



3rd Meeting of the 2025-2026 Student Government Association Senate
April 22nd, 2025 | 7:00 PM | Livak Ballroom

Call to Order

This meeting was called to order by Speaker Hannah York.

Roll Call

Senators Surak, Richardson, and Chair Espejo not present.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes approved unanimously.

Public Forum

Student Advisory Board of CESS – Introduction

- **Annie:** Middle-level education major, special education minor, former SGA member on COE.
- **Ciara:** Facilitator for the College of Education and Social Services Student Advisory Board. SAB is like a version of student government within a specific college, CESS being one of the smallest colleges at this University.
- As leaders and ambassadors, we go to Admitted Student Visit Day events, Orientation events, Board of Advisors meetings, and more.

- At our meetings, we develop proposals to improve student and faculty experience. We have done a lot of community outreach this year to expand our presence.
- This year we moved to task groups from committees as a more effective model.
 - Outreach: creating social media and more materials to make our presence known.
 - Peer Mentor: pairing first-years with juniors/seniors to ease the transition into college. Honors College and Nursing have programs like this already that we are trying to start.
 - Alumni Highlights: bridge connections with alumni to highlight how they are using their degree and showcase career paths.
- Looking toward the future, we are trying to get the Peer Mentor and Alumni Highlights task groups off the ground next year. Working to uphold the values of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Belonging in our college. Partner with the FOUR office to find more resources for research and scholarships. Support identity centers without overwhelming them.

President Connors: I'm a writer for the CDAE newsletter, we are doing an alumni focus there too. Relating to the Peer Mentor task group, I'm not in any of those programs, can you explain what that looks like?

- **Response (Annie):** This was something I started to think about on SGA, some colleges have strong peer mentor programs already and some don't. I love the small community that we have in CESS but outside of your major you might not know many people. This would start by matching groups of six first-year students with a peer mentor. Reaching out a lot at the start of the year and sending out resources each month. It's hard to know lots of cool things that you can do at the start of college, so this is a way to support that.

Senator Paquette: I know how hard it can be in a small college to get representation. How can SGA help you with representation and getting your message out there?

- **Response (Ciara):** I came into this position last year to make our presence known in CESS as a resource especially for students who transfer in. Maybe Annie can talk more about this as a senior and former SGA member.
- **Response (Annie):** It could be cool if you highlighted different leadership groups and events around campus. Using your platform to highlight work that other groups or clubs are doing would be good.

Old Business

Emergency Business

New Business

Senatorial Forum

Chair Rice & Senator Esbin – Discussing Financial Literacy Week

- **Senator Esbin:** Myself, Chair Rice, and the rest of the Finance Committee have been talking about launching this idea for a while. We want everyone's feedback, to see what you think, get ideas and hopefully you can get involved.
- **Chair Rice:** We've realized the typical student doesn't have the resources needed to manage their finances and wanted to put together a week of events to support that.
- **Senator Esbin:** We have some ideas and put together a mock timeline.

- Day 1: Partner with local financial institutions to learn what they do and how they can help you.
- Day 2: Have any finance related clubs table and talk to students. Also have a panel with a financial literacy specialist.
- Day 3: Self-investment and future planning, LinkedIn workshop, and free headshots from the employment office.
- **Chair Rice:** Day 4 and 5 are less structured so we would appreciate ideas for that.
 - Day 4: Student Financial Services tabling and talking about finances in college, maybe including scholarships too.
 - Day 5: Walking around with Rally Cat and giving out prizes.
- **Senator Esbin:** We were also thinking about doing a partnership with Athletics to specifically educate athletes on personal finance because of the high earning potential over a short career.
- Our expected timeline would be getting interested Senators together in May, begin the process of reaching out to interested participants in July, book spaces and plan for return to campus in August, have plans finalized in September, and October 6-10 would be Financial Literacy Week.

Senator Jones: When it comes to days 4 and 5, I'm not sure about Athletics having its own day. That feels like a specific entity that you could reach out to as its own thing. My other recommendation when it comes to financial literacy for college students is talking about credit card debt. That could be a whole day talking about starter credit cards, what goes into your credit score, saving money, getting out of debt, etc.

- **Response (Chair Rice):** That is a great idea, I think we could definitely incorporate that.

- **Response (Senator Esbin):** The main reason I put Athletics on its own day was because we were running low on ideas, but I agree with you.

