



11th Meeting of the 2025-2026 Student Government Association Senate
October 14th, 2025 | 7:00 PM | Livak Ballroom

Call to Order

This meeting was called to order by Speaker Lily Onorato.

Roll Call

Senator York and Theroux, Senator Marcus and Talhouk, Senator Jones and Senator Marchant, Senator Richardson, and Senator Esbin are not present.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes approved unanimously.

Public Forum

Abby Crocker Presenting on Justice Research Center

- I am Abby Crocker; I am grateful for the work Abi has done, and I am grateful for all of the service SGA does on behalf of our community. I am excited to talk about the Justice Research Center, which is a new center that has grown out of eight years of initiatives. We are leveraging the power of data to bring policymakers together to make change. We are interdisciplinary and include both qualitative and quantitative data. By having data, we create a focus to bring groups together to face complex challenges. However, data alone are not enough; we also need trust and relations, we need strong community

partnerships. The people who are impacted most need to be at the heart of solving these complex challenges. We need to recognize that there are lots of different ways of knowing, such as lived experience. We are dedicated to bringing action towards change, and we are grounded by four core objectives: growing the next generation of justice researchers, conducting research and applying research, having partners and collaborators, and intentionally breaking down silos. We want to create opportunities to come together

- We are developing a research primer, which is a shared language for people to talk about data. This makes a more inclusive space because different disciplines talk about data with different languages, and people have different comfort levels with data. We have a shared language to bring disciplines together and have a common framework for communication. We are also creating opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and community partners. There are short-term and long-term research practice partnerships. Prison research incarceration network is collaborating with a national network, expansive partnerships in UVM, Vermont, and the country. We find that partnerships are essential to advance this work. It takes a community coming together to figure out what it cares about, which is how it creates change. We operate under three core values: treasuring curiosity, acknowledging everyone is an expert at something, and trust.
- **Senator Brito Del Valle:** My involvement started this summer as a partnership with the FOUR office and PRIN. My experience was grounded in getting familiar with the project and our partners. I participated in a series of site visits at the correctional facility in Springfield, Vermont. We had focus groups with faculty, staff, and community partners, and talked with the Vermont Department of Corrections. We heard from people who are

incarcerated about the problems they are facing and things that they want to change.

These all allowed us to gather a well-rounded perspective. I also worked a lot on comparing restorative justice. For PRIN, we had to write reflections in which we talked about our experiences within the facilities. I also worked with the data that we gathered, and we collaborated with the individuals inside and the workers to develop a survey to measure the climate. With that data, we analyzed it and gave it to legislators and those inside the prison. This experience highlighted to me the importance of data equity, and the importance of knowing where and how we get our data and what we do with it

- **Senator Lee:** Thank you both. I have questions about how more undergrad students can get involved. And how could it be applicable to students and their careers here?
 - **Response:** We are looking for more student involvement. We are launching a new summer program that will be open to all students on campus across all majors. These are really interdisciplinary challenges. That is a funded summer fellowship. Over the academic year, there are research opportunities. This is a clear, tangible pathway for doing work in the community in partnership with lived experience in an actual interdisciplinary way.
- **Senator Sadiqqi:** Do you have a five year plan for PRIN or any other projects that you are thinking about?
 - **Response:** Prisons are the least transparent institutions in the country. This is the first of its kind to have this community-driven research partner facilities. Our goal is to grow more students and faculty who want to do research in this space. We spent time building the infrastructure of PRIN. A lot of change has happened in corrections, they have expanded parental programs to all six prisons, new peer

recovery services, and all of these new community programs. We want more of that and more people involved

- **Senator Paquette:** This topic is extremely interesting to me. I was wondering if you guys had any connection to the political world, whether that be state or local government. These policies are hard to change without a bigger force to enact them
 - It has gotta be research for action, so you need partnerships with people who can take that action. State and local advisors and the committee advisory board have been instrumental in making tangible change at the state level.

Riley Foye Presenting on Catamounts Against Cancer

- I am the President of Catamounts Against Cancer, and we raise money for ACS. We raise thousands of dollars to provide treatments for people undergoing cancer and money for cancer research. We have raised over \$140,000 in the past 3 years. Our main event is Relay for Life, which is a long event on the Andrew Harris Commons from 12 – 6 pm on November 8 to fundraise for ACS. We are coming together with our common experience and loss. Clubs and organizations also come, such as dance groups, bands, and fraternities. At the Relay for Life event, we have raffles, donated food, and the giant purple chair. We also do Quesidilla Night and candy grams around Halloween and Valentine's Day. We also go to the Hope Lodge, where those undergoing cancer treatment can go. We volunteer and bring dinner. Another event is where we bring in barbers to shave your head or cut off 8 inches of hair to make into a wig for children.
- SGA should come to the Relay for Life event. They can table. To come you have to pay 25 dollars, and then get a free t-shirt, Signing up for the event is your donation to ACS.

