



6th Meeting of the 2022-2023 Student Government Association Senate
October 4th, 2022 | 7:00 PM | Livak Ballroom

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Speaker Carter Purple.

Roll Call

Senators Bourgault and Langlois not present.

Public Forum

Annabelle Keimach - Every Voice Coalition

- Greetings and introduction to Every Voice Coalition. Annabelle is a Sophomore, Global Studies major, working with nonprofits on various social issues.
- Every Voice Coalition's mission is to combat campus violence by passing legislation. Taking a bipartisan approach to legislation. Passed six bills so far. Nonprofit, student survivor led organization.
- As college students, we understand how campus sexual violence influences our communities. Acknowledgement of meaningful work done with this issue already.

- Statistical overview of issues and acknowledgement of the failure of stats to accurately represent issues. Definitions of various acts that pertain to this issue.
- Overview of the Every Voice Coalition Core 5, based on individual states' needs.
- Currently, students fear retaliation and lack support from administration. Legislature focuses on clarifying survivors rights and options, including on-campus advisors at every University. Anti-retaliation protection for reporting parties. Third party resources beyond on-campus administration. Transparent public data created by a task force around the state. Working with Vermont Campus Sexual harm task force.
- Updates on Vermont's specific policy stances in regards to on-campus sexual violence.
- Movement is just coming to Vermont, needing more student engagement as they are an entirely student-led organization. Engagement can look like attending legislature meetings, attending press conferences, and outreach through social media, community and campus events, writing in various campus medias, spreading the word.
- First general body meeting this Thursday (October 6th) on Zoom.

Treasurer Wignon: Could you guys become a club on campus and access funding or are you staying within your national coalition?

- **Response:** I'm actually working on becoming a club, but that would be one sect of the national movement.

Senator Carpenter: What has your group already accomplished in the state of Vermont?

- **Response:** Bill drafting and researching, gathering data on students needs and translating that into witten policy, forming partnerships with different organizations in vermont.

VP Wood: What is an Amnesty policy?

- **Response:** If a school code of conduct is broken at the time of the incident the individual would not be punished for the breach of conduct.

Ann Wong & Friends - AdvoCats

- Introduction to AdvoCats.
- Disconnect between students and administration. Frustration with SGA and tour guides not having recognition for their actions from the student body and administration, and how best to deal with students pinning things the administration does on SGA and AdvoCats. How do you interact with peers and share your experiences with being student leaders and interactions with administration?

Senator Siegel: SGA feels like they have better connections with the administration because they have more opportunities to meet with the administration. There should be more interactions with Provost and Deans to get better communication.

VP Wood: I think it's really powerful when AdvoCats go on strike for various things. What is something that SGA can do in that respect?

- **Response:** A big thing that SGA does is what Senator Siegel was saying about having closer connections with administration, and having one-on-one meetings with the President. That is a big advantage of SGA, as well as passing resolutions and letting everyone know what's happening. When we went on strike (the previous year) it was because we didn't feel comfortable representing the school when there was so much activism on campus.

- **Response:** Also, striking was about not representing the actions of the administration at that moment. Administration does a lot of pushback on various issues, so the role of SGA refusing to compromise and continuing to represent the student body is really important.
- **Response:** It can be really triggering to the tour guide and to those visiting, when the activism was occurring while tours were ongoing.

Chair Teferra: What was UVM's response to the strike you guys participated in?

- **Response:** A lot of the AdvoCats were in a meeting when the Instagram post went up, and we connected the supervisors and got in contact with the Vice-Provost and the Provost about the reasons behind suspending tours and what the tour guides needed, and what she needed to do to have the tour guides go back to having tours.
- **Response:** All leadership positions need to think outside of the box and think critically about how we are representing our students' best interests.

Senator Carpenter: Do you feel like you are in a position and have the tools you need to represent the student body? What can SGA do to help you? Do you feel like you can share your insight with students, anything that is related to recruitment and retention?

- **Response:** In our marketing role as tour guides, it is important to make sure that the things that students are interested in are still here when they come here. Related to the cutting of departments, etc.

Senator Carpenter: What are one or two things that could be done to get you the information you need to field the questions from students who bring up questions about UVM? If someone was to ask you a question about, for example, parking on campus as a Sophomore, would you have the resources to answer that question?

