



**12th Meeting of the 2023-2024 Student Government Association Senate**  
**October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023 | 7:00 PM | Livak Ballroom**

**Call to Order**

This meeting was called to order by Speaker Ashleigh Clark.

**Roll Call**

Senator Wiltz not present.

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes approved unanimously.

**Public Forum**

**Anja Samson** – VT Space Grant Consortium Discussing Eclipse Events for the April 8<sup>th</sup> Total Solar Eclipse

- Ellen Brennan, Program Administrator for NASA Vermont Space Grant and Anja Samson, student coordinator for the eclipse event.
- Monday April 8<sup>th</sup> is Eclipse Day on campus. There will be a total solar eclipse with 3 full minutes of totality. This isn't going to happen again this century, so this is very cool.
  - The University is designating that day as alternative instruction. Professors can choose not to hold class and encourage you to do fun eclipse stuff that we are hosting.

- We have until the start of the semester to come up with the best educational experience to convince your professors not to hold class.
- What we're looking for from SGA is as much student buy-in as possible. It came direct from the Provost and the President that they want you involved in this.
  - Ideas for lead up and day of events.
  - Volunteer for events or take charge of something, we will pay for you to do that.
  - Other clubs you are associated with that would be interested are also great.
- Events already started/starting soon running up to the eclipse:
  - Benchmark Space Systems is hosting a regularly occurring space themed trivia night in Brennans with escalating prizes.
  - Seminar series each month starting in January and a few on the day of.
  - Space themed movie nights or TV show screenings in the Davis Center.
- Really close to the eclipse will have more specific and wider activities:
  - April 5<sup>th</sup> we want to shuttle anyone who's interested to themed tours of different aerospace companies nearby in Vermont.
  - School of the Arts has an interesting musician coming to host a concert on Friday open to everyone.
  - Movie night the day before.
  - Whole weekend should be exciting with lots of activities.
- Day of eclipse events:
  - Admissions running tours for STEM students interested in coming to UVM.
  - Space Research Fair with poster competition and cash prize.
  - Scavenger Hunt similar to the Amazing Race solving puzzles across campus.

- Space Fair with ideally every aerospace related organization in the state, including UVM clubs we would love to host.
  - Art Exhibition that will include concerts, plays, improv exercises, and physical art in Williams and the Royall Tyler Theatre. Mostly highlighting student art with a few professional performers as well.
  - Quiet activity space with board games, puzzles, and art activities in its own building.
  - The Keynote speaker will be either the Director of the Carl Sagan Institute or I'll call up my friend and get an astronaut.
  - Eclipse viewing stations will be scattered across campus, we will be choosing those pretty soon. They will have eclipse glasses, solar viewing telescopes, astrophotography filters so you can take photos with your phone.
  - We want to have a campus blackout, all non-essential lights off during 3 minutes of totality. Campus Safety is not enthusiastic about that but hopefully we can make it happen.
  - Party outside after the eclipse with food, games, and live music.
  - Last trivia of the season with the biggest prize.
- This is all a draft that we just sent to the Provost and President on Tuesday so there is plenty of time to add a bunch of stuff.
  - The city of Burlington is planning for 200,000 people to be here so there could end up being a lot of people on campus who aren't normally here. That is about a third of Vermont's population, so if you have something cool to show off or want to make connections this will be a great day for that.

- We have a sizable budget and time to add more events to this schedule so if you have things you are interested in or want to get involved, let us know.

**Treasurer Sorensen:** I'm sure clubs would love to be involved, how should they reach out?

- **Response:** Email me, you can go to the Vermont Space Grant website and find my email there.

**Treasurer Sorensen:** We are having a club signer training on November 13<sup>th</sup> where all the leaders from every club will be in one room which could also be a good time to bring this up or have a form.

- **Response:** We have a form for space themed clubs already, but I could make a more broad one as well to put on the website.

**Senator Arnone:** Could there be a discussion on the ethics of space exploration?

- **Response:** We have many companies focused on sustainability and a panel planned on that, but ethics would be a great idea too.