- **Chair Demeo:** You did an outstanding job presenting, and you guys do amazing work
- **Senator Lee:** Do you guys collaborate with Rallython
 - **Response:** We usually try to go to each other's events and collaborate, but we fundraise for different organizations
- **President Connors:** Thank you so much for coming in. Other than the main events, what are other ways for SGA to become involved?
 - **Response:** We have an email list you can join and a weekly meeting at 7 pm in Jeffords on Wednesday. You guys are welcome to come to any of our events. We are always looking for people to fundraise, so you guys could come to Relay and bring an event to fundraise.

Ward 6 City Councillor

- The next city council meeting is Tuesday, October 21, and we are taking up a bill that has to do with the relationship between UVM, the city, and the housing code. We have heard through formal reports that the dorms are not aligned with housing code, with issues such as forced triples, mold, mildew, and silverfish infestations. The University should be up to code, and we have asked for documentation for self-certification, but we haven't found anything from the city or the University, which is concerning. The resolution on the 21st asks the University to produce this documentation. We would love to hear about experiences living in the dorms and any reports you have or haven't made.
- **Senator Campbell:** This city council meeting has to be on Tuesday, so we are asking you to be okay to miss a part of your committee meeting to come to City Hall or join online. It would be very meaningful

- **Chair Laychak:** is there a way to review the resolution
 - **Response:** The bill should be out by the end of the day on Thursday. I can give you the link if you give us your email
- **Senator Hollner:** Let's say that Mercy Hall was covered in mold, what would you do about that?
 - **Response:** The most helpful thing from our perspective is for students to report it directly to code enforcement. Be specific with photos and timelines. A lot of times, we don't even have it on paper, which means we can't do much
- **Senator Oriki:** What are we giving our email for? Is there a way you guys can give us your contact info?
 - **Response:** I'll send our contact info in the Group Me
- **President Connors:** President Connors: Following the Mercy Hall example, if it was discovered that there was mold in one of the residence halls, would you displace all of the residents?
 - **Response:** It is very case by case. Landlords have to demonstrate that they are taking reasonable action. Hard to give a definite answer, but they wouldn't be off the hook just for trying. The intent of the resolution is to give a last chance to the university to show that they are making a good faith effort to comply with the housing code. The city can't spend the resources to check the dorms, and the University is not holding up its end of the deal. We want to hire new inspectors and go in and treat the dorms as other apartment buildings, where we take you to court if you're not following the rules

- **Senator Camacho:** Have you had meetings with Reslife? There is a kitchen and we have been in contact with the University, but they have refused to change it because it is too expensive
 - It's insane because that standard would never hold for an apartment. We would never expect that situation, but it is happening in the University. A lot of local government are shrugging their shoulders. The University is not within the local ordinance, so we have to force their hand. When Bernie was mayor, he took an aggressive stance against developers and the university. Bernie came in, he threatened eminent domain to private developers in order to force their hand.
- **Senator Alarafi:** The form you suggested students should fill out. Should we be promoting it? Do students not know about it?
 - The student tenant union was pushing for students to report, as it is underutilized by students versus the actual number of issues. There are only a few dozen reports a year. Anything and everything we can do to promote to put political pressure on the University through pressuring the bureaucrats with hard data.
- **Senator Chen:** Is this a UVM-specific issue, or are other colleges in the area facing the same issue?
 - I am most familiar with UVM. We haven't asked for info regarding Champlain. They have been generally better around working with the city proactively on housing things
- **Chair Demeo:** Back to the political side of things, is there a broad political will to take on this issue?

- I think there is more political will than there has been. There has never really been a conversation since I have been involved about expanding code enforcement to this degree. If people feel that students make up a large number of the population, there will be built-in pressure if students are organized through elections

Old Business

Bill Recognizing the indigenous Student Union

- Sponsored by Senator Torres
- BILL passed unanimously; Senator Torres abstained

Bill Recognizing UVM Indivisible

- Sponsored by Chair Grace
- **Senator Paquette:** I am up here as the club signer, this organization is building off the public forum guest from a few weeks ago, this organization will be a subset of that.
Saturday, there is an event at City Hall Park at noon, meet 3rd floor of Davis to walk down
- BILL passed unanimously; Chair Grace and Senator Paquette abstained

Bill Recognizing UVM Thrift

- Sponsored by Chair Grace
- We are trying to make sure everyone has access to affordable clothing because there are not a lot of spots for students to get clothes, especially if you don't have a car. Everything will be between 1-5 dollars.
- **Senator Lee:** This is a great idea, where are you getting the clothes from?

