



**11th Meeting of the 2024-2025 Student Government Association Senate**  
**October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 | 7:00 PM | Livak Ballroom**

**Call to Order**

This meeting was called to order by Speaker Kennedy Connors.

**Roll Call**

Senators Gottfurcht, Lee, Reeder, and Chair Jones not present.

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes approved unanimously.

**Public Forum**

**Jason Garvey & Jennifer Payne** – From the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

- **Jay:** Executive Director for the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment and Associate Professor in the Higher Education and Student Affairs Administration program.
- **JP:** Jennifer Payne, go by JP, Director of Student Orientation and Advancement.
- **Jay:** SGA is the first stop on our road tour across important constituents to share what we are doing.
- As the new Executive Director I am eager for us to push into the realm of equity and opportunity for structural reform. I understand that systemic change requires time,

resources, trust, and relationships. I promise to continue the important services we deliver and refine the culture of trusted colleagues with an important perspective for growth and change.

- Historically, OIRA has held a service driven enterprise on campus, filling needs for partners such as administrators, staff, students, and faculty. We have a philosophy of relational impact, that it's not only what we achieve but how and with whom.
- OIRA Staff:
  - Larry Granillo: Associate Director, handles operational priorities for the office.
  - Nick Hartshorn: Senior Analyst, focuses on dashboard and data infrastructure.
  - Rich Cohen: Senior Analyst, focuses on curricular assessment.
  - Three analysts primarily fulfill external and internal requests for data.
  - This summer, we hired two Postdoctoral Fellows overseeing Co-Curricular Assessment and the Lived Identity Project.
  - Paul Goldberg: Administrative Assistant, supports the office.
- Externally: field a large volume of requests from accredited bodies, associations, federal and state organizations, rankings, and surveys.
  - In the past academic year, we fulfilled obligations with the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System through the Department of Education, US News & World Report, National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Common Data Set, College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR), National Postsecondary Student Aid Study, and NASPA First Scholars.

- Internally: 2/3 of the workload managing requests from campus partners across academic and administrative units from the president and Board of Trustees to faculty, undergraduate students, and governing bodies.
  - We are proud of our work on signature projects such as the Census for Student Employee Data, Academic Success Goals articulated by the Provost, Academic Program Review, First Six Week Survey, Catamount Core, Career Outcome Survey, Inclusive Excellence Action Plans, Rankings of Distinction for legislative fact sheets and Vermont state government, union negotiations, and grant support for faculty researchers.
- As Executive Director, I spent my first year prioritizing strategic initiatives to amplify our impact, to democratize access to data, and to have a more critical understanding of infrastructures we create for the University.
- Catamount Data Center provides access to dashboards. We're working on Catamount Data 2.0 to more proactively modify and expand our data dashboards.
  - We hope to create a more streamlined, accurate, and user-friendly dashboard ecosystem to enhance the data infrastructure, reduce manual complexities, and support informed decision making. This includes improving background processes and architecture, advocating for a data warehouse on campus.
- Currently there is no data governance infrastructure which is unusual for a large institution. Philosophically, a lot of what I've learned about this is from critical theoretical perspectives rooted in Black Feminist thought and Indigenous ways of knowing statistics.
  - Explore Quantitative Criticalism and Digital Sovereignty.

- Once we define a data structure we can have a centralized council to oversee practices.
- Assessment was recently added to our office and now we oversee all campus-wide surveys like the First Six Week survey, NSSE, Campus Climate survey, and Career Outcome survey.
  - We're trying to take a more proactive stance on this. We went from 8% to 52% response rate for the First Six Week survey from last year to this year.
- I formed the Assessment Council which aims to strengthen the culture of data use with a vision of developing communities and practice for curricular and co-curricular assessment to elevate department and cross-department assessment efforts in alignment with the Provost and President.
- The Lived Identity Project's mission is to humanize data infrastructures at the University. Our vision is to develop student and employee data infrastructures with policies and practices that promote dignity, confidentiality, and fidelity.
  - Identify practices and policy barriers to lived identity and demographic data collection among students and employees. Particular focus on Banner, PeopleSoft, and survey data.
  - Develop promising practices and policies for lived identity and demographic data collection for editing, reporting, and use.
  - Recommend promising practices for adoption to promote individual dignity, ensure individual confidentiality, and highlight fidelity in longitudinal data infrastructures.

