Student Government Meeting
Wednesday, October 8, 2014

Meeting Highlights:
- Three budget requests were passed
- The elimination of faculty and staff positions was discussed
- Internet bandwidth issues were discussed

Complete minutes are as follows:

Roll Call:

Absent: Kelsey Wittorf, Connor Johnson, JJ Hansen

Minutes from the last meeting stand approved.

Reports:
Student Body President Alex Severn: Jess was sick this week so I met with the president by myself. One of the items we talked about was internet on campus. We will talk more about that in general discussion. We also talked about living conditions and the aesthetic appeal of campus. I also thought it was important to portray the message that the physical plant is not getting back to students in a timely manner to complete work orders. He said that he would talk to the physical plant and look into specific issues such as the Kresge washers. We also talked at length about the staff positions that got eliminated. We don’t necessarily think that these layoffs were handled in the appropriate way. It was more corporate than in a family way. We discussed some possibilities of how to handle such situations if something similar happens again. We want to see more transparency in these layoffs such that students aren’t finding out a week or two after they happen. I expressed dearly that if students don’t find out about these things until two weeks later everything that comes out of the cabinet sounds like a canned line PR put together for them. He completely agrees and thinks it’s most important to have transparency in the future. That is part of the reason he is putting together the budget liaison committee that Ethan and I are going to be sitting on. The third thing is that if there are budget issues everyone needs to make sacrifices. We aren’t necessarily sure that is happening. If that is happening, students need to know that everyone is making these sacrifices. The budget liaison committee will be sending out a campus wide survey asking students questions and receiving questions from students. That is so when the budget liaison committee meets we can ask the right questions and get answers to students. There is a big movement on campus to get more students, faculty, and staff involved. President Simmons will be giving us a more formal declaration of what the committee will be doing. He wants to charge the committee with deciding how to handle situations where there are more or less students enrolled than planned for. I am under the idea that it is an advisory committee and its decisions are non-binding. Students will have opportunities to ask questions through this budget committee. President Simmons is more than willing to come talk to SGA but I want to make sure we have questions for him.

Manager Michael Reuter: Nothing to report.
Treasurer Ethan Fredrick: We have three budget requests. We started talking with Luke Behaunek, other members of the college, and the cultural centers themselves about how these houses get funding. We toured the houses this weekend and have a report that we can share with anyone who is interested.

Senior Class President Jessalyn Holdcraft: We have three budget requests. We toured the three houses and have a plethora of pictures we can share with anyone who is interested.

Junior Class President Austin Jacobs: As part of Homecoming next week, SGA is sponsoring flag football on Tuesday.

Sophomore Class President Robert Lyons: The student advocacy committee met again today with Tracy Dinesen and started talking about May Term courses for May Term 2016. The student advocacy committee will have people downstairs in Kent next week over lunch talking to students trying to get ideas for May Term classes with “sexy titles.” We will also try to develop a contest with that and vote on titles to get input. Next week we will be meeting with Sarah Beadle about the non-traditional student lounge.

First Year Class President Zach Goodrich: The Student Organization committee met last Thursday. We met with Sarah Beadle and Intramurals.

Advisors Rich & Kristen: Nothing to report.

Faculty Committee Meeting, Alex Severn: I attended the faculty meeting today because of the current issues that are going on around campus. It was a good platform for faculty to ask questions that they have to the president. I think that he was giving genuine transparent answers back to the faculty which was great to see. Representative Stokesbary gave a speech to the faculty saying that we support them and saying the three things I talked about in my report. I think it was well received.

Old Business:
None

New Business:
Rotaract Club Budget Request: Total Requested: $86.50 Recommended: $86.50
Jessalyn Holdcraft: I move to allocate $86.50 to the Rotaract Club. It is for supplies for homecoming street painting. They already have a design.
Vote: Passed

Psychology Club Budget Request: Total Requested: $400.00 Recommended: $400.00
Jessalyn Holdcraft: I move to allocate $400.00 for the Psychology Club to attend a conference. This is a month out but we already have the names of seven people who will be attending. We don’t have the full list because they are waiting on this funding.
Vote: Passed

SGA Flag Football Budget Request: Total Requested: $500.00 Recommended: $500.00
Jessalyn Holdcraft: I move to allocate $500.00 to SGA for flag football. The $500 is for Gatorade which is provided to all participants and for gift cards which are given to the first and second place teams.
Alex Severn: If we have an athlete that wins is it an NCAA violation?
Rich Ramos: Yes that is a violation.
**Resolution:**