**Senator Joshi:** You mentioned the safety team said you couldn't do a blackout?

- **Response:** They haven't said no, but they didn't love the idea.

**Senator Halvorson:** Are you looking for non space-related clubs also, maybe for lawn games after?

- **Response:** Yes, anyone who wants to get involved in any way, please do.

### **Old Business**

Resolution Addressing UVM's Response to the Palestinian Community, Sponsored by Chair Anis and Chair Teferra

- **Chair Teferra:** We know this is a difficult conversation and a sensitive topic so feel free to ask questions or step out if you need to. Be mindful of what you are saying and how you say it to be respectful.
- Like we talked about last week, the intention of this is not to debate politics. This is not the place to do that and that won't get anything accomplished. It is about supporting people here at UVM, both Jewish and Palestinian students and making sure there is equitable support from the administration.
- Through the past few weeks, starting with the initial email to the student body on October 10<sup>th</sup> and then further through the cancellation of Mohammed El-Kurd's lecture, we saw there was a lack of support and fair perspective provided to Palestinian and Arab students.
- The intention behind this is to make sure Palestinian students know they are supported in this community, and also to say to admin that we are not satisfied by the support they provided. SGA supports you and we want admin to support you as well, and we are willing to work with them to provide resources, to provide awareness, however that may look in the future.

**Senator Siegel:** Hello everyone, before I speak on this resolution I want to take a second to thank you all for the support you have given me throughout the week during this emotional time; I really appreciate it more than you know.

Over the weekend, I took a lot of time to read the resolution and really understand the perspectives of my fellow senators. At a first glance, it may seem like we have different opinions on a slew of issues, and from a bird's-eye-view politically there are some key issues where we

differ in opinion, but at the heart of it all we all agree on one thing— we all want peace and we all want to feel safe and heard in our home here at the University of Vermont.

If we look at this resolution through a lens of safety for all students of the University, it does an inadequate job. Across our campus we are plagued with both antisemitism and Islamophobia; and many have argued that postponing the Mohammed El-Kurd lecture during this difficult time of geopolitical crisis would in fact exacerbate the cognitive biases so many Americans sadly have today of our Arab and Palestinian friends on campus. However, I would argue that the University Administration cannot simply uplift one community at the expense of another.

Mohammed El-Kurd has a history of inciting harmful rhetoric against the Jewish community, and approximately 20% of UVM students identify as Jewish. I acknowledge that Mohammed El-Kurd was invited prior to October 7<sup>th</sup>, but the University sponsors chose to keep the event running as planned despite concerns from students, faculty, and members of the Burlington community. During this time of heightened conflict and intense emotion, and given his past rhetoric on college campuses, public events, and social media all point to the fact that he could very well incite violence on our Jewish community in the name of anti-Zionism. And, in fact he did.

After his lecture, many UVM students took to their social media accounts to post antisemitic rhetoric, even going as far to say that they did not care if what they said was antisemitic if it helped the Palestinian cause in their eyes. Many of you likely saw some of these posts. Could you imagine the impact he would have had if he spoke live, in person, on our campus? If this is what students feel comfortable saying on their Instagram pages, what would

they say in person? If antisemitism is okay if it's fighting for the "right" cause, what would they say to the faces of their Jewish and Israeli peers here on campus?

Surely you've seen the horrific stories of Jewish students fearing for their lives on college campuses all across the nation— Tulane, Cooper Union, Columbia University, NYU. If you haven't seen these colleges in the news, please look them up after this meeting. I, and many of my Jewish friends and peers, believe that Mohammed El-Kurd contributes to this type of unsafe environment. Not all Jews will agree on this. But are you okay with Jewish students, of any quantity, feeling unsafe to exist as their fullest selves on campus?

Mohammed El-Kurd has a history of criticizing Israel, which is fine. The Jews and Israelis I talk to, including myself, criticize the Israeli government and its actions all the time. The way many of us felt about former President Trump is the way many Israelis feel about Netanyahu and current Israeli politics. It is reasonable to criticize Israel. But Mohammed El-Kurd has never been interested in simply criticizing Israel. He literally said in his October 26<sup>th</sup> lecture that he doesn't care about perpetuating antisemitic tropes because "words don't kill". This is coming from a poet of all people. El-Kurd spent the first 25 minutes of his speech, which I watched more than 3 times, talking about how he hates the Jewish settlers, and that it is not their fault they're Jewish.

