putting on the election board, if someone puts an ipad in your face and asks you to vote for a tuition increase, they are going to say no, the survey looks at how these things affects them, allows us to look at data, this referendum doesn't get a valid student opinion.
- xxxiii. Goodson: Is there any way to do the survey and then write a bill after getting opinion?
- xxxiv. Lawler: We talked about that. We have two ways – as a representative body and through a referendum. But we have to think about timeline. If we pass this tonight, we have 4-6 weeks to educate students
- xxxv. Goodson: When are the board of regents supposed to pass their recommendations?
- xxxvi. Lawler: mid march
- xxxvii. Goodson: When are elections?
- xxxviii. Lawler: March 1st, which would give us four weeks
- xxxix. Goodson: So it seems like we have time to get a survey out before elections?
- xl. Butler: It would take a month to six weeks to develop a scientific survey
- xli. Rosenthal: Was it discussed to write the actual amount of the increase?
- xl.ii. Lawler: In summary we didn't have those numbers available, but they will be in the referendum, so students wont have to follow links.
- xl.iii. Yuan: You guys are assuming that the average UT student is indifferent. These students are here for a reason tonight. We are open to changing the phrasing of the question, we need to work together so that you guys like it to?
- xl.ii. Ragsdale: the last thing I want to say is we obviously know students don't want a tuition increase. This referendum isn't going to tell us anything we don't already know, its just going to tell our leaders that we don't have faith in the current system.
- xl.v. Julian Villasenor: you say we are too uninformed, but there is a third option here, we have the money here and it needs to be allocated properly
- xl.vi. Viridiana: You are assuming that you know as a representative what students want, but I don't think you know that, lets not assume that we know what students are thinking
- xl.vii. Goodson: Point of Information: Did we not agree that a survey would be the most scientific way to get the information?
- xl.viii. Desai: The survey will be the most scientific way, yes
- xl.ix. Goodson: With that being said, would it not be common sense for the survey to be the right route to take to gather the most opinion, since it is scientific in nature?



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- i. Lawler: It is not. The survey is not the best route, because its not going to reach as many people as the referendum. We really have a chance to educate students and allow them to make an educated decision for themselves.
- ii. Irvin: Coming from a student whose parents don't pay my tuition, I am not against a tuition increase. Our tuition is what keeps us in the classroom and the lights on. If you want to stay in class and keep the lights on, and you want to go to this University, you need to pay for it, and with times being what they are, a tuition increase is necessary.
- iii. Lawler: Were talking about is amendment. The young man offered a very valid stance that he is in support of this increase. I support the increase. We know what assumptions make out of you and me. Natalie Butler is one of the smartest people on this campus, and she supports the increase. The young man made a very good point, but we should give him the opportunity to express that. It is very likely and it could happen that this referendum comes out in support of this increase
- liii. Ragsdale: Reps, I would encourage you not to abstain on this issue vote yes or no
- liv. Lancaster: Move to end debate, seconded, passed
- lv. VOTE ON AMENDMENT: Roll Call, Amendment Fails, 24 against, 6 for
- lvi. Carlson: Move to strike the questions and replace them with one to say: "Do you support or reject the recommendations of the Tuition Policy Advisory Committee
- lvii. Carlson: This amendment is talking in the least biased way possible. If you want to add a second question to this that is fine, but I am trying to do the least biased way to do it. If you have another question to add, that is fine, but the wording of this first question is the least biased way to do it
- lviii. Rosenthal: I disagree with this because I think the second question is really important in conjunction with the first
- lix. Thayer: Amendment to keep the second question next and have the first say: "Do you support the proposed tuition recommendations of the Tuition Policy Advisory Committee over the next two years
- lx. Lawler: I think adding the word increase is important because it is to the point, it is blunt and summarizes it. It should maintain
- lxi. Thayer: If you're going to raise that question, I don't think its fair to say you have to have one side of the question or another, you cant have a biased question. If we want to have the two questions separate, adding the word increase just makes it biased, and if they don't know what the recommendations are, they shouldn't be voting



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- lxii. Thompson: To help everyone, we should use the wording on the screen, you should add the word increase because it was a fact that it happened. I encourage you to vote against this alternative because there is a better alternative with a neutral situation
 - lxiii. Goodson: If we don't include the word increase or decrease, we are allowing students to go find out what they are voting on, its encouraging the to do research
 - lxiv. Yuan: Won't they be encouraged to do the research when they see the word increase?
 - lxv. Zhao: We skim, if you include increase, they will take that as a summary of the recommendations without the facts behind it, they are assuming the basic details and using it as a shortcut
 - lxvi. Stewart: The point of having the summary is to provide all of the details. I think its fair to put the big numbers
 - lxvii. Carlson: Move to recess for five minutes to discuss this
 - lxviii. Thayer: Rescind Amendment
 - lxix. Lawler: Amendment: -\$92 million cuts to the university's state allocation in the next biennium.- tpac proposed a 2.6 increase for resident undergrads, 3.6 for other students.- 2.6, the rate increase that would potentially impact the most students, reflects the weighted consumer price index for the past few years.- the proposed increase would generate roughly \$30 million to help mitigate the other cuts
 - lxx. AMENDMENT PASSES
 - lxxi. Leonard: Move to previous question
 - lxxii. Roll Call vote: 24, 6
- XIII. New Business
- XIV. Announcements
- a. Butler: If you know about an awesome undergraduate professor, nominate them for the Friar Society Centennial Lecture Award, 25,000 grant, Sharon Jarvis, John Daley, Professor Theriault, biggest grant that a student org gives to teachers
 - b. Louis Armendariz: This Thursday will be the Newman Honorary Coffee, which is an open speaker series, if you are interested in getting involved or wanting to know what it is, this is a good opportunity to come find out, we have a panel of the new guys, get excited to hear about Braydon Jones. Thursday 9pm 26th and Rio Grande, free drinks and snacks
- XV. Second Roll Call
- XVI. Adjournment