- **JP:** This was a charge from Provost Prelock before she took over as Interim President.  
There is a committee of ten of us in charge of figuring out this big project. We are finding all the places you share personal information about your identity on campus and make sure it is consistent and protected.
  - There are 60 different software platforms and we need to align all of them.
- We have faculty, staff, and students represented and organized into five pillars.
  - Jay and I are the Leadership piece, going out and communicating to advocate for this project and find out what barriers there are.
  - The Cultural group is working to humanize practices by educating and discussing with our communities.
  - The Policy group is supporting data governance through policies concerning lived identity.
  - The Technical and Functional groups have a lot of overlap. Technical is working on updating the system architecture. Functional is gathering perspectives to understand current data use and where the gaps are.
- We meet every other week and have tasks to hold each other accountable to get this done this year.
- **Jay:** We want feedback on the Lived Identity Project and OIRA. Our primary aim is for you to help forecast barriers when interfacing with the student body. We want to be proactive and address questions up front. Thoughts about how we can use a more expansive and community centered suite of demographic information to inform our strategic priorities.

**Senator Purple:** Sounds like there is awesome stuff going on in OIRA. The Lived Identity Project sounds great, I am confused about what it will look like. Could you give some examples?

- **Response (Jay):** When you submit an application, sex and race are submitted in restrictive ways. That is what we use in Banner for projections and reporting internally and externally.
  - I am a queer person and a lot of what I do is uplifting queer and trans people. Our reporting requirements include assigned sex at birth in a binary of male and female. The federal government requires us to submit information about what they call gender, but what is really operationalized as sex. For students whose sex is not defined as male or female, institutions are required to take the average gender composition and assign male or female.
  - Our hope is that we can develop infrastructure that is more expansive and person-centered. Then we can use that internally to track retention, to understand gender composition of SGA Senators, or to advocate for more funding for Prism. None of our current data allows that because how we report gender is a restrictive binary mandated by the federal government.
  - Data governance comes into play with determining how to break down this expansive operationalization of gender into the restrictive binary reporting requirements. Now imagine that across eight major social categories.
  - The hope is to get more expansive information at the beginning with an application into Banner and then break it down from there.

**Senator Talhouk:** Would there be a way to change what you submit as gender can be fluid?

- **Response (Jay):** Yes, part of the process I have learned is being able to edit and update how we see ourselves. Ideally there would be an interface for everyone to enter and update. We currently take census snapshots after add/drop for students and on November 1<sup>st</sup> for employees and this carries forward through the year. It may be more difficult to do in the data infrastructure and take priority after initial setup.

**Senator Lynch:** Would this be accessible to students or is it publicly online? Can you talk more about that?

- **Response (Jay):** You should check out Catamount Data Center which is available to the public. When talking about data access, it is important to think about trends-based analysis and individual data for student outreach. Data governance is important for this because if you can get down into such a small level, we risk leaking confidentiality.
  - I might want to reach out to OIRA for a list of First-Gen students in a specific residence hall to proactively reach out and support them. We would need your permission for that and we currently don't have that.

**Senator Lynch:** How is that consent given?

- **Response (Jay):** Historically with other institutions it is via opt-in at the time of data entry. I could see a box on an application in the future asking for that consent.

**President Teferra:** Are there any current obstacles or restrictions you face in the university?

- **Response (Jay):** So many. The hardest hurdle is our data infrastructure, we need more universal systems for a large institution. We don't have a foundation of data governance or data technology, so we have this initiative to grab five things and do it all at once.
- If you want to talk about this please reach out.
- **JP:** We are continuing to do more outreach including focus groups so be on the lookout.

**Samantha Morse** – Introducing UVM Traditions Challenge

- Assistant Director in Orientation and Student Advancement.
- The Traditions Challenge is an idea to increase retention and help students to be engaged and connected with their school.
- When I was a student we had a list of 101 Things To Do Before You Graduate. I narrowed this down to 20 with the hopes that it would be more manageable and maybe 5 per year.
- What are some UVM or Burlington traditions you think students should do?