As a Palestinian man, El-Kurd is absolutely entitled to talk about the first-hand experience of himself, his family, and his loved ones. No one can take his lived experience away, and he has a right to talk about it. He should not, however, be allowed to excuse harmful Jewish tropes and stereotypes or express hatred toward all Jews in the name of Palestinian liberation. Does his justification of antisemitism, for any reason, sound safe to you? Does his encouragement of other non-Jews to redefine or ignore antisemitism sound safe to you?

I told you before I do not want to repeat some of the verbage he has spoken before, but no longer will I stay silent. He has many quotes, including, “I hope every one of them [Israelis] dies in the most torturous & slow ways. I hope that they see their mothers suffering”. This, deep down, is what this man believes. Even if this surrounds politics, we all know there is a line.

Now that I’ve discussed my concerns with Mohammed El-Kurd as a person and as a lecturer, I’d like to share my concerns with the resolution itself. The resolution, aside from supporting Mohammed El-Kurd, stated that the lecture was canceled by the University of Vermont administration and the Division of Safety and Compliance just a week before the event was supposed to occur. However the resolution fails to acknowledge that the lecture organizers, members of the English and Sociology department, who worked for over a year planning this event, did not consider enough safety of all of its students until two weeks prior to Mohammed El-Kurd’s lecture. Do you know how I know this is true? Because three weeks ago, I spoke with Chair Strickler, the Dean of the Sociology department, and during that meeting she told me and a handful of other students that because of our vocal concerns for the safety of any potential attendees, El-Kurd himself, and UVM administration and faculty, she would “look into” security measures for the event.

This was not a personal request, as Jewish students have been afraid all across the nation from outbreaks of violence surrounding University events in this conflict. The topic of Israel and Palestine is always a contentious subject, and it is not unreasonable to expect some kind of security measure at an event focused on such an emotionally-loaded topic even in the best of times. Given the current state of the world, it would be irresponsible for the event organizers to host an event on the subject without security. When the Division of Safety and Compliance told the Will Miller Lecture Series organizers that University of Vermont police would be unable to



provide adequate security in the Livak Ballroom, the series organizers refused to cooperate by selecting an alternate venue or date for the lecture. An email was then sent to the sponsors, saying, and I quote, “The University has attempted to work with you to reschedule the event for a later date but you were unable or unwilling to reschedule. We have also considered alternate venues on campus that could be secured with the limited public safety resources we have available.” At the end of the day, Mohammed El-Kurd’s lecture was not canceled, it was moved to a virtual setting not because the University wanted to cancel him, but because the sponsors would not compromise to meet the standard safety requirements. The requests to move the lecture were last minute, yes. But the University simply cannot predict geopolitics or wars.

The horrific events that occurred on October 7<sup>th</sup> and the war that has followed made security measures even more necessary than they would have been before. To say that the University of Vermont simply canceled Mohammed El-Kurd is false. To say that any “security concerns” the University of Vermont cited when asking the event organizers to reschedule their event were “lies” is both unfounded, not based in reality, and extremely hurtful to all of the students I personally know who feared for their safety because of El-Kurd’s planned presence.

It is very reasonable to request that the University acknowledge the very real hurt of Palestinian students and provide adequate measures and apology; I would support a resolution that requested specifically this. However, it is unreasonable to ask the University to apologize for looking into safety concerns that affect every single student. It is fair to request that the University release a statement acknowledging the hurt and the suffering of every single innocent civilian in the Gaza Strip; however you can do this without glorifying Mohammed El-Kurd, a man who openly supports Hamas, a terrorist organization.

There is a great need for education on these difficult, deep-rooted topics, and there is a need for experiential learning in the form of speakers and educators outside the classroom, but student safety and security must always be first priority when discussing these charged topics.