**Ethan Fredrick:** I move that Student Government Association pass a resolution that reads “The Student Government Association should have a student of their choosing be a voting member of the President’s Cabinet.” If you weren’t aware, positions were eliminated. The issue people have with it is that there was absolutely no transparency. Originally, the issue came from faculty. The Simpsonian has published a letter from an alumni and had an article about a letter to the president that was signed by 20 faculty members. That letter said this was a very corporate feel rather than a normal feel. They had an issue that all of the positions eliminated were women, and they had an issue that no administrator who earns over $100,000 took any pay cut while the salaries of other employees were in question. All of the positions that were lost were positions that dealt directly with providing services to students. The reason I am bringing this forward, structurally for the amount of work that students do, besides the fact that we pay tuition, these positions very directly affect us. We quantify such a workforce that it is ridiculous that we don’t have input in these decisions because it very directly affects us. A very direct effect of this is that the UGA for the Communications Department had to pick up all the work of a full time staff member who was laid off in order to make the debate tournament last weekend happen. That is ridiculous. My idea is that the student government organization should be able to choose someone whether that person is on student government, in a certain position on SGA, or just a student we select each year. This is just a resolution. I would like us to pass it so it can have Alex’s signature on it so we can deliver it to the president and his cabinet. They don’t have to do anything about it but it would have a bigger effect than anything else we can do.

**Alex Severn:** The faculty was asking for something similar today in the faculty meeting. If we pass this resolution, I don’t think this is something that will materialize. What may materialize out of this is a position that sits in on certain cabinet meetings that are open door. Maybe this is a win for SGA and students. What it sounds like is when they have discussions such as who is going to be cut, that is not something they can include faculty or students on. There might be some sort of legal ramifications and that is something we can discuss but I don’t think this is going to materialize completely.

**Nick Yeager:** Regardless of whether or not the full scope of the letter is realized, as long as we make progress in the right direction, that’s what counts.

**Robert Lyons:** I fully support what Senator Fredrick is trying to do here and I fully support this resolution. It all depends what they want to do on it. There are other avenues we can take. I applaud this effort.

**Ryan Stewart:** I agree with Senator Lyons and I am also in full support of this. I think back to what Senator Stokesbary said in a previous meeting. He sat in a meeting and they basically said “read this and see if you understand it.” I think most of the decisions the person in this position would be asked to vote on would be the same thing. This is going to make people put their money where their mouth is and focus on one of two things. Do we really care what students say and if we do how much do we care to keep them on the same page so they can have a say. If they come back and say that these things are way above my head, then lift my head up so I can be at the same level as you, because I am employing you to
work for me. If they say no, let’s hear reasons. Maybe legally we can’t have this happen and that fine because we can go another avenue.

Zach Goodrich: Is there any historical precedence for a position like this?

Rich Ramos: Not at Simpson but you might want to check into similar positions at other institutions.

Olivia Anderson: Can you clarify what you mean by a voting member.

Ethan Fredrick: There are no faculty on the cabinet. There are three types of people who work at Simpson. There are staff who aren’t engaged in the education but work at Simpson. There are faculty who directly instruct students. There are administrators. Right now, administrators are the only people on the cabinet. We want someone on there who has just as much a vote as anyone else in the room. My thought with how it’s going, in terms of this college and the way it makes decisions, is the presumption that students are told. The phrasing that President Simmons used with this decision is if students or student government have questions, I will do a Q&A with student government. It sounds like this budget liaison committee is mostly oriented towards that, getting student buy in by having them answer questions. I think that is an intolerable and condescending answer. Unless you let students have voting on it, you don’t get buy in. When you are cutting services that students rely on and came to Simpson for, you don’t get buy in. If we find out that it’s illegal, I want to verify that it’s illegal and that there is no other school that does this. I think a lot of times we get told what is and isn’t possible and I want to start challenging those presumptions. If it is actually a legal issue that we can’t be on there, then I think it’s time that we and the cabinet come up with a creative solution so that students do have input, because the status quo isn’t working.

Rich Ramos: These are all valid things that you are agreeing on. You are all in a position to challenge those status quos. You can’t solve problems by doing the same things that got you into the problem in the first place.

Alex Severn: How are we going to appoint such a member?

Ethan Fredrick: In the unlikely circumstance that this gets passed, I think we can figure that out.

Nick Yeager: The purpose is to have them know that we want input.

Vote: Passed

Alex Severn: I would like to speak a little bit towards signing this resolution. I am intrigued by the current path that we are going on and I think it is appropriate to ask for these decisions. I think that the path Ethan is going down is appropriate saying that students need more than just a Q&A session to get buy in. For these reasons, I am going to sign the resolution and hand it on to the president. We will see what happens.

