

University Council Meeting 2024-2025

Thursday, November 21th, 2024

6pm

Student Center Reading Room

Attendance

Voting Members in Attendance:

Name	Email
Thomas Sanford	Thomas.Sanford@downstate.edu
Shivasuryan Vummidi	Shivasuryan.Vummidi@downstate.edu
Isaac Vingan	Isaac.Vingan@downstate.edu
Joya Ahmad	Joya.Ahmad@downstate.edu
Kunika Chahal	Kunika.Chahal@downstate.edu
Daniel Green	Daniel.Green@downstate.edu
Nour Elshabassy	Nour.Elshabassy@downstate.edu
Dhruti Patel	Dhruti.Patel@downstate.edu

Voting Members not in Attendance:

Madhavi Jere	
Kelsha Sanchez	Proxy: Thomas Sanford
Karina Muniz	Proxy: Shivasuryan Vummidi
Elana Cohen	Proxy: Kunika Chahal

Non-voting Members in Attendance:

Adam Burgman	Lianlen Joy Distor
Patricia Napolitano	Jasmin Yu
Jeffery Putman	Soham Rawal
Ester Auerbach	
Nicholas Minasian	

Agenda

- 1. Call to Order at 6:19 pm**
- 2. Introductions: Patricia Napolitano (Assistant VP of Student Affairs)**
 - a. International students, accessibility issues
 - b. College of Nursing, SOHP, and SPH

- c. Office in Student Affairs Suite next to financial aid
- d. For accommodations issues:
 - i. Nicholas Cromie will take over fully in January
 - ii. Dr. Berkowitz is still managing intake for COM students
 - iii. No funding for student testing but there is a list of places with sliding scale in the office - financial aid can help with figuring out funding on a case by case basis

3. Budget Requests

- a. Medical Artists - Christmas ornament making event → \$489.50, they wanted clarification if they can use their current UC budget for their future book production and request an extra \$500 for this event. They wanted to also know if we would prefer to split funding with MC.
 - i. Tell them to use the money they have for the event and come request for the book production
- b. Lunar New Year - Adam requesting \$800 (total budget is \$4600 - \$800 from UC co-sponsor, \$800 from SCGB, CAMS \$2000, APAMSA \$1000)
 - i. 250-350 students attend in the gym
 - ii. Wednesday January 22, 2025 - everyone will be back in time to attend
 - iii. Money for food, decorations, and the professionals for the lion dance
 - 1. Year of the snake needs new decorations

Motion to fund the Lunar New Year event at \$800 using Multicultural Events account
 Seconded by Tom, passed unanimously
Fund \$800

4. New Business

- a. Updates from Adam:
 - i. Budget increase for clubs - currently only spending up to \$300/month is allowed without approval. Proposal is to increase to \$400/month before approval requirement kicks in → all the councils have approved this
 - 1. Goal is to get all councils to have the same budget process over the next couple of years
 - ii. Club application form is live online, apps are open til May, will be reviewed in June, new clubs will start in August (no new clubs will be approved this academic year, next year we might have 2 fairs)
 - iii. Forms for off-campus events instead of emailing Adam
 - 1. Form should be submitted 1-2 weeks in advance, err on the side of earlier especially if there is a possibility of complex stuff like legal approval, contracts with vendors, etc.
 - iv. Councils need to start ordering their own food (if wanting to use Downstate vendors, send request to Z a week in advance, otherwise it is fine to order from wherever and get reimbursed reasonably)
- b. Ernie's contract is up in May 2025 and he may or may not renew - discuss Thanksgiving dinner backup plan and possible replacement with Multicultural Dinner vs. finding a new vendor and funding
 - i. Adam would like to know UC's opinion on this (does not need to be decided tonight)
 - ii. Entire campus food contract is up for bid right now
 - iii. Right now we're hypothesizing there's no vendor who would do what Ernie does at a sustainable cost, but we don't have a formal list or anything.
- c. Academic Advising and Accommodations Concerns: Nicholas Cromie is coming to December meeting
 - i. Campus-wide survey for concerns from all programs regarding both - Kunika will help
- d. Invitations for the rest of the year: who would we like to get to know as a council for future meetings?
 - i. Quick list of staff and faculty that we would like to attend our meetings so we can form a relationship with them:

1. Alicia Goodrich, Seth Langley, Ombudsman, Student Health Leadership,
- e. 395 Entrance is now open til 11pm (M-F), we can formally announce this via email
 - i. The council thinks we should ask to extend library hours
 - ii. Dr. Putman will help us put in this request
- f. Instagram revitalization - credentials secured, ideas for specific campaigns, anything we want to do?