I stand here today wanting to learn more about Palestinian narratives, more about their history, more about their story. It is important for my views to be broadened and my biases to be challenged as a Jewish student. It is also important for our conversations to be continued with regard to our University of Vermont Common Ground Values of Respect, Integrity, Justice, and Responsibility for people of all nationalities, ethnicities, and religions. We need to find speakers who can do both, and Mohammed El-Kurd does not exemplify this.

I care so deeply about the safety of everyone in this room, and I hope you would care about mine as well – as a UVM student, as a Jew, as a person. We can highlight marginalized voices without putting people in harm's way. Controversial and uncomfortable discussions are needed, yes, but we can host these discussions without simultaneously amplifying hate speech. We can host these discussions having looked into appropriate security measures. We can host these discussions and listen to the concerns of our peers. And perhaps most relevant to this proposed resolution, we can ask UVM to acknowledge the hurt and pain and suffering of its Palestinian students in a way that does not dismiss the very valid concerns of its student body.

We can advocate for students in a better way. Please do not pass this resolution as it stands. And more importantly, take care of yourselves during these difficult times, trust me I know how it feels.

- **Response (Chair Anis):** Thank you for the perspective you bring, I appreciate it.
- First, I want to affirm your and other students' feelings of insecurity. That is valid and is something we care for and understand. I believe at the same time, this resolution is not

about whether or not Mohammed El-Kurd should have come and spoke. This resolution is about the silencing of Palestinian and Arab voices. In reality, to make it about him disregards the entirety of our resolution and the entire point of why we wrote it.

- I appreciate the solutions and edits you brought to the table, but it feels rather unprofessional because we gave you ample opportunity to voice edits on this resolution, but no further concerns were raised. We stand here with this final draft to be passed as it is, the opportunity for change has come and gone.
- This resolution does not glorify Mohammed El-Kurd.
- **Response (Chair Teferra):** Nowhere in this resolution do we say that we stand by everything Mohammed El-Kurd has said. We aren't saying we support him as a person, but that canceling his lecture was not the right move.
- The intent may have been in the right direction with genuine security concerns, but the impact is very harmful for Palestinian and Arab students, especially when this is a constant issue. This was not the first time they felt isolated or alone, there is a constant problem with underrepresentation of Palestinian and Arab students on this campus and across the country. Canceling something which brings some representation adds to these feelings.
- Silencing a Palestinian perspective does not uplift a Jewish perspective. That is a false dichotomy we have, both can be heard.
- We've heard from many students that this action hurt them deeply and there was little to nothing done to show them that they are supported.

**Vice President Purple:** We can talk about the message of his lecture, but that is not the purpose of this resolution. This resolution is about the byproduct of the cancellation being that the

Palestinian and Arab community here at UVM feels silenced and isolated. This resolution is calling on the administration to better support and amplify these voices, so keep that in mind.

**Senator Joshi:** This isn't about El-Kurd's morality. I believe this is an important resolution that should be passed. UVM was vague in their reasoning and voices should not be silenced.

**Senator Jones:** Going back to a point Chair Teferra and Chair Anis made last week, that we are here as elected representatives. Personal feelings are not important, what matters are the people you are representing.

As I watched this lecture, I saw many people feeling that they were heard for the first time in a long time and people using it to learn, share discourse, and ask questions. After that I saw a wave of people across campus sharing empathy and conversation reveling at the chance to be heard. Those are the people we are here to represent. Those are the people who, by the actions of administration the past couple of weeks, had that opportunity taken away from them.

It is important to say in the nature of free speech and in the nature of this resolution, we cannot say "you may speak if you say this". That is not how free speech works. That is not how liberation works. That is a very slippery slope.

We may not agree with El-Kurd's words, his rhetoric, or points he has made throughout his career as someone in the public, but he was there to give a voice and representation to Palestinian and Arab students. If we can't allow people to have a space to share discourse, to learn, to have empathy, conversation, and representation, even in its barest form in academia, in conversation, in lived experience, in polite civil discourse; then that is not free speech and that is what is being taken away from students.

It is important for this resolution to call the administration to recognize the impact of their actions and respect and empathy for everyone in the conversation.