**Chair Espejo:** Jumping off the cliff at North Beach.

**Chair Halvorson:** I'm not sure the World's Tallest Filing Cabinet needs to be on there because it's a bit of a let down.

**Senator Renallo:** Late Night Breakfast during Finals Week.

**Treasurer Sorensen:** Agree to disagree about the filing cabinet. Lake Monsters or Vermont Green game during the summer.

**Senator Lynch:** Basement concerts.

**Senator Purple:** ActivitiesFest hosted by SGA.

**Senator Esbin:** Sledding on campus, specifically the hospital hill.

**Vice President Bednarik:** Similar to the identity center events, BSU Fashion Show and ASU Lunar New Year.

**Treasurer Sorensen:** I would reach out to those groups before putting it on a list.

**Senator Talhouk:** I would suggest removing hike/drive up Mt Mansfield for differently abled students because it could be a barrier.



- Students would submit photos as they do these activities and then would get some recognition. I wanted to see if you had any ideas of what you would want to see?

**Senator Demeo:** A shoutout on Instagram could be good.

**Chair Halvorson:** A compilation video on TikTok could be relevant for this generation.

**Vice President Bednarik:** It could be a pin on the grad cap or a cord for graduation.

- Interesting that you said a pin, we have a framework of getting one pin each year for getting five done and then all four pins at the end would create a design. Maybe also a Traditionkeepers stole and recognition ceremony which could be during sophomore year as well to keep people engaged.

**Senator Esbin:** Do you have an alternate plan for students that won't be here all four years?

- **Response:** Yes I think if you complete all of them even as a transfer student you could be recognized.

**Chair Garcia:** This would work for me as a first year, it looks amazing.

**Senator York:** This is a great idea. As a transfer student I would be discouraged so some flexibility around the five a year would be good.

**Chair Espejo:** If you are involved in a club or organization on campus could be another good tradition.

**Senator Zubarev:** Some activities could be difficult for people with dietary restrictions. Maybe a better way to track progress and show commitment, especially with students creating their own traditions around their individual identities. Maybe creating your own tradition would be good.

**President Teferra:** An idea I have for promotion is to have the places that hold these traditions promote it and put signs up there as well. If you go there anyway then you can pick up on it.

**Senator Torres:** I really love this, it sounds so much fun. You could have more than 20 options and then you just have to do 20 to be recognized. Options that can be picked from could mitigate problems that people have raised.

**Senator Talhouk:** To mitigate problems with transfers it could also just be to do five new traditions each year.

**Senator Lynch:** Going back to hiking, I believe there are accessible trails for wheelchairs.

**Chair Halvorson:** Going off of what President Teferra said, you could do a continuous scavenger hunt with QR codes at each stop. This would be harder for off-campus locations but could be great for on-campus.

- If you think of more traditions or have more questions, reach out.

### **Old Business**

Bill Recognizing Jewelry Club, sponsored by Senator Paquette

- This seems like a fun organization to focus on making jewelry and provide community for people to learn an awesome skill.

**BILL: Passed** unanimously, Senator Paquette abstained

Bill Recognizing UVM Line Dancing, sponsored by Senator Torres

- This is my first club recognition, I'm excited for them.

**President Teferra:** Can you suggest they do a Footloose flash mob on campus?

- **Response:** Yes, would you be part of it?

**President Teferra:** No.

**BILL: Passed** unanimously, Senator Torres abstained

## **Emergency Business**

## **New Business**

## **Senatorial Forum**

## **Executive Reports**

### **Speaker Connors**

- We get to hear about the surprise project this week! Judicial had our first full meeting on Thursday and we will be doing parking tickets!
  - I was inspired by the University of Alabama where for your first parking offense you can volunteer with an organization on campus instead of having to pay. We have been talking with the Transportation Office about this.
- I am meeting tomorrow about getting legislation into Digital Collections. We will add it in the coming weeks.
- For those who passed legislation today, please come sign it after the meeting.

**President Teferra:** With the parking tickets, since the first one is currently no charge would the volunteer option be for the second one?

- **Response:** Yes, the first one where you have to pay.

