



12th Meeting of the 2025-2026 Student Government Association Senate
October 21st, 2025 | 7:00 PM | Livak Ballroom

Call to Order

This meeting was called to order by Speaker Lily Onorato.

Roll Call

Chair Espejo, Senators Lee and Campbell, Chair Demeo, Senator Saini

Approval of Minutes

Minutes approved unanimously.

Public Forum

Joseph Murphy Presenting on Students for Justice in Palestine

- Thank you for having me here, and to the senators who encouraged me to show up for this. I wanted to talk about a campaign we are running about getting weapons manufacturers out of Career Fairs. Currently, we educate about the occupation and ongoing genocide in Palestine, we do teach-ins, and look for connections to separate between the University and Israel. We work with anyone we can find common ground with by building solidarity among struggles. We do a lot of research, and we have increasingly focused on research that identifies connections between UVM and the genocide and occupation in Palestine. We try to enable students to do something about the genocide and inform them about what actions can be taken

- Arms off campus campaign revolves around our research that identified companies at the Career Fairs that are involved in the genocide and occupation. The core of what we are trying to achieve is to make the University adopt ethical standards for the companies they host at the career fair, so that those who are involved in the genocide are not allowed to recruit on campus. The reason we came today is that, so far, the administration has rejected our attempts to work together. Despite the unhelpful administration, we saw some success. We protested the fall career fair and two companies backed out on their own. We are working with other clubs, unions, faculty and staff, and graduate students to continue communication with the administration so UVM can become as ethical as it markets itself as. We want to get in touch with those who want to help us.
- **Senator Jones:** Could you discuss the benefits behind keeping these organizations off campus
 - **Response:** It is the most immediate and easy thing the University could do to begin to end its complicity. As an organization and with other groups, we are going to research the endowment to identify if there are negative companies with ties to the University
- **Senator Jones:** Could you follow up on divesting and severing the economic ties, and give us an update on what goals have been met from the encampment?
 - **Response:** Our demands during the encampment were to disclose the endowment of funds, divestment from companies that are involved in the genocide, remove the US ambassador to the UN, who blocked the ceasefires from speaking at commencement, an academic boycott of Israeli institutions and the end of UVM with those institutions, and amnesty for students participating

- o The UN ambassador was removed. For disclosure and divestment, we were given a partial list of third-party funds that manage money on behalf of UVM. We have been able to parse through these funds and identify some of those companies that UVM is invested in.
- **Senator Marchant:** You mentioned that the club has worked with other institutions. What other specific clubs are you working with for this campaign?
 - o **Response:** We don't have an official list of clubs, but general contacts in a number of different communities, such as Young Progressives and YDSA. We are looking to expand our coalition.
- **President Connors:** You mentioned the administration hasn't been receptive. Could you update us the conversation with the career center? What has pushback looked like?
 - o **Response:** The conversation hasn't gone anywhere agyer the conversation you and I were present for. We are looking for ways to restart the conversation
- **President Connors:** Have you been in contact with the career center director?
 - o **Response:** We haven't had much contact since the protest. Part of that is because we want to get together with other groups and figure out how we can go to the administration representing the will of the students.
- **Senator Orik:** I am curious what these ethical standards would look like. I wonder if Palestine wasn't explicitly mentioned if the administration would be more inclined to accept them
 - o **Response:** The standards would be less in my wheelhouse. We have people who are working on specific language, and we would like to talk to the university

about it and see where they are so we can work together. We want to determine the threshold for how bad a company has to be in order for them to not be invited

- **Senator Orik:** With groups like GSU or Faculty Senate, have there been any specific resolutions or are you just working with specific students
 - **Response:** Graduate Student Senate has endorsed our campaign and we are working with them to develop long-term policy change.
- **Senator Esbin:** With career fairs, I have noticed some students create pamphlets for companies with faulty backgrounds, which informs students about what is going on, and gives the students autonomy by providing the option to not go up to that table.
 - **Response:** IN the absence of UVM disallowing these companies, students' have a responsibility to not allow themselves to be recruited by genocidal companies. We want to take it a step further so UVM can say they don't want weapons manufactures because they don't reflect UVM's values
- **Senator Castaneda:** Are there specific ways you want SGA to help as a body?
 - **Response:** We want to hear from you guys on what you think is possible and get that perspective before we ask you to do something for us

Kahlia Livingston Presenting on the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity

- I am from the CVOEO, I am hereto talk about the statewide housing advocacy programs. We teach students about their rights and responsibilities as tenants.. My role is outreach coordinator, so I work closely with housing advocacy programs. We have workshops and trainings to anyone who is a housing provider, one-on-one consultations where people can reach out if they have experienced housing-related discrimination. We are not attorneys, but we can inform people about what the law says. We also have a hot line

service that anyone in the state can use. Fair housing is the right to equal opportunity in housing choice, free from discrimination. If people have membership in a protected class and are experiencing discrimination, that would be illegal. Anyone renting, home-owning, paying a mortgage, or occupying a dwelling should be protected. If a client needed resources, we would direct them to Vermont Legal Aid, a consultation with me, or the Department of Housing. We have workshops every month on zoom with financial tips for those who are seeking sustainable housing. Our interns will be teaching a know your rights workshop to rising juniors, which I would love to raise awareness for.

- **Senator Wheaton:** Can you expand on the home voucher program?
 - **Response:** It is a program for families experiencing homelessness. One of the main eligibility points is that the family has to be experiencing homelessness or is about to. Once they get a case manager, they can start.
- **Chair Laychak:** What resources do you give out specifically to students
 - **Response:** Mainly our housing advocacy programs. We have a community action program and help with rental assistance and utilities.
- **Senator Orik:** if places do not accept student applicants, is that discrimination?
 - **Response:** It could be discrimination based on age
- **Senator Peterson:** Is there a cost for the workshops?
 - **Response:** Attending online is free but we do have a cost for the housing provider trainings. However, if cost is a burden we can work around it
- **Senator Ranallo:** I think the latest people secure housing is in November, I would recommend having the workshop for students earlier in the year

- o **Response:** Thank you for the feedback. The plan is to have it out before the holidays
- **Senator Wheaton:** I think that the housing search started at the end of our freshman year in August, so it would be nice to get them informed
- **Senator Camacho:** Is it possible to have the contact info of these interns to promote the workshop?
 - o **Response:** I gave them Cameron's email, you guys can connect that way and I can facilitate correspondence.

Old Business

Bill Recognizing Forza, Pound & Wellness Club

- Sponsored by Chair Grace
- Student led fitness community, inclusive environment to build strength release stress,
- BILL: passed unanimously, Chair Grace abstained

Emergency Business

New Business

Senatorial Forum

Senator Hollner

- I have a new project idea and I am looking for advice and opinions. I want to inform middle schools and high schools about SGA to show them why they should start or continue in SGA. This project would build connections between schools and the University, which could inspire students to be leaders. I would tell them what we are currently doing and what we did in the past, such as WOK and Retreat. I would share my SGA journey because I came into it with no knowledge, so this could show that you don't need a background in it to get involved. I am looking to reach out to this week, reach out to schools by the end of October, have the presentations in November, and begin presenting in the spring.
- Should I make separate presentations for the different age groups? What would you want me to share? Who should I reach out to?
- **Senator Jones:** I know from a past project, you do need a training to interact with children. I would also suggest talking about civic engagement more broadly than just SGA. Also, it would be ideal to have two presentations because they have different levels of comprehension.
- **Senator Marchant:** You should do two presentations
- **Senator Peterson:** I would love to help you out, we could also connect college SGAs
- **Senator Ranallo:** Do you know what grades are considered middle school and high school?
 - **Senator Jones:** the groupings are 3-5, 6-8, 9-12
- **Chair Rice:** there should be two different presentations because they will have different levels of care for different groups. Keep it as simple and direct as possible

- **Senator Torres:** You should reach out to CESS and figure out what schools they work with
- **Senator Orik:** I think middle schoolers have a lot to learn and think about. It is good for them to think about things that are complicated, so don't dumb it down too much
- **Senator Esbin:** This might be seen as an admissions effort, you might want to see if there are parameters around that
- **Senator Chen:** For middle schoolers you have to strike their interest. Is your point to persuade them to join SGA or to teach them about SGA
 - **Response:** both
- **Senator Paquette:** You should lean more into civiv engagement because college SGA is very different compared to high school SGA
- **President Connors:** When we have volunteer events, you should give them the opportunity to get involved