**Senator Orr:** Touching on what Senator Joshi said. Given all we've seen at other universities in the last week, I don't think elaboration about security concerns was necessary, there are clear examples. Yes, we are supposed to represent everyone, so let's do that.

**Senator Siegel:** Firstly, I owe you an apology. I messed up and was not as communicative as I could have been. That was a mistake I made, I was traveling and focusing on many things and I am sorry because you know that I do want to work with you on this. My concern is that within this resolution there is rhetoric that supports Mohammed El-Kurd.

I want to educate and uplift all voices, but even calling for allowing him to come to campus would be ludicrous and dangerous. We had a Palestinian artist speak here last year and she talked about the occupation, but this is different. In terms of safety, I would argue that depending on what can be said or incited, especially in the Livak Ballroom which you can see does not have much room for escape, who knows what could happen.

I keep hearing this rhetoric from senators, but the event was not canceled, it was asked to postpone or move to a different location and then it ended up online. You can ask for empathy from the administration, but we are crossing a line here. If you want to uplift Jewish and Palestinian voices, work with me on another resolution that does so, because I look at this and I don't see myself represented in it.

- **Response (Chair Teferra):** This is not the end all be all on this issue. We condemn any discrimination, and that includes antisemitism, Islamophobia, anti-Arab sentiment, anything. Writing a resolution acknowledging the struggles of one community does not mean we don't acknowledge the struggles of another.
- Last year, Senator Siegel wrote a letter to administration about how they were lacking in addressing antisemitism, and many of us, including myself and Chair Anis, signed and

supported that letter. The Strategic Planning Committee was a byproduct of that initiative that Senator Siegel took and we both served on it to ensure not just that Jewish voices were being heard, but any students from any identity were heard and we can accurately present that to administration.

- We do see antisemitism. We support the Jewish community and have shown that support. How can we do that, but not support Palestinian students as well? There is so much support for the Jewish community when they are in times of trouble, but often this support for Palestinians is missing.
- Saying that us writing this implies that we don't support the Jewish community is disrespectful. We have shown our support and will continue to do so in further resolutions, letters, and initiatives

**Senator Carpenter:** First think about personal opinion: should UVM have put forth stringent alternatives that were unrealistic, not technically cancellation but making it difficult and putting that on the organizers.

Yes, there may have been valid safety concerns. But also does that matter? That's not what this bill is about. It's about UVM's administration not providing support for Palestinian students. Not providing alternatives instead of putting that work on event organizers.

A decent chunk of this resolution is about UVM's commitment to diversity in Our Common Ground and Diversity Statement and the very different levels of support for different groups. I don't think this is about personal thoughts, or even the safety concerns. You have to look at how UVM has supported Palestinian and Jewish students very differently and this bill is criticizing administration for that.

**Senator Jones:** It is not fair to say that Palestinians can only be supported in conjunction with other identities. When you say this resolution is only reflecting support for the Palestinian community and doesn't represent your identity, that is true. This resolution is intended to be supporting Palestine. That is not to say other groups are being put down, but there is an imbalance which needs to be rectified. And there needs to be targeted attention given to the Palestinian community.

To bring it back to the resolution, it is addressing Palestinian students' feelings of not being supported. This is a campus where we have seen issues with antisemitism and we have seen student organizations rise to occasion to combat that and we are now asking for the same support for Palestinians.

About the issue of safety concerns. We can acknowledge that there were safety concerns, that is true at any event covering salient sensitive issues like this. But did UVM go far enough to try to mitigate that and work around that and accommodate for that. I work in the library, and I personally saw the police go onto the roof during one of the vigils to ensure the safety of students.

It is not about whether there were or were not safety concerns, but rather whether UVM used these concerns as a cop-out. Could they have gone out of their way to secure this event? Arguably yes. The issue is that they didn't. Accommodations were unreasonably put on organizers which feels like an uncaring response. The issue is a lack of care.

**Senator Ibinyopakaka:** We can go back and forth on issues of safety and I do feel that there could have been legitimate issues. For me, even if El-Kurd was not the speaker, I feel UVM would have done the same thing with a different Palestinian speaker.