**General Discussion:**

**May Term Courses:**

**Robert Lyons:** Since the Student Advocacy committee is working on May Term classes. I am going to ask for you guys to give ideas and “sexy titles.”

Erica Heidler: An example of a “sexy title” is “Super Girl Saves the World” which is about Buffy the Vampire. This is a way for students to get a little more input on May Term courses and was new last year. Something new the faculty is doing is focusing each May Term on an ECCC designation that is harder to get. May Term 2016 is focused on ethics and values.

**Tyler Stokesbary:** An example of what I want to do is ethics on Star Wars.

**Robert Lyons:** These trips can include domestic travel or include volunteering opportunities. You have a lot of freedom in coming up with these things. We have a form coming out in the coming week that includes a title, description, and week-by-week layout of what the class would cover. We encourage you to come by our table with ideas next week.
Olivia Anderson: The key with this is that even though an idea is voted on by students, it is just an idea and faculty will still have to pick it up.

Erica Heidler: Send your ideas our way. Hopefully the table will do that in the coming week.

Internet Bandwidth Issues:
Alex Severn: We are going to discuss the current internet issue. I have had a lot of students and faculty members come to me complaining about the current status of the wireless internet on campus. Faculty is unable to do their jobs and students are unable to access necessary resources for doing homework. It is very important for this college to have undisturbed internet access that students and faculty can assess to do the things that need to get done. We have gone long enough into the semester that this is something that needs to be addressed more immediately. I met with Kelly last Thursday and also talked with President Simmons about this issue. The college has spent a good amount of money increasing the amount of access points so that you can connect virtually anywhere on campus. The problem is that we don’t have enough bandwidth so that even if you have a Wi-Fi connection, you can’t necessarily use the internet. Their assumptions were that the amount of bandwidth we had was going to last us to next year. Kelly would then plan on asking for more money in her budget to be able to increase the amount of bandwidth next year. In September of 2013, there were about 4,500 devices connected to the internet while there were about 6,200 in September of 2014. We discussed future planning and that there should be an emergency fund to deal with these issues. The current status is that there is a limited fund. To solve this problem we need $27,000. This includes $12,000 for a 1GB switch which is a one-time fee and a $15,000 annual fee to increase the amount of bandwidth. Kelly has $6,000 in reserve and needs $21,000 from elsewhere to solve this problem. After talking with President Simmons, there is another $6,000 he can put toward this project which covers the cost of the 1GB switch. This leaves $15,000 for the annual fee to increase our bandwidth. At the end of the day, I don’t want SGA to have a line item of negative $15,000. It may be a slippery slope allowing such debits to occur such that we are handling expenses that should be handled by the operating budget. This is a discussion we can have. Those are the raw facts. If we decide to go down this path, it will increase our bandwidth by a third which will hopefully prevent us from hitting the peak of our bandwidth. One concern that has been expressed is that a large amount of the bandwidth is being used for recreational use such as Netflix, YouTube, and Hulu. It is close to 80% use for these items.

Austin Jacobs: We are talking about this being a short term issue. According to our Student Life Survey, over 80% of students have Netflix or Hulu.

Alex Severn: I am expecting some general discussion on possibly helping out with this issue and possibly offering up SGA funds or not tonight. I want our committee to come up with a plan of what we are expecting to happen on campus if we do agree to this.

Cody Isabel: Would this be something that we helped with one time?

Alex Severn: The goal is that this would be added into their budget in the future. I have asked President Simmons and Kelly such that in one year we know where this money is coming from. We also need to have a plan of what we are expecting and a plan for a worst case scenario. They are going to start working on that. We are not expecting this to be an annual charge to SGA and I don’t think we should let that happen.

Tyler Stokesbary: If we take this to a vote, I would vote “no.” It’s not that I don’t think Simpson needs better internet, but I don’t think SGA should be paying for it. I know that we won’t be paying for it every year, or at least that’s what they are telling us, but even a one-time fee should not come out of our budget. We have a student government fee that goes from our tuition into student government. We also have a technology fee. These are two separate things that should remain separate. The fact that we have this problem should have been addressed before. This was not an unforeseeable problem. Also, I recognize Michael Reuter to speak at any time during this discussion.
Ruth Ann Roberts: What is going on with the Tyler’s renovation budget? Can we use that money here? Alex Severn: For all intensive purposes, I think we’ve scraped the Tyler’s budget. Those funds will be available as well.

