SGA Senate Minutes  
Tuesday, February 24, 2015  
7:00-8:00 PM

1. Call to Order 7:00PM
2. Roll Call 7:00PM
3. Approve the minutes from 02/10/15 7:05PM
   1. Senator Stacey Young moves to approve the minutes
   2. Senator Elizabeth Nolasco seconds
   3. Minutes pass
4. Vote on UPLIFT Charter 7:05PM
   1. There is no discussion
   2. Senator Zoe Brian moves to vote
   3. Senate Sarena Shafner seconds
   4. Charter passes
5. Smith College Pre-Law Society Charter Presentation 7:10PM
   1. Najwa Alsheikh brings this charter to the Senate
   2. About 25 people are interested so far
      1. There have been 4 interest meetings on Mondays in Seelye 102 from 4-5pm
   3. Would organize LSAT study groups, trips to law schools, 5 College events
   4. Bring lawyers to campus to discuss law school experiences and career paths
   5. Provide direction for students who are interested in the legal field, the application
      is a very complicated process with many details
   6. Senator Katherine asks what kind of funding the group would need
      1. Najwa says the group wouldn’t need a lot of funding. Looking for other
         organizational benefits like SGA Van access and booking rooms
   7. Voting will take place next week
6. Smith College B/E Charter Presentation 7:14PM
   1. Have had two interest meetings, 15-20 people have attended each time
2. Looking to start an open source building project
3. Work with engineering organizations and Dean Walters on community projects
4. Purpose would be to give landscape study and architecture students a support group and a place to learn from each other
   1. These are small departments and this kind of support is necessary
5. Sam Page asks what kinds of programming would take place in meetings
   1. Members would present interesting articles they have found, things they have learned, or projects they are working on. Members would also give tutorials on types of software other members might not have used before. The organization would work on larger community projects and perhaps bring a speaker to campus.
6. Meetings are every other Friday during lunch in the architecture room
7. Laura Lubben asks what the organization would need in terms of funding
   1. Would want funds to present architecture to the greater student body to encourage people to think about architecture and attend conferences.
8. Voting will take place next week
7. Vote on the Social Justice and Equity Committee Bylaw Changes 7:20PM
   1. Nancy Chen is here to answer questions
   2. Senator Maya asks to change the language from “have had to been” to “have been” in Section 1, part b.
      1. The change is made
   3. Senator Stacey Young moves to vote
   4. Senator Emily Hagstrom seconds
   5. The changes pass
8. Open Forum 7:22PM
   1. EnA Committee
      1. Election registration opens tomorrow morning at 8am
      2. Posters are available for Senators to hang in the dining halls in their houses.
   2. Dis/ability Committee
      1. Looking for a few more senators to join the committee
      2. Meets either 10:30am on Thursdays or lunch on Friday
      3. Senators Jennie, Zoe, Leen, Isabella, Amanda, Catherine
      4. Senator Jessica moves for a vote of confidence
      5. Senator Zoe seconds
      6. Motion passes
3. Collaborations
   1. Danielle Maco is here to present Collaborations
   2. Will be on April 18th this year
      1. Presentations in Seelye
      2. Poster session 8:30-11am in the CC
   3. Please promote the event in your house
   4. Needs volunteers to set-up and clean-up for the poster session

4. Dining Committee
   1. Nutella is gone because people were complaining that there was no peanut butter, so now there is peanut butter and not Nutella. Email sgadining@smith.edu if you have complaints and Rose will forward them to the correct person.
   2. If you have suggestions/complaints about the dining hall in your house or that your house frequents, please send a few to Rose at sgadining@smith.edu

5. Curriculum Committee
   1. NEASC reaccreditation has led to a discuss about the federal definition of credit hours
   2. Are all 4 credits are the same amount of work?
      1. Senator Emily says there are discrepancies in departments, some classes in a given department take a lot more work than others
      2. Senator Isabella says that reading takes different amount of time for different students. Also, some people have study methods that take more time than others.
      3. Senator Emma says that across departments there are discrepancies, for example studio art classes are a lot more time in class
   3. Do you think that credits are accurately reflecting the work you do in each course?
      1. General consensus is a “no”
      2. Does this mean professors should adhere to a more uniform status? What are the ways to address these differences?
      3. Senator Sarena says that people chose a schedule that includes some easier and some harder classes in order to have balance. Students know some classes will be more work than others.
      4. Senator Lila is worried that if we change the way we assign credits to
meet the federal standard students will not be able to graduate.