I would like to echo Senator Jones and Senator Carpenter. This bill is about supporting students, not one singular speaker or other things we are discussing. We have a responsibility to show that we support all students on campus. Passing this bill does not mean we do not care about other groups.

**Senator Halvorson:** I acknowledge I have no direct connection to this conflict, but I have researched this and read this resolution. I have only seen this resolution as solving an equity issue. It does not bring Palestinians to an equitable position compared with Jewish voices, but it is an important stepping stone. That is not meant as an insult to the resolution, I think it is a great start. We have focused a lot of energy into uplifting Jewish voices, now it is time for UVM and SGA to put energy into uplifting Palestinian students as well.

**Senator Siegel:** I have heard what you are saying, I agree with more than you might think. Our first conversation we had outside last week was emotional and I made a comment about how America has a deep issue with Islamophobia. You [Chair Teferra or Chair Anis] said that canceling this speaker would inherently increase Islamophobia and cognitive biases, and I understand that.

I'm trying to get at the fact that this resolution has some great parts about it, but there are some parts that I do not stand by. I would be open to changing it so there were parts with different rhetoric. I agree that we need to support Palestinian voices, but the current way it is written makes me and others feel unsafe.

- **Response (Chair Teferra):** Can you clarify what your exact problems are with this resolution?

**Speaker Clark:** Point of information: any senator can motion for amendments to the resolution at any time.



**Senator Siegel:** I take issue with calling it a cancellation and I think it could be worded differently to support both sides. Where it says “Let it be known that this response creates a negative reputation for the University and sets a precedent that will impede any further relationship with Mohammed El-Kurd.” Although it might set a negative reputation, it is important to note that there is critical work to support voices which can be done without a relationship with someone who has said very scary things.

I am in support of a resolution that does more to uplift Palestinian voices and I don’t think I could work on that right now. There is more work to be done in passing this resolution than can be done right now.

- **Response (Chair Anis):** Speaking on the act of canceling. We say that “UVM SGA condemns the cancellation of Mohammed El-Kurd’s lecture” because it was this act that silenced Palestinian voices by eliminating a space where Palestinian and Arab voices could come together and feel heard on this campus and in this state and have a place to gather and feel included. We have to condemn the cancellation of this event in this resolution because that effectively silenced Palestinian voices.
- I don’t want to make you or others feel unsafe. As we said in here, we stand by UVM’s Diversity Statement and Our Common Ground and your concerns are not falling on deaf ears. That is something we can work together on moving forward, but this resolution is meant to uplift Palestinian and Arab voices who feel so belittled by the administration.
- **Response (Chair Teferra):** We can talk about semantics of what a cancellation is, but effectively this is viewed as cancellation because it did not occur in the setting or way it was meant to be. Yes there was an online lecture, but that is very different and it was not affiliated with UVM or on campus. Anyone who reads this resolution knowing the

context will understand that the initial event was canceled. We didn't feel the need to include that there was a virtual event because that was not supported by UVM.

**Senator Jones:** This resolution is aimed to address impact which is inarguable, which we have seen that.

**Senator Orr:** I have a question about one of the points in the resolution. Can you explain more about the first one on the second page?

- **Response (Chair Teferra):** This is the email that was sent out on October 10<sup>th</sup>. I would like to point out the extent that Palestinian people are mentioned in a very limited way, not in name at all. This represents the harm and silencing that Palestinian people feel.
  - The resources that are provided are not specific to Palestinian students in comparison to things like Hillel. There is no strong support system like there is for Jewish students. We want equitable systems.
  - This statement by being neutral takes a side. There are feelings of isolation and silencing due to that lack of support system. We can support both groups.
- A comparison to a few years ago, during the Black Lives Matter movement there was a response of "All lives matter, why are we only supporting this one group?" We are speaking about one group because that group has been oppressed and speaking out for a long time and not being heard. Saying all groups are important is not helpful when we are highlighting that one group is being underrepresented and needs to be heard.

**Senator Orr:** I see that. I also see how that can have happened because the email was referencing specific events that happened on the 7<sup>th</sup>. I think we should definitely put pressure on admin to say something about what has happened since then.