Ruth Ann Roberts: The months during the school year have a lot more usage but there is also a high amount of usage during the summer. Is this all student usage? Alex Severn: I think it’s appropriate that if students are paying for it they should be getting the benefit of it. We can’t get an internet contract for just the school months.

Ruth Ann Roberts: My question is why the bandwidth is still being used so heavily during the summer. Rich Ramos: There are plenty of people here during the summer. Offices are still functioning full bore all summer. I’m sure registration in June also uses a large amount of data.

Alex Severn: According to Kelly, the peak month is October.

Ruth Ann Roberts: Is it possible to raise the bandwidth for certain networks or buildings on campus? Alex Severn: We have the ability to separate the bandwidth between buildings. For example, when we had the debate, IT provided this building with a larger amount of bandwidth.

Austin Jacobs: During the day, the staff network has more bandwidth than the student network and they flip flop after a certain time. That allows the faculty to do more online during the day and students to do more at night. Kelly is going to be at our meeting tomorrow and this meeting next week. SGA also spent $15,000 when Simpson first got Wi-Fi.

Alex Severn: Kelly’s goal is for them to buy another switch down the line and configure another internet connection with a different provider as a backup if the first connection goes down.

Ethan Fredrick: Ruth was concerned as to why a large amount of bandwidth was used during the summer. There are only 1/12 as many students on campus during the summer so I think we need to investigate who is using all of this data. I want to make sure that other groups on campus during the summer aren’t using this if we are paying for it with student funds.

Ishaya David: We are considering giving this money because we are trying to fix this right now. There was a failure on their side to plan for something so we need to do something about it. You pay about $160 for a technology fee so I plan on asking Kelly where that money is going. The student fund is meant for students. This is huge on the list of priorities, so we have to help, not because we want to but because this needs to be fixed.

Tyler Stokesbary: As students in the modern world, we should be able to have internet. I had to go through my own means to get internet through Mediacom but I know not every student can do that. The reason I would vote “no” is not because I don’t realize this is a problem. If they screw up in doing their job and SGA has to fund them that is a slippery slope. If they don’t have to worry about their plan not working because SGA has boatloads of money and will save them, then they should have planned ahead and upped the tech budget.

Ishaya David: There is an emergency reserve fund that is meant for issues like this but this fund is really low. The reason we have to pay for this is because it is a last resort.

Savannah Calaway: We don’t want to throw money at them, we want to have conditions written for this. We are meeting with Kelly tomorrow, Alex on Sunday, and we are having Kelly come in next Wednesday so we can get these rules written out.

Tyler Stokesbary: Another issue is that not everything is on this pie chart. There are many students on the staff network using services such as Xbox Live that aren’t part of this graph.

Alex Severn: I asked Kelly to do some investigative work as to what students have been doing on the staff network. It is very important to me that if we are going to put money into this students are getting the most capability possible or we won’t be happy at the end of the day.

Cody Isabel: Would we be giving this for a specific project not just their specific budget? Alex Severn: Yes it would be going directly to the bandwidth issue.