SGA Strategic Planning Committee

- We wanted to go over the survey questions that we hope to send out to the student body. If you have specific questions about the word choice, text us later. We have 32 questions that we are trying to cut down. The first is demographic questions, which transitions to mental health – focused on depression and anxiety. Next is about housing and financial security. Then there are yes/no questions about sexual harassment and violence to know where students are feeling unsafe. Lastly, we have questions about academics and SGA's presence on campus

- **Senator Jones:** I have noticed that there are gaps that students can fall through because they don't fit in the four options, don't be too restrictive
- **Senator Hollner:** for the mental health questions, you should add 911 as a resource they may have reached out to
- **Chair Rice:** would these questions be select all that apply?
 - **Response:** Yes
- **Senator Eamon Giles:** are questions required or can they be skipped
 - **Response:** ideally they would be required since it is anonymous
- **Senator Esbin:** Would you guys be able to send this list in the Teams. Will this be on Qualtrics
 - **Response:** It will probably be on Microsoft Forms
- **Vice President Modun:** have you considered an open ended question about what more SGA could be doing
 - **Response:** That is more of a s second survey question
- **Senator Ranallo:** Under financial security, are you going to add an option for personal loans, and a preferred not to say under identity questions
- **Senator Richardson:** how are you incentivizing students to take the survey
 - **Response:** there are stuffed animals from the bookstore as a prize given through a raffle
- **Senator Ranallo:** if there is an incentive, how is it anonymous
 - **Response:** there will be a separate form to fill out to be in the running

- **Senator Jones:** There are still concerns about a separate survey for data privacy. You should give students an upfront notice of data privacy strategies you are using and talk to administrators about following policies.
 - **Response:** this survey is completely voluntary so if students don't have concerns they don't have to take it. The questions we are asking are customary, but if they feel uncomfortable they can always opt out
- **Senator Chapman:** it is important for the data that they don't skip questions; however, the last two questions should have an I don't know option
- **Senator Torres:** You should consider making the first SGA question more open ended
- **Senator Rob:** RAs could promote the survey
- **Senator Esbin:** do you guys have a set sample size
 - **Response:** The sample would be 150 students. The second survey would be open
 - the entire student body
- **Chair Grace:** when is this coming out
 - **Response:** the goal was next week but that might be postponed due to the privacy concerns

Executive Reports

Speaker Onorato

- Meeting with Bridgette Burk – storing legislation, updated SGA site to see any information. Treasurer Murphy and I attended community coalition. First judicial committee meeting working on updating documents. The new attendance policy – we are

working 4 non-senate meetings events, at the end of the semester we will be sending out an accountability form asking you to report what events you went to, not taking attendance at events it is an honor system

Vice President Modun

- Make up retreat was this past Sunday, one more retreat on Thursday. President Connors and I have done chair check-ins for committees, these will continue into next week. We are attending a town hall meeting at CWP. WOK meeting on Thursday. You can appoint people who are interested in joining SGA.

President Connors

- Last week was Board Of Trustees, which went well all the board members were receptive to student concerns. They were not aware of the status of the dorms; they were excited to be in discussion about changes. The thunder sticks finally came. SGA game on November 8. The final hoodie print was sent to the bookstore on Friday. Federal Actions Ad hoc forum nov 13 from 7-8pm. Professional development workshop on Nov 11, the time is set from 5-6 it's a Tuesday, we might change the time Sexual violence prevention council is looking for nominations.. Meeting with Rally Cat Cupboardsto support the future of it. SGA pop up this Thursday in central dining 1:30-3:30 so many signed up, you can still sign up in the teams. Justice Sotomayor now has a SGA hat, she said she will wear it

Treasurer Murphy

- Finished the RSO fundraiser FAQ that will be sent to the club signer group me, open to more suggestions. Spring Fest committee meeting on Friday. Thank everyone who came to pickleball on Sunday for their enthusiasm and support, having SGA x Jewlerly club in Innovation in E105. Let me know if there are any other clubs and events you would like to see for an SGA collab

Committee Reports

Public Relations Committee – Chair Denny

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Committee on the Environment – Chair Arnone

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Committee on Our Common Ground Values – Chair Espejo

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Committee on Legislative and Community Affairs – Chair Laychak

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Committee on Student Action and Well-Being – Chair Steele

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Club Affairs Committee – Chairs Demeo and Grace

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Academic Affairs Committee – Chair Carroll-Millins

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Finance Committee – Chair Rice

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Senatorial Comments/Announcements

Adjournment