- **Response (Chair Teferra):** I agree about time pressure, but this issue didn't start just now. This problem is incredibly widespread, when you are only hearing about your people as being demonized that feels horrible.

**Senator Connors:** Would you be open to changing the “condemning cancellation” line to remove cancellation and Mohammed El-Kurd’s name to focus more on student impact?

- **Response (Chair Teferra):** Thank you for reaching out earlier about this as well, which gave me more time to think about it. My issue with taking his name out, is that it doesn't help to bring into light specific actions that have been done by administration that we aren't happy with. The more general and vague and abstract we are, the less they will do and the less actionable steps we can give them. Just saying don't silence Palestinian voices can be taken however they interpret it, and to them canceling this lecture might not be seen that way. We need to provide examples of this silencing.
- Everyone knows what we are talking about, so if we don't say it then it will sound like we are dancing circles around what we mean and what we really want to say.
- **Response (Chair Anis):** Ironically, by expunging El-Kurd's name from this resolution, we would be literally silencing a Palestinian voice. So before we vote on this amendment, think about the hypocrisy of that.

**Speaker Clark:** To clarify, Senator Connors, are you making a motion to amend the resolution?

**Senator Connors:** I'm sorry, I don't know exactly how I would do that.

**Speaker Clark:** “Motion to amend”.

**Senator Connors:** Can I wait to make that motion?

**Speaker Clark:** Yes, motions can be made at any time during this discussion.

**Chair Bednarik:** When we are looking at this amendment, a lot of things we have brought up as senators have been about institutional change and we need to remember that doesn't happen quickly. The best we can do is interpersonal change to bring comfort and safety to marginalized groups. Palestinian and Arab students need that right now. The best thing we can do now is to work on that and to promote institutional change from admin.

To a marginalized group, such as the Palestinian and Arab community, who has already felt unheard and isolated, if this resolution does not pass I feel as though it will be another blow and further damage the relationship this group has with administration, UVM, Burlington, with everyone.

**Senator Ibinyopakaka:** Dumbing down and taking a lukewarm response to this issue does not help anyone. Change only happens when we are actively calling out people on specific things, generalizing means anyone can take it up to interpretation. You can look at this historically, change doesn't happen through generalization. This resolution is actively calling out specific actions UVM has done which is the only way that you can make something happen. In terms of Palestinian and Arab voices, generalizing will make these groups feel further sidelined.

**Senator Siegel:** Thank you all for having this conversation. There is more work to be done, but I am in support of passing this resolution now. Motion to vote on the resolution.

- Motion **passed**.

RESOLUTION: **PASSED** by majority; Senator Orr against; Senator Siegel, Chair Teffera, and Chair Anis abstained

**Speaker Clark:** Motion for 10 minute break.

- Motion **passed**.

## **Emergency Business**

## **New Business**

Resolution Reaffirming Support for UVM Staff United

Bill Amending Article 13 Section 3 of SGA Constitution

Bill Recognizing Campus Impact

## **Senatorial Forum**

**Treasurer Sorensen:** Motion to go into executive session.

- Motion **passed**.

## **Executive Reports**

### **Speaker Clark**

- The updated Constitution has been sent to Meg to upload on the SGA website, this will happen every time we amend it.
- Looking forward to the next Amendment coming up.
- Express gratitude for deliberation that occurred earlier, expressing thoughts in a manner that was safe and respectful.
- I would like to remind everyone that questions about motions, procedure, and other things should not be met with laughter or rolling eyes, especially in a manner that is heard by everyone and is brought up to me.

- If you ever are made to feel uncomfortable, I would encourage you to come talk to me about that. And I encourage you to keep bringing these questions up if you are ever unsure of how something works.
- Continuing to update legislation and resolutions we have and categorizing previous resolutions and bills with keywords to help with searching in the future.

### **Vice President Purple**

- Thank you all for handling yourself with respect. I have so much respect for all of you.
- We decided not to wear costumes tonight, but I would still love to see that, so Thursday night there will be a Halloween party in the SGA office around 5 or 5:30.
- As always, if you need help with anything or want to chat, come see me.