- **Response:** We are not expected to have an in depth response to everything, so we refer that person to a counselor who has more information about specific topics.

VP Wood: Students on tours often have answers to other prospective student's questions. We are also able to refer to other tour guides and the counselors to answer various questions.

- **Response:** Tour guides are hired to have a diverse population with various majors and interests so that a variety of student's questions are answered.

Senator Kerin: Thank you for bringing this in, this can be seen in UBP too.

Treasurer Wigon: What are you asking of us?

- **Response:** Opening up a discussion of what tour guides do and how we can navigate being student leaders, and navigating the interactions between the student body and the administration.

Treasurer Wigon: There is a separation, because the tour guides are paid employees to represent the school while SGA is a body working to represent the student's interests.

- **Response:** That is why we're here, to bridge the gap between representing the school and representing the student body.

Senator Siegel: Maybe once or twice a semester we could have a meeting of student leaders including SGA, Advocats, maybe UPB, and bring in the President and the Provost and create a place for discussion to all get on the same page.

Senator Jones: Reaching out like this is a powerful reminder to the administration that their actions impact all students, including putting the Advocats in a conflict of interest position. We should increase student awareness of the harassment that tour guides face, just because you are employees of the school doesn't mean you need to agree with the administration on everything.

Maybe we could do something about not having tours going through populated areas like the Howe during stressful periods like midterm or finals week or periods of unrest.

- **Response:** I appreciate the feedback and we can bring that up in future meetings. The situation is that we have expectations to fulfill as employees but we can look into that further.

Chair Teferra: A way we can make students more attentive to the efforts of SGA and AdvoCats would be to have student leadership meetings where we can work through issues and create statements from student leaders to send to administration to navigate topics. We have the same problems with admin that all students do, even when we are supposed to represent admin with our jobs as student leaders, so to create a space and a statement that would clarify the position of the student leaders would be valuable.

Senator Smith: Would it be beneficial to establish an open line of communication between SGA and AdvoCats, perhaps a liaison position on a committee?

- **Response:** I think that would be really helpful but even having access to the meeting minutes would be beneficial to keep the line of communication open.

Old Business

Bill Recognizing UVM Prison Project, Sponsored by Senator Hogan

- Our goal is to go in and volunteer in the women's prison in VT, and we have been running for many years without SGA's approval. Seeking more student involvement in the club and seeking funds, and recognition from SGA.
- Want to get more UVM students out of the campus bubble and into the reality of life around us, and recognition of the faults of the criminal justice system.

- Two parts; education of the reality of the industrial prison complex, and volunteers working in the prison.

Chair MacHarrie: Who can participate in this?

- **Response:** Any UVM students are able to participate, but in order to volunteer in the prison itself you do have to get a background check and training. Anyone can be involved in the club.

Senator Jones: Does the training come at a cost?

- **Response:** No.

Senator Boudreau: Do you know what kinds of things students would be doing as volunteers?

- **Response:** A lot of the people in the club are all sophomores, so right now we are starting with playing sports but we are hoping to extend the activities as the years go on. Ideas include art, writing, yoga, etc. There are a couple legal loopholes but we are hoping to combine student and incarcerated individual's ideas to create activities.

Senator Jones: Do you know if there are any opportunities to be involved with the Career Center that could involve internship opportunities for those wanting to work within the criminal justice system?

- **Response:** That would be a great idea, we will look into that.

Senator Bednarik: Idea of reaching out to the Fleming museum to combine activities with exhibits.

VP Wood: There are a lot of opportunities to be involved with the women's prison through UVM classes right now.

BILL: PASSED unanimously, Senator Hogan abstained

Emergency Business

Confirming of Judicial Committee -

Nominations of Senators.

Senators: Johnson, Jones, Elkort, Lista, Smith, Daniels, Le, Rooney

Confirmation of Judicial Committee: APPROVED by unanimous vote, judicial committee nominees abstained.

