

THE STUDENT SENATE OF OBERLIN COLLEGE

40TH STUDENT CONGRESS, *Spring Session.*

MINUTES—PLENARY, MARCH 11, 2007
(APPROVED MARCH 18, 2007)

Agenda

- I. Check Ins
- II. Old Business
 - A. SEED House
- III. New Business
 - A. Committee Appointments
 - B. Administrator Meetings
 - C. Federal Research Public Access Act
- IV. Current Events
- V. Check Outs

Attendance

Members present: Daniel Abramson, Dave Casserly, Alison Eddy, Nick Ferrara, Louis Grube, David Huck, Colin Jones, Evan Kittay, Ben Klebanoff, Colin Koffel, Erin Morey, Nancy Nguyen, Leah Pine, Iliana Zamorska

Members absent: Anthony Osei

Also present: Shozo Kawaguchi

Minutes

General feelings on approving the agenda and Dave Casserly facilitating this plenary were positive.

SEED House: A proposal offering support and financial aid to the SEED House was offered and tabled at the previous plenary. Colin Koffel, noting the absence of the proposal's author, offered a process suggestion to table the proposal again. The process suggestion passed.

Committee Appointments: Louis Grube and Leah Pine presented Ryan Whitt and Bryne Ulmschneider as candidates for the Athletics Committee. Both were good, strong candidates. Senate discussed their awareness of club sports issues, their own athletic involvement, and how long they would be at Oberlin. Colin Koffel proposed that Senate appoint Bryne Ulmschneider to the Athletics Committee. The proposal passed 7-0-3.

Leah Pine presented Shani Ofrat as a candidate for the Educational Plans and Policy Committee. Colin Koffel inquired whether the other students who expressed interest were offered an opportunity to interview. David Huck answered that they had withdrawn. David Huck described Shani Ofrat as aware of the oddities of the credit system, a former member of the ExCo Committee, and a double major with interdisciplinary experience. Evan Kittay proposed that Senate appoint Shani Ofrat to the Educational Plans and Policy Committee. The proposal passed 9-0-2.

Colin Koffel proposed that Senate rescind Anthony Osei's appointment to the Admissions Committee, re-appoint Matthew Kaplan for the remainder of the academic year, and appoint Anthony Osei to the committee starting at the beginning of next year. Matthew Kaplan had previously served on the committee for three years but lost his seat when he resigned from Senate in December of 2006. Matthew Kaplan and the chair of the committee expressed a strong desire for Matthew Kaplan to continue serving. Erin Morey pointed out that Anthony Osei was very

qualified. Nancy Nguyen expressed concern about appointing Anthony Osei immediately, suggests keeping the process open. Colin Koffel separated his proposal into two parts: (a) re-appoint Matthew Kaplan and (b) appoint Anthony Osei. The first proposal passed 7-1-4. The second proposal passed 9-0-3.

Daniel Abramson noted that he has a class during the meeting time of the Committee on Environmental Sustainability but he will try to switch to another section of that class. He will advise Senate soon whether he can serve on the committee.

Charters: Erin Morey advised that charters for Oberlin Street Art, the Vietnamese Student Association, Affirming Choice Through Spirituality, and Philanthropy Club were passed by the Student Life Committee.

Administrator Meetings: Erin Morey advised that she had emailed David Stull, Jeff Witmer, Nick Jones, Residential Education, Nancy Dye, Ron Watts, Joe Kaarlsgard, Kathryn Stuart, and Robert Lemle to arrange meetings. She and Colin Koffel had discussed what meetings would be mandatory for senators to attend.

SEED House: Ben Klebanoff wished to revisit SEED House, process suggested that senate return to the item. The process suggestion passed. Ben Klebanoff stated that he had not heard anything negative or any concerns about his proposal from the previous week to support and donate to the SEED House. Erin Morey advised that the three students who created SEED House weren't aware of this proposal and that while they need support, now was too early. Ben Klebanoff said that he talked with Lucas Brown, one of the students, and that they wanted help because they need to raise a lot of money. Evan Kittay suggested that senate vote in a co-op fashion, starting with no money and increasing the amount Senate would contribute. Colin Koffel offered that we may not have enough money in our budget to give, especially depending on the salaries paid out this semester. Erin Morey suggested that senate consider the proposal without the funding clause. Louis Grube suggested that senate talked to the students. Erin Morey advised that the class which is helping to plan the SEED House is still figuring out many things. Ben Klebanoff offered the proposal without the paragraph calling for contributing money. The proposal passed 10-0-2.

Administrator Meetings: Colin Koffel advised that Karen Sutton contacted senate and wanted to present the Honors at Graduation Committee's proposal to bring back latin honors at Oberlin. Senate agreed to seek a meeting with Karen Sutton on March 13, 2007 around noon.

Referendum: Alison Eddy, citing Colin Jones's email to senate, proposed that senate have a referendum. Erin Morey offered a process suggestion to table the proposal. The process suggestion passed.

Presidential Search Committee: Colin Koffel raised concerns over a March 8 letter from Robert Lemle, chair of the Search Committee. Colin Koffel is worried that the committee is outlining a selection process that may not involve campus visits for the final candidates

and provide for only limited student input in the final decision of who to hire. Shozo advised that his impression is that there will be open meetings. Colin Koffel responded that he had talked with Dr. Courtice, the consultant hired by the committee, and that he is unsure whether the committee is actually committed to campus visits for the top candidates. Ben Klebanoff proposed that Senate object to the lack of student input. Leah Pine advised that she had invited Courtney Merrell, the student member of the committee, to speak with us but that Merrell was concerned about violating the committee's Code of Conduct. Colin Koffel offered to write a letter to the committee seeking clarification whether there would be on campus presentations of the top candidates and whether committee members could meet with groups like Senate to hear advocacy and not violate the Code of Conduct. Ben Klebanoff modified his earlier proposal to charge a couple of senators to draft a letter conveying the desire of students to be truly involved in selecting Oberlin's next president. The proposal passed 12-0-0.

Residential Education & Vandalism: Louis Grube suggested that the recent problem was a Fireland's issue and not a school issue. Alison Eddy agreed. Dave Casserly objected, saying that ResEd's actions were collective punishment and wrong. Alison Eddy advised that a shopping cart had recently been put through a window in North and that it would not be fair to bill everyone in that building for the damage. Louis Grube suggested that because dorms are owned by the college, there is a renter and tenant relationship and responsibility; also, these problems are related to overall ResEd problems and their trying to be parents, especially with the two guests per resident policy. Evan Kittay advised that ResEd's policy was a result of their interpretation of the fire code & liability. Ben Klebanoff pointed out that students give away a lot of rights by signing the dorm contract. Daniel Abramson believed that students can mobilize still. Colin Koffel believed that ResEd's actions were bad policy, proposed that Student Senate request a report on why these decisions were made. Dave Casserly pointed out that students have no choice but to sign the contract. Nancy Nguyen advised that billings for damage could affect financial aid. Leah Pine reminded Senate that we are not productive with theoretical discussions. Evan Kittay noted that Senate is an outlet for student opinion and that we should make this a priority. Colin Koffel asked if we had a working group dedicated to housing issues. Erin Morey advised that we do. Ben Klebanoff reminded Senate that we need to pick our battles carefully. The proposal passed 13-0-0.

Referendum: Louis Grube offered a process suggestion to return to the issue of a referendum. The process suggestion fails.

Website: Nick Ferrara advised that he had updated parts of the Senate website.

Plenary: Colin Koffel proposed that Senate holds an official plenary session on April 1, 2007 without requiring attendance. The proposal passed 8-1-4.