5. Old business

- a. Braille in new cafeteria bathrooms - the problem ones were temporary signs, the right ones are here now
- b. Events:
 - i. Halloween Event - amazing turnout!
 - ii. Thanksgiving Dinner - really good, sold out!
- c. Opt in for Email List Serves - TBA
 - i. will revisit next month
- d. New Budget Submission process
 - i. A new form has been developed to replace the traditional budget request form
 1. This new form is a google form and allows space for up to three events. It also includes UC specific stipulations. We will review this form in the slack and finalize it next meeting.
 2. Consideration to transfer this form to Qualtrics for increased security
 3. Consider getting IT to do a Qualtrics training. We can follow up with Dr. Putman to set this up.
 4. Everyone is okay with this being on Google Forms as long as we don't give publishing rights, we could switch to Microsoft Forms in the future but right now that's not a function we have access to (this should be coming soon)
 5. Shiva will add a place to attach documentation
- e. Kudos and Concerns implementation for other programs
 - i. The committee has been established and has had its first meeting. The first order of business is expanding the form to be used by other programs.
 - ii. Dean Putman says this is in the works and will likely come out on Microsoft Forms soon
 1. A committee has been set up to monitor the form - counseling, student affairs, and UPD are all going to be involved in this
 2. Question is if the med school one will be merged
- f. Updates on successful addressing of student concerns – biannual email updates
 - i. Consider annual newsletter “A Year in Review” that will go out a month before elections
 - ii. Consider posting our accomplishments at the coffee event to provide a quick update
 - iii. Elana will spearhead this project.
 - iv. Ideas for content inclusion:
 1. Events - turnout, successes, etc. and pictures
 2. SA resolutions
 3. Some “on the horizon”
 4. Kunika suggested making a requirement for events that they send us at least 1 picture so we can include it in social media/the newsletter
- g. Constitution review group
 - i. Document read through, line edits have been suggested, implementation will begin soon
 - ii. Meeting with Adam to discuss addendums and edits
- h. Placards for the water fountain
 - i. Mockup has been made, discuss printing - print with Adam and laminate here, we can also contact Medical Communications- Sean Till

- i. Coffee House Event
 - i. **DATE THURSDAY DECEMBER 5TH @ 11am-1pm**
 - 1. Dhruti, Joya, and Dan
 - ii. Order needs to be placed - any changes from last year?
 - 1. Get hot chocolate from Adam
 - 2. Do same order as last year but $\frac{3}{4}$ as many bananas
- j. Health Insurance - student health advisory committee to revise this.
 - i. Committee is still in the process of being appointed.
 - ii. Do students on LOA get health insurance?
 - 1. UHC changed their policy where a student must be a student in order to be enrolled and they had to be enrolled for a class, so LOA is not considered enrolled. If a student takes a leave in the middle of a semester, they don't lose it immediately, but they won't be able to re-enroll.
 - 2. Considering a study "course" but it cannot be considered preparatory or remedial so working on the curricular change
- k. Discounted MTA services - Metrocards are being phased out
 - i. Spencer Berg, Policy Advisory from SUNY Albany. Working to get OMNY Cards for SUNY and CUNY students at the SA level
 - ii. Connect Students with Fair Fares
 - 1. Send campus email to introduce them to the city program

6. SUNY SA Applicant Interviews:

- a. Tom gave introduction and explained SA representative comes to UC meetings and then goes to SA twice a year (Fall/Spring) to meet with the reps from all SUNYs, explained the Downstate support resolution which passed, and then also updated support for DREAMers, and increasing the cap for Student Activities Fees
- b. Candidates:
 - i. Soham Rawal - COM, MS2
 - ii. Esther Auerbach - COM, MS1
 - iii. Nicholas Minasian - COM, MS1
 - iv. Dan Green - COM, MS2 - Received the most votes**
 - v. Laura Pessoa - COM, MS1
 - vi. Lianlen Joy Distor - GS, 1st year

7. Nursing Council Representative Introduction:

- a. Jasmine Yu

8. Program Updates

- a. COM: Step 1 pass rate 2026 (85% not including students who still haven't taken it yet), what resources do we have for people? How are people who are retaking being helped? Professional content tutoring was discussed but currently not much movement. Kings County clearance process is getting better.
- b. CON: new rep elected, pinning happening December 17th for 24' cohort, planning a 4 day in person live review for NCLEX Dec 2,3,9,10.
- c. SOHP: lots of presentations, no new issues
- d. SPH: holiday party being planned, career week being planned
- e. GS: new member of GS office hired recently- hopefully for career guidance and direct student support, second annual research slam happened, 2 grad students placed in the top, town hall about thesis proposal process

- f. SUNY SA: Downstate support resolution which passed, along with resolutions supporting the DREAMers, greater access to mental health resources, and increasing the cap for Student Activities Fees. Also Tom is now one of two SA wide graduate student representatives on the SA Eboard. :) Dan has the second vote on behalf of undergrads.
- g. College Council: Downstate Transformation Committee still not officially appointed
- h. Middle States had first official meeting and students met with director, nothing has happened yet

9. Open Floor

- a. N/A

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by 8:03pm. Seconded by Thomas Sanford.

Minutes officially submitted by on 01/10/2025



Kelsha Sanchez

UC Secretary 2024-2025