New Business

Bill Altering Language of Diversity Enhancement Fund

Bill Altering Language of Wellness and Engagement Fund

Bill Recognizing Jump-Rope Club

Senatorial Forum

Senator Clark - Non-Consensual Towing

- Non-Consensual Towing is towing companies seizing vehicles without cause. Language used to describe violations is vague, leading to towing companies to seize vehicles for almost every parking offense. Towing companies have very limited checks on impounding abilities. Important issue in protecting students in low-income communities.
- Introducing state legislation against towing companies having free-reign. Transparency against towing lobbyists. Establishing a line of commutation between towing companies and those who have had their cars towed. Expanding methods of payment to include election options.
- Examples of legislature in Utah and New Jersey

- Link is being sent out with a survey.

VP Wood: Further explanations about the differences between city parking services and UVM parking services?

- **Response:** Language is up for debate, but UVM policy acts as a notification service for city towing services to impound cars.

Treasurer Wignon: Are towing companies contracted with Burlington or with UVM itself?

- **Response:** They act as a private company.

Senator Smith: Can you talk about work you are doing with legislators at the moment?

- **Response:** There is a student internet working on getting legislature passed this spring, my role is to spread the survey.

Senator Johnson: Is UVM making money off of towing companies towing cars specifically on UVM campus?

- **Response:** I don't know how UVM benefits from this, I know it's lucrative for the two towing companies as they have no competition.

Senator Johnson: Would we ask UVM or the city of Burlington for change on this?

- **Response:** It would be the greater state of Vermont, this is a state-wide issue so these restrictions would be state-wide.

Senator Carpenter: Clarifying the relationship between UVM and these towing companies. Are there any MOUs in place between these, and any way to adjust them to put more sticks and carrots in there to make the towing companies abide by the guidelines?

- **Response:** Unclear the exact interaction between UVM and the towing companies, and because of the cash flow there are limited records.

Senator Ward: Do we know if any city council, mayor, representatives have taken money from towing lobbyists?

- **Response:** It has been such a prevalent issue that lines of communication are being established now, exact donations are unknown but they are prevalent.

Senator Jones: Would it be possible to organize some kind of town hall to raise awareness?

- **Response:** Yes, the advocacy aspect is really important, and students don't have the capabilities to legally advocate for themselves.

Chair Sorensen: Comment on legislative members that could be connected in regards to this.

Senator Collins: Do you know what UVM's specific policy is on towing vs tickets?

- **Response:** Towing is based on "safety" of the roads, such as being parked in front of a house or on Main St. If you have a parking fine, you are in a place you shouldn't be, but towing is based on safety. But the language is very arbitrary.

Chair Teferra: What exactly are we asking the UVM administration to do other than advocating?

- **Response:** If we get a lot of engagement on the survey, we can have a greater voice in passing the legislation.

VP Wood: It would be interesting if COLCA could reach out to different communities with education on parking laws.

Senator Charles: In an effort to remember off-campus students, would this include the issue of predatory off-campus towing?

- **Response:** This issue impacts on campus and off campus students as these two towing companies have jurisdiction in both UVM and Burlington.

Senator Smith: Comment on witnessing towing in Burlington.

Senator Jones: Could we get a QR Code to post on campus and have a place for students to register complaints, and then have a forum to produce direct quotes from?

Senator Carpenter : Could UVM invest in and house their own towing truck and take responsibility for all on-campus towing?

- **Response:** It is an interesting idea, but when you commodify the enforcement of law you get in murky waters with what is a towable offense. It would be in UVM's best interest to have their own towing company, but it is always a murky business.

Senator Batyrshina: Issues with parking permits?

- **Response:** UVM has a limited amount of parking permits, and with limited space there is always an issue.

Senator Smith: There are several residential streets that don't even offer parking permits.

Senator Collins: Should we be talking about public transit and buses?

- **Response:** Talk to Senator Kerin for further ideas.

Executive Reports

Speaker Purple

- Thank you all for a great retreat.
- Introduction of the minutes process.
- Policy review; No eating, talking, technology. Attendance Policy.

Vice President Wood

- Thanks for a great retreat. Short makeup sessions will be available for those who couldn't attend.

- Met with GSS President with Senator Jones and Senator Daniels to continue working on various student organizations.

President Henson

- Apologies for not being here.
- Report for the Board of Trustee is due this Friday.
- Updates regarding the Pendergrass situation.
 - **Senator Carpenter:** A followup for how the academic side of Pendergrass is going?
 - **Response:** They brought back a previous professor, who they have already had an exam with.
 - **Senator Jones:** Was the cease of employment of his own volition or from the administration?
 - **Response:** There were so many complaints about his teaching and specific things from students so there were legal grounds for firing him.