1. We would change the number of credits needed for graduation

5. Senator Rose says that the discrepancies are due to styles of teaching, this is not necessarily a credit issue

6. Laura Lubben says the work looks different for every class so it is hard to compare the numbers of hours spent. This will put the humanities and certain majors at a disadvantage because the work doesn’t look a certain way.

   1. Julia Collins says there needs to be some kind of distinction between valuing a class and assigning credits to it.
   2. Senator Sarena worries this will force some students to take more than 4 classes a semester

7. Senator Rose asks if we need to change class schedules to have more time in class in order to meet the standard

   1. Julia Collins says there is not enough space on campus to address the problem in this way

8. Senator Isabella wants to know how this amount of time spent outside of class will be determined.

   1. Julia Collins says that professors will be asked to judge how long their tasks would take. This would be a reasonable expectation for the average student.

9. Senator Catherine says she had a professor who wanted to change the number of credits his class was worth because he recognized that the class was taking a lot more time for his students than it was “worth”

10. Julia Collins says this will be class by class, not department by department, how much time a class is worth

11. Senator Emily says that professors know how to accurately judge how much time they spend out of class, so changing the credit hours to more accurately reflect the workload will help students create a schedule that is balanced in terms of workload among the classes they select

12. Senator Lila says that her professors underestimate the amount of work they give, worried than an approach based on the professors won’t be accurate.
13. Senator Katherine asks if we still have to come inline with the federal law even if we think it is problematic.

   1. Julia Collins says yes

14. Senator Theo says that most professors do not know how much work they are assigning. There is a lot more time being spent outside of class than professors expect. It is difficult to make course choices based on the current system because students cannot gauge their class time.

15. Senator Rose says that there are too many variables and no constant, would be better to decide what exact things we need to account for in making a decision about credit hours.

   1. Senator Sarena says that we’re trying to quantify variables that we can’t quantify

4. The federal definition is three hours out of class for every one hour in class (12 hours for a 4 credit class). Do you think this is happening at Smith?

5. Colgan Powell asks if Smith has struggled in meeting these requirements in the past.

   1. In the past, NEASC has not pushed as hard on this. But now this is something that needs to be remedied before 2017.

   2. Curriculum Committee is worried that the administration only wants to fix this on paper instead of addressing issues that students have.

9. Vote on F1GS Charter 7:55PM

   1. Senator Sarena asks if the organization is for first generation Smithies or first generation college students

      1. The organization is for first generation students, which includes anyone who feels they would benefit from the resources and the community.

   2. Senator Rose moves to vote

3. Senator Stacey seconds

4. Charter passes

10. Restructure 7:58PM

   1. Senator Maya asks about the SJE designee position on Cabinet versus the Chair of SJE

      1. The preference is to have someone from SJE, but not always the Chair, go to Cabinet and to have the Chair always in Senate.

   2. Senator Sarena moves to vote on moving the Committee Chairs into Senate
3. Senator Elizabeth seconds
4. Motion passes
5. Senator Emily moves to combine the positions of ORC Chair and Treasurer
6. Senator Lila seconds
7. Motion passes
8. Senator Emily moves to combine the positions of Senate and SGA Secretary
9. Senator Lila seconds
10. Motion passes
11. Senator Jessica moves to create the Student Life position
12. Senator Emily seconds
13. Motion passes

11. Announcements 8:07PM
   1. Send out house emails, CC sgasenate@smith.edu
   2. Restructure meeting after Senate
   3. Send me your committee updates by Monday night via email
   4. Enter your engagement points on the Social Network
   5. Class of 2016 “Spoons” (aka Assassins) game! Please post the posters in your houses.

12. Adjournment 8:09PM
   1. Senator Jessica moves to adjourn
   2. Senator Emily seconds
   3. Motion passes