- **Response:** Last year we put donation bins at the main desks in the res halls, which made it more accessible for students to donate. We get clothes throughout the semester. Adults have also been donating.
- Right now, we are becoming a club so we can officially do things. We need space for storage because we don't have a place to store the clothes
- **Senator Ranallo:** What do you do with the money?
 - **Response:** It is a nonprofit, the money will go back into the project, we are hoping for a permanent store like Ski and Snowboard, we are hoping it is sustainable enough that it lasts after we graduate
- BILL: passed unanimously; Chair Grace abstained

Emergency Business

New Business

- **Chair Demeo:** Bill introducing Forza pound and wellness club

Senatorial Forum

President Connors and Vice President Modun

- The two of us wanted to come on, because we are so proud that we have had a great year. We have heard of some concerns and seen concerns ourselves
- After hearing from exec and other senators, we are going to do a professional development workshop. In the interim, when you are speaking to fellow members of SGA, everyone in this room is a student leader, so speak with kindness and respect. The

same goes for the entire executive team. They all have experience they are here to help you. If you need help with professional development, ask them or us

- Showing up and being present in SGA is incredibly important. Having like 10 people missing is a red flag. We respect that everyone is a student first. It is a privilege to be a senator. If you don't have the time, then we are just one conversation away. If anyone has questions about expectations, talk to us. Our priorities are that you are passionate and partaking in productive work, and that you are a kind and respectful member of the Senate
- When you are speaking to stakeholders outside of SGA, you are never speaking on behalf of the entire SGA, we are speaking from our experiences and perspectives. We are not speaking for SGA. It is important not to overpromise. Don't say SGA can do this for you. When you do that and you can't follow through, it reduces the credibility of you as an individual and of the organization. If someone asks, what does SGA think of this? Unless we pass a resolution or statement, you cannot answer that. You can only say that as a member of SGA, my personal belief is whatever

Executive Reports

Speaker Onorato

- Hi, I am working with Chair Denny to come up with ways to post legislation and meetings out to the public, which is available for students to see. My meeting with the Special Collections director is tomorrow. The first Judicial Committee meeting is on Thursday.

- For attendance, we are going to maintain the 3 unexcused absence rule, please let me know if you will be absent, late, or have to leave early. Don't hesitate to reach out. We have discussed with exec, and we want to talk about the implementation of a quota for non-Senate meetings. Ask me any questions about that. There are tons of different events that aren't our senate meetings, like the pop-ups and the work the committees are doing. We are doing this to encourage everyone to be present and engaged, and support your fellow senators
- **Senator Arnome:** With the three unexcused absences, when is it excused, and what is being counted
 - If anyone has a question about their absences reach out to me. There are always extenuating circumstances. For general rules, being sick, family or personal emergencies is excused, similar to the rules around classes. We understand everyone is a student first, you guys should prioritize academics, but it is important for us to be present, so plan around SGA meetings.

Vice President Modun

- Thank you for listening to us and keeping these reminders and expectations in mind. Keep an eye out for the professional development workshop. Make-up retreat for Sunday, October 19. If you have a conflict, reach out to me. We had the second federal ad hoc action yesterday. It has been a couple of weeks since the fall retreat, we should have another group bonding activity, I'm thinking dinner, corn maze, pumpkin patch. Let me know if you have any ideas

President Connors

- First, I wanted to talk about SVPT, shout out to Chairs Demeo and Grace. I appreciate all who shared feedback about the slides and the concerns about the content of the training, bringing those concerns to Elliot Ruggles. Federal ad hoc met today, we are working with administrators to have a forum where they can answer questions. SGA strategic plan committee, we will share next week about the questions for our first survey. The GS president will be coming in sometime next semester. The Board of Trustees meeting will be on Friday. We will be presenting the information from the UVM Strategic Planning Committee to the Board of Trustees. The October pop-up event is next week at CCRH 1:30-3:30. There will be an Excel spreadsheet tonight for sign-ups. Maybe the dining hall will give us cupcakes for attending. Pink merch was approved. I am so ecstatic, we are going to do hoodies, and you can pitch sweatshirts to me; they will be released in November for WOK. They will be light pink, UVM, on the back, line art of Old Mill with tulips in the front, and the SGA logo.
- **Senator Orik:** Are we going to be receiving one of those for free
 - You will have to pay; we are just marketing this idea
- **Senator Lee:** The pop-up event is in the dining hall. What if you don't have dining hall swipes?
 - They will just let us in