Treasurer Wigon

- New budgeting system is going very well, becoming more generalized and giving clubs more options.
- Budgeting training is Nov. 8th.

Committee Reports

Public Relations Committee

- Getting ready to send out the September newsletter.

Committee on the Environment

- Senator Boudreau got the Instagram up and running.

- Senator Charles is working on making UVM merchandise in the UVM bookstore more sustainable and more transparent about the sources and regulations.
- Senator Collins found a compromise for the trash can problem, working on trash cans being placed in the airlocks of the resident halls.
- Senator Johnson is working on an on-campus investment in composting.

Committee on Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity

- Updates on upcoming projects in the future.

Committee on Legislative and Community Affairs

- Chair Robinson and Senator Bourgault compiled resources regarding voting that are to be shared with the student body.
- Senator Langlois working on the distribution of harm reduction resources with the UVM Psychedelic Club.
- Senator Rooney working on the clothing drive and donations for the Women's Correctional Facility.
- Senator Kerin working on an off-campus bus running for students who live downtown.
- Off-campus student resource fair coming up, volunteers needed (more info on TEAMS).
 - **VP Wood:** How did the first community coalition meeting go?
 - **Response:** It went really well, we talked a lot about the upcoming resource fair and restorative practices at UVM and in the greater Burlington community.
 - **Senator Jones:** The political science club is looking to organize a watch party event for the midterm elections.

Student Action and Well-Being Committee

- Senator Orr worked with Senator Rooney on increasing options in the dining halls.

- Senator Sanford working on mental health counseling accessibility.
- Senator Batyrshina working on safe spaces at the gym and potentially working with Girl Gains.
- Senator Jones working on a student accessibility project and an idea for a mental health fair.
- Revamping Instagram and SGA spotify account.
- Working with various clubs for Week of Kindness.

Club Affairs Committee

- Working on connecting with GSS for accessibility for grad students to be involved in undergraduate clubs.
- Planning first club center training.
- Working on club recognitions.
- Encouraging club leaders to bring their clubs into SGA.
 - **Treasurer Wigon:** Grad students just have to connect the financial office to pay the SGA fee then they can participate in a club.
 - **Senator Hogan:** Note on remembering that students bring clubs to SGA looking for assistance and don't necessarily have all the details figured out.

Academic Affairs Committee

- Peer-mentoring, led by Senator Siegel and Senator DeGroot.
- Increasing the numbers of BIPOC faculty, led by Senator Le and Senator Bednarik.
- Increasing academic resources.

Finance Committee

- Taking over the gas and supplementals project.

- Working on the Diversity Enhancement Fund.
- Met about budget for Week of Kindness.
- Getting SGA a sponsor. TD Bank a sponsor?

Senatorial Comments/Announcements

Treasurer Wigon: All club forms for clubs due.

Chair Sorensen: TD bank sponsoring SGA?

Senator Clark: Tiktok is popping off.

Senator Carpenter: Soul Food Social, by UVM BSU, Saturday Oct. 8th (6:00pm - 9:00pm) in the Grand Maple Ballroom.

Senator Elkort: TriDelt is doing a pancake fundraiser soon.

Chair Teferra: Wednesday 10-12 is women and nonbinary gym time.

Senator Charles: RAs formed an RA Advisory board, might be seeking SGA help in future.

Chair Meunier: Plant based chicken is just as good!

Senator Bednarik: Women and Gender Equity Center celebrating 30 Years, Thursday Oct. 6th (5:00pm - 7:00pm) at the Fleming Museum.

Senator Kerin: Innertube Water Polo with Campus Rec Intramural Sports. Idea of SGA forming a student employee union.

Chair O'Hagan: Send events in the TEAMS.

Senator Siegel: Congratulations to Senator Nicholas for being the only (2/0?) spikeball team on SGA so far.

Senator Lista: Tomorrow is Yom Kippur so Jewish students may be fasting tomorrow.

Senator Batyrshina: Late Night Bubble Tea! by the UVM Taekwondo Club, Friday Oct. 7th

(7:00pm - 1:00am)

Adjournment