Chair Steele: I struggled with putting together a budget, especially moving off campus, so I would try to find someone who has tips about budgeting to join the panel. Also talking about what to do with savings and retirement plans and how to invest responsibly.

- **Response (Chair Rice):** On off-campus planning, we could bring OSCR in with that.

Chair Laychak: Funny that you mention OSCR, I suggest reaching out to off-campus students specifically because they can be hard to reach but definitely would find this relevant.

Senator Paquette: I like the scholarship idea. Many students are working a job at the same time as school and don't know about scholarships and grants to save money and invest.

- **Response (Chair Rice):** That was exactly our mentality.

Chair Demeo: I was wondering if you had ideas for publicizing and getting people to engage?

- **Response (Senator Esbin):** A lot of that depends on location planning for events.

Tabling in the atrium where many students walk through all day. Working with PR to promote events and working with different on-campus entities to get our message out.

Senator Lee: Has the business school done anything like this? Collaborating with them would be good. Emphasizing what students can get out of this through promotion would be smart.

- **Response (Senator Esbin):** As far as we know, Grossman doesn't do anything like this yet. Financial Literacy Month is April but we thought this would be better timing for us. Grossman has a points program if you show up to events which goes towards some credit and that could incentivize attendance.

Vice President Modun: How often would this occur? What else are you partnering with?

- **Response (Chair Rice):** Yearly to start, if we can get it off the ground then maybe move to semesterly.
- **Response (Senator Esbin):** We're thinking of local banks to partner with and possibly national banks as well. Outside of that investment firms, insurance companies, and anything else that students might want.

Senator Oreck: On the topic of athletes and promoting this, I think it is important to understand the different audiences. People spend money in different ways and have different concerns. A basic budget for a freshman is going to look a lot different than a senior who is about to leave college. Understanding where people congregate and would be most easily accessed is important.

- **Response (Senator Esbin):** That is a great point, one of the things we are trying to do is acknowledge different economic backgrounds and help everyone.

Senator Chapman: What do you think about having small budgeting workshops for individuals like we do with ClubSigners?

- **Response (Chair Rice):** That's a good idea, we could have small sessions in Gormley.
- **Response (Senator Esbin):** I like the idea, but I don't know if we would be the most qualified to give financial advice. Maybe we could work with an outside professional to host those.

Senator Zubarev: Many students also might not want to talk to us about personal finances, so having a trusted professional is a good idea. Having SFS involved on some of the days could help students a lot. I think it's a good idea to have Athletics involved because it's fun and can get lots of students involved, especially with the hype around the soccer team that just won the championship.

- **Response (Senator Esbin):** Emeritus Treasurer Sorensen worked hard with Athletics to allow different organizations to table and support each other at athletic events. Maybe we could table at a soccer game.

Chair Steele: Along with the budget seminar, you could make a template that you can hand out to students and they can work on in their own time without giving out any of their information. Have alumni come in to talk about their jobs with a unique piece of advice.

- **Response (Chair Rice):** I agree, working with a professional to curate a budget template would be good.

Chair Grace: I think it's good to have people outside of business and economics invested in this. Going into classes to promote and talk about this could be good too.

- **Response (Chair Rice):** We might also be able to go into large lectures or first-year seminars.

Senator Marchant: Doing a drive for people who are struggling could be a good way of raising funds to help out the community while teaching the importance of financial literacy.

Senator Wheaton: One of the fun activities could be partnering with Pub Quiz. You mentioned banks and insurance companies coming in, it feels like a struggle for them to come in without advertising for them. As much as you can focus on more neutral professionals would be good.

- **Response (Senator Esbin):** I agree, we would not be looking to advertise for anyone. Our idea is that it can be helpful to understand the different services available.

Senator Jones: I have been to several academic fairs and events where financial institutions come in. From that experience, I would focus on local credit unions that are institutions which put their money where their mouth is to not take advantage of people.

- **Response (Chair Rice):** I agree, Vermont centered organizations would likely be more willing to come in as well.

Executive Reports

Speaker York

- Thank you for bearing with me as I slowly acquaint myself with the Speaker role.
- I have continued working with the SVAM ad hoc, there is a game night and collaboration with Feel Good on Saturday.
- I am working to publish the legislation that President Connors digitized as Speaker.
- If anyone wants to grab a coffee and get introduced to me, let me know.
- Taylor Swift Song of the Week: the last great american dynasty.