### **President Eisenberg**

- Thank you for the respectful and intentional discussion.
- The Strategic Plan email is done and Chair Robinson will be looking it over to make it look nicer. Should be sent out in the next few days.
- Vice President Purple and I are meeting with President Garimella tomorrow to talk about what we've been discussing here recently and express student sentiment.
- Working on something to make sure students understand how the Supreme Court decision on affirmative action will affect UVM admissions.
  - Jay Jacobs, Vice Provost for Enrollment Management, will be coming to Public Forum soon and again in the spring, and will also be hosting an Ask an Admin.

### **Treasurer Sorensen**

- We have a new employee in the SGA office, Lily, so stop by and introduce yourself.

- Chair Bednarik introduced the resolution supporting UVM Staff United and we are meeting with that group later this week.
- Budget workshop with the club signers is Monday 11/13 from 6:30-8 pm in the Grand Maple Ballroom.
- First SpringFest committee meeting last week.

**Senator Siegel:** Motion for paper committee reports.

- Motion **failed**.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Public Relations Committee**

- Went over changes to the website including the updated Constitution.
- Events committees are hosting which will be posted on Instagram.

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

- Thank you for helping us pass the resolution. It means a lot and this is a great stepping stone for showing support for all students.
- SOJO has their proposal meeting with the Office of Sustainability soon and we'll hopefully find out in the next week or so about whether that gets funded.
- Working on individual projects.
- I'm working with Senator Rai on the PIVOT program.

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

- Thank you all for passing our resolution and I would like to commend everyone for having a respectful, thoughtful, and thorough discourse. I appreciate all your thoughts, feelings, and inputs.

- New ADA barrier reporting form on UVM's Office of Equal Opportunity webpage. If there are any violations you or others notice, fill that out or point people to that page.
- Senator Joshi needs help with vehicle theft prevention lock tabling for the following times: 11/7 4-5 pm, 11/8 2:30-3:30 pm, 11/9 4-5 pm, and 11/10 2-3:20 pm.
  - More info on that is in Teams and there is a spreadsheet to sign up for times you can help.
- Bi-weekly meeting with Elliot Ruggles to plan SVAM today went well. If you have any ideas about that, please bring them to me.

**Senator Ibinyopakaka:** Could you explain what ADA stands for?

- **Response (Senator Daniels):** Americans with Disabilities Act which we are federally required to enforce and comply with.

**Chair Bednarik:** The spreadsheet is currently view-only, can you change that so I can sign up?

- **Response:** Yes.

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

- Community cleanup is Saturday at 11, there will be an Instagram post soon.
- Song of the week: Fallin' for You by Colbie Caillat.

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

- Happy Halloween everyone, I hope you enjoyed your little cards with a personal message!
- Working on individual projects.
- Next week in Senatorial Forum there will be a lengthy discussion for Week of Kindness. If you have any questions before then, please see me or join our ad hoc meetings Tuesdays at 5 in the SGA office.



### **Club Affairs Committee**

- Speaker Clark sat in on our meeting today and that went well.
- We're starting a committee-wide project about Constitutions which I'll talk more about next week.

### **Academic Affairs Committee**

- I met with Jen Dickinson and she provided some helpful project resources. She mentioned that she's always looking for policies or processes that are confusing.
- Senators Wiltz and DeGroot have a tentative date for the Monday after Thanksgiving Break from 1-4 in the Davis Center for their Career Networking Event.
- Together VT has their first meeting this Sunday from 4-4:45 in the Galaxy Space.

### **Finance Committee**

- Nothing to report.

### **Senatorial Comments/Announcements**

**Chair Teferra:** Saturday 11/18 the Center for Health and Wellbeing is doing a training on mental health first aid. Originally capped attendance because it was in person but now it is online so I believe it is open for all.

**Senator Joshi:** As Chair Anis brought up, I need help for tabling. I will make the spreadsheet open so people can put their name down. Also 11/11 at 6:30 is a Diwali celebration.

**Senator Daniels:** November 13<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> there will be a Trans and Queer art gallery in Williams to showcase Trans and Queer artists at UVM.

### **Adjournment**