Treasurer Murphy

- Been busy working with new clubs and reactivated clubs. Having my first meeting with Bethany Wolff for preliminary fiscal year planning. SGA x Pickleball this Sunday in the MAC courts should be 1-3. Jewelry club next Thursday at 7:30

Committee Reports

Public Relations Committee – Chair Denny

- Chair Steele and I are working on WOK, meeting with the Vice Provost on Thursday about the budget, and a definite of what we are doing. Thank you to those at the ad hoc meeting.
- Story highlights will be up to date with photos from the retreat

Committee on the Environment – Chair Arnone

- Thanks for voting in Thrift UVM. We sent Linna a draft of a business proposal, and she will give us feedback before we create a financial plan. Pop-up event in the Hub, 47 Applications are done, and today we set a criteria for review, we will decide next week for the applicants, 10-15 people. Partnering with other organizations to promote, like Inside UVM and the UVM calendar. Senator Peterson is working on creating an environmental coalition between clubs.

Committee on Our Common Ground Values – Chair Espejo

- I had a meeting with Jeff Scholman, Athletic Director, about alumni funding for the athletics project. He said the Board of Trustees is looking for more student input. President Connors and I will be meeting about how to include that in her report. Senator Chen is working with the Provost on the one-stop shop. Senator Camacho is waiting for responses about the mentor group and meeting with the director of Mosaic. We are also working on getting more visibility for First Gen

Committee on Legislative and Community Affairs – Chair Laychak

- Working on various projects. Senator Lee is working on the athletics ad hoc and Winter Parents weekend. Senator Orik is working on getting more art in the Davis Center. As for me, I met with Aimee Alexander to work more closely with civic engagement, and we are planning on recurring monthly meetings to reach better cooperation. Graffiti clean-up is this Saturday at 10 am. This week, is community coalition is happening this Friday. 3-4:30 pm on Colchester Ave, there will also be a Zoom link

Committee on Student Action and Well-Being – Chair Steele

- Everyone is working on their respective projects.. Senator Jones is getting started on an activism project. Senator Brito Del Vaille did a wonderful job on public forum. I'll be meeting with SAC about a WOK collaboration. Remind student athletes to fill out the survey we have almost 200 responses.
- **Chair Espejo:** is there a graphic that we can post on our Instagram
 - **Response:** I made one!

Club Affairs Committee – Chairs Demeo and Grace

- Shout out to Senator Paquette for becoming a club signer for UVM Indivisible and shout out to Senator Torres for bringing the Indigenous Student Union. SVPT happened and we are so glad so many of you could make it. If you have any additional feedback, please share it with me so we can get it to Dr. Ruggles. Attendance lists for that have been finalized. Club signer makeup is complete, and info about virtual makeup will be sent out tomorrow. SVPT in the digital aid will be on November 6, 5-6:30, in Billings lecture hall. We have canceled Cats Reconnect as we were not able to find a suitable location.

Academic Affairs Committee – Chair Carroll-Millins

- We have been busy planning the midterm scavenger hunt on October 27-29, it will be Halloween themed, where students can trick or treat to the resources

Finance Committee – Chair Rice

- Continuing supplementals, I will be attending the Board of Trustees finance committee meeting.

Senatorial Comments/Announcements

- **Senator Paquette:** I am creating an infographic for the event on Saturday. I'll drop that in the group me if you guys could repost
- **Chair Arnome:** The first volleyball game is this Monday at 10 pm. If you wanna join let me know. We are looking for a few more guys; we only have 2
- **Chair Steele:** wellness fair hosted by CHWB on Oct 24, tabling outside of the rest stop, the fair is from 11-2,
- **Senator Brito Del Valle:** graffiti clean up is this Saturday, 10 am meeting in front of City Hall
- **Vice President Modun:** Put these dates on the calendar and check the calendar
- **Treasurer Murphy:** flu shots tomorrow from 8-4 at the rest stop
- **Senator Camacho:** Chair Steele, do you need help tabling for the event?

Response: I will be there from 11-12:50, looking for people to table from 1-2

Adjournment