Vice President Modun

- President Connors and I have been busy getting ready for the upcoming year to work on our goals.
- Working to get funds out before the fiscal year ends.
- We're looking to put together a comprehensive calendar for SGA before moving into the next year.
- Reminder: President's Dinner is Thursday 5:30-6:30pm on the 5th floor of Waterman.

President Connors

- As Speaker York mentioned, the Feel Good x SGA event is 9-11pm this Saturday. Senator Esbin will be making cotton candy, Chair Espejo will be DJing, and we need two volunteers to help us make sandwiches.

- Game Night is being moved to this Saturday and combined with the Feel Good event so it doesn't overlap with the President's Dinner.
- I reached out to the Cynic, SGA used to have a column in 2000, and I asked if they would be willing to reinstate that.
- One of our main goals is increasing student support amidst the political climate. We are creating an ad hoc specifically for this and trying to extend that outside of SGA as well.

Chair Arnone: Springfest related question, when do we know if it is inside or outside?

- **Response:** I think tomorrow they will let us know.

Treasurer Murphy

- Nothing to report.

Committee Reports

Public Relations Committee – Chair Denny

- Working with Academic Affairs and CSAW on a Week of Wellness.
- If you are joining PR, expect a message soon to schedule a meeting.

Vice President Modun: If you are a Chair, please send me who you want on PR so we can make those appointments.

Committee on the Environment – Chair Arnone

- Working on earth week stuff. Had three swaps last week, selling over 400 items and making \$3,000. We are investing in future swaps and more materials to hopefully get a more permanent spot.
- Trivia night last week was successful with Pub Quiz.
- Setting goals for the rest of the year and next year.

Committee on Our Common Ground Values – Chair Espejo

- Senator Theroux reading for Chair Espejo:
 - SVAM is still underway, check out the Teams for sign up info.
 - Shoutout Senator Onorato and President Connors with the Redstone event.

Committee on Legislative and Community Affairs – Chair Laychak

- May 2nd 3-4:30 at 12 Colchester Ave is the last Community Coalition for the year. There is Vermont trivia, really good snacks, and a special thing to sign for Emeritus Chair Garcia.
- OSCR is running the off-campus survey, so if you live off-campus please fill it out.
- COLCA is laying the groundwork for expanding communication with Burlington and Vermont leaders to improve connections next year.

Senator Oreck: Last time we had trivia, myself and Senator Talhouk won a \$25 gift card to City Market, get excited.

Senator Talhouk: Chair Laychak is salty that I beat him at trivia when he is a native Vermonter.

Committee on Student Action and Well-Being – Chair Steele

- Senator Onorato and I are working with Chair Carroll-Millins and Chair Denny on Week of Wellness for finals week. Messaging with Campus Rec about lawn games.
- Take care of yourself as we go into finals season.

Club Affairs Committee – Chairs Demeo and Grace

- **Chair Demeo:** This is our first ever in-person joint report. We are gearing up for ClubSigner training, around 240 of 250 RSOs successfully completed ClubSigner changeover.

- **Chair Grace:** This will be our only joint report, from now on only one of us will speak.

The ClubSigner training will be next Monday 4/28 from 7-9pm in the Grand Maple Ballroom.

- Club Event of the Week: Historical Fencing Legend of the Lake tournament. This is an international tournament in the indoor turf of Patrick Gym.

Academic Affairs Committee – Chair Carroll-Millins

- Working with CSAW, PR, and President Connors on Week of Wellness to support students during finals week. Planning is coming along well.
 - Food truck and lawn games outside Howe, slime making, coffee, snacks, posters, and social media posts.

Finance Committee – Chair Rice

- If you are interested in helping with the Financial Literacy Week, please reach out.

Senatorial Comments/Announcements

Chair Steele: UVM Ice Cats and Figure Skating clubs have a showcase this Sunday at 6pm.

Emeritus Chair De Groot is the captain of the Ice Cats. Guest skaters coming from Middlebury.

\$5 for tickets and there will be a bake sale.

Senator Paquette: Huge shoutout to President Connors and Senator Onorato for putting together care packages for the displaced students.

Senator Forrest: April Showers themed Contra, Mann Hall on Saturday at 6:45pm.

Chair Grace: Friday Hit Paws senior show is happening, Ira Allen Chapel on Friday at 6:30pm.

Adjournment