**Senator Lynch:** Could this count for Burlington too, maybe South Willard Street?

- **Response:** Sadly no.

**Senator Grace:** Would this maybe apply for your latest one or only going forward?

- **Response:** We don't know yet, just trying to get it started right now.

### **Vice President Bednarik**

- My office hours will be Mondays 1-2:30pm for anyone and everyone, not just SGA but any students. That is a place to consistently find me, if you just want to chat during that time that's good too.
- The sign up for office tours is in the Teams, if you just joined Senate it is mandatory. It will really help you to learn the space.
- Interim President Prelock's house on November 3<sup>rd</sup> from 11-3. We will schedule carpool transportation through committees and if you can't work that out, let Exec know and we can make it work.
  - It's not a costume party...last year someone told Speaker Connors it was.
- First RA Support Group meeting on November 6<sup>th</sup> at 5pm in the Rosa Parks Room.

### **President Teferra**

- Happy Tuesday! I will not be airing anyone else's business in my report.
- Exec Retreat was yesterday, we had some great conversations.
- Board of Trustees meeting Friday and Saturday. Go on their website to see meeting times if you want to attend.
- Pickleball next weekend so stay tuned.

### **Treasurer Sorensen**

- My office hours are Tuesdays 1:30-2:30.
- Thank you everyone who came to the Ribbon Cutting Event today. That meant a lot to see local news, the Cynic, people from this body, and DSU.
- Last chance to express interest in SpringFest Committee.

- Admin has countered the Student Activity Fee proposal with \$15 a semester for a total of \$30 a year. We were proposing \$27 a semester for a total of \$54 a year. I am happy about this, seeing it as a win to bring in new revenue for SGA next year.
- I'm on the Budget, Finance, and Investment Committee which will be voting on a resolution to pass that proposal on Friday.

**President Teferra:** Round of applause for Treasurer Sorensen, he's put in a lot of work.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Public Relations Committee**

- Fun Fact of the Week: Dolphins sleep with one eye open so maybe you all should too.

#### **Committee on the Environment**

- We have a lot of meetings with people about projects and various stuff like that.

#### **Committee on Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity**

- I am meeting with Elliot Ruggles about SVAM planning on Thursday
- State of the Week: In honor of me going home, it is Connecticut.

#### **Committee on Legislative and Community Affairs**

- Senator Laychak had a productive meeting with Blake Reilly to discuss adding suicide hotlines to the LiveSafe app.
- Community Coalition this past Friday about community safety and off-campus resources was very productive.
- Community Cleanup is Saturday November 9<sup>th</sup> at 2pm. There will be coffee, hot chocolate, donuts, and more.
- Song of the Week: The Edge by Sydney Ross Mitchell.

### **Committee on Student Action and Well-Being**

- Senator Steele reading for Chair Jones:
- Senator Onorato is meeting with Elliot Ruggles on Monday
- Artist of the Week: Vince Guaraldi Trio, give a listen to Great Pumpkin Waltz.

### **Club Affairs Committee**

- Congratulations to Senator Torres on her first bill being passed.
- I am meeting with Elliot and Ana tomorrow about planning the Sexual Violence Prevention Training.
- President Teferra has located the cotton candy and popcorn machines which can be rented out for fundraising events.

**Chair Modun:** We also have a pinball machine they can use.

### **Academic Affairs Committee**

- I am meeting with AJ from Grammarly to talk over a potential contract a week from now.
- Senator Toomey is meeting with representatives from the dining halls about extending hours to accommodate long academic schedules.

### **Finance Committee**

- Nothing to report.

### **Senatorial Comments/Announcements**

**Senator Zubarev:** I am fundraising for Women's Club Ice Hockey, we are selling cookie dough.

**Senator Purple:** We are looking for a new Elections Chair as I am graduating in December. If you know that you will not be on SGA next year let me know. It is paid.

**Senator Onorato:** As Senator Steele said, I am meeting with Dr. Ruggles on Monday. We are talking about having some enforcement for the required Vector courses.

**Senator Osei:** First Gen Week is happening November 4<sup>th</sup>, there are lots of different activities including headshots.

### **Adjournment**