Ruth Ann Roberts: How many people on your survey said they have Netflix?
Austin Jacobs: We have about 380 responses so far and 80% of those said they have Netflix, Hulu, or another streaming service.
Ruth Ann Roberts: I understand where everyone is coming from not wanting to use the student funds for an immediate fix. If 240 people are using Netflix, that is a better turnout than we get at most CAB events. Sometimes we give $4,000 to a musician and have 30 people attend. If people want to sit at home watching Netflix on a Friday night, more power to them. In the past, SGA has put money toward remodeling places on campus. It sucks because the school should be paying for it, not us, but if we didn’t do it, who was going to? I get it. We don’t want to do this continuously but if this is going to be a one-time fix and this is going to be the best for the students, I don’t know why we aren’t doing it.
Jessalyn Holdcraft: Although I am not in favor of giving the school money that is supposed to be ours to allocate to student groups, I know from being on the technology committee that Kelly works from multiple budgets. In an ideal world, the technology fee would be going to student technology items but it goes everywhere. In the future, I think we can ask that the technology fund goes to things like this. This is something that needs to happen. Ethan and I have had discussions and know we shouldn’t be funding xyz, but sometimes we need to just suck it up and pay for it because people need it. While the Wi-Fi doesn’t suck that much for me, I know it sucks a lot for other people. We have had people meet with Kelly every year since I’ve been here so they know these issues will arise. What makes me feel better about this is that the school will have an agreement with SGA that x,y,z will be completed by next year. We also need to have an agreement that the student technology fee goes to the technology department, not just the general pot that they tend to work out of.
Austin Jacobs: While less than 400 people have taken the survey, there are 1,400 students on campus and 80% have Netflix or Hulu, so it would be more like 1,000 to 1,100 people that have these services. Only 15% of people surveyed said that their Wi-Fi was good while 50% of the students on campus said their Wi-Fi was not good or terrible and another 36% saying it was decent that’s not good.
Ethan Fredrick: This is an issue we have to deal with on lots of things, especially now since the college is facing budgetary constraints elsewhere. I agree with the logic that they have used the reserve funds. The logic we need to be hearing is that the emergency rainy day funds are running low and students are just now getting some decision power in how money is being spent. The language we are getting isn’t we are going to decide the direction, value, and priorities of spending. It is, we have already gone through all the available resources. Here are two bad options. Here is something you shouldn’t be paying for or you can let students suffer. This kind of habit, which is nothing but a habit and the result of administration that we don’t seem to trust because the words in this room are that “we don’t trust that the student tech fee is going where it is supposed to” and “we don’t trust that they are planning long-term.” We need a definite change of culture.
Alex Severn: This is something we have discussed and we saw that this technology fee was going to be the culprit. I think it’s very appropriate that we figure out something where students get more buy-in on where this tech fee is going and how it is being expended on campus. It is something I discussed with President Simmons and he agrees that it is something students need to have buy-in on because at the end of the day, you’re paying for it in your tuition.
Tyler Stokesbary: To continue off of Ethan, I would still vote “no.” I can’t be swayed on this. There is no reason we should be in the emergency funds. It’s October. We’re already having an emergency? Students shouldn’t have to fix the college’s problem. If you keep reinforcing someone, they will keep screwing up and keep getting more money. If we just keep with the status quo and keep giving them money because they keep screwing up, then the students out there aren’t going to know what’s going on. They are going to think that everything is fine because it’s being taken care of. A lot of the students out there don’t know how it’s getting taken care of. They just know it’s getting fixed. They don’t know it’s getting fixed out of a budget that you should be going to a concert for or that you should be able to enjoy more events at homecoming for it. I’m not about to use my money to pay for a problem in some
department where we don’t even know where its money comes from. If you’re a fiscally responsible adult in a department, you should know where your money is coming from. CAB has to do it, we are a bunch of students. We have to be accountable, they should to.

Cody Isabel: If the total internet bandwidth is increased, it wouldn’t help me and some others because a lot of the time I can’t even connect or have issues with connecting and disconnecting.

Alex Severn: You need to let IT know about that.

Savannah Calaway: We can’t stall anymore because this is affecting our education. That is point where you can’t stall and you can’t make a stand, you have to lie down.

Nick Laning: I agree that the college should still have emergency funds and we shouldn’t be the emergency fund for the college, but can’t we use this as a device to gain ground with the administration? If the administration is hearing the students complain about this issue, then why don’t we use this $15,000 to say that SGA is not an emergency fund and we will not allocate the money until there is something done to ensure that this doesn’t happen again.

Austin Jacobs: To finish up, our committee is meeting with Kelly tomorrow and she will be here at the full meeting next week.

Alex Severn: I want to thank Tyler for offering his opinions and putting them out there. I hope if you have opinions you will put them out there as well. I don’t think all of us agree with those positions and that’s ok. I don’t think its status quo that the college comes to us for emergency funds. I also would like to go on what Nick is saying over here that this is an opportunity for us to gain some ground. We need to have a plan and expectations that we wouldn’t be paying this again in the future. With this plan would be expectations that this doesn’t happen again. I have expressed to President Simmons and Kelly that in one year we won’t be paying for this and in five years we will know where we are going with this college and we won’t have this emergency. Finally, I think there is a little confusion about the emergency funds. For the budget, there is about $800,000 for emergency issues. This $800,000 has been drastically cut due to issues with the continuing and graduate programs. Currently our enrollment for the graduate programs is way down and we are taking a $400,000 loss. This is where most of that contingency fee has gone. What the rest of this fund is for is situations such as rising natural gas prices. There is a little confusion about the immediacy of this emergency fund being spent, but bills need to be paid early in the semester. There should be an emergency fund for this technology and it is something that I have expressed to Kelly and President Simmons. The committee and I will get a plan in writing will have a formal budget request by next Wednesday.

Yik Yak:

Alex Severn: I would personally like to denounce the use of Yik Yak on campus. I think the use of this service is a way to cowardly bully other people around campus. I don’t think that the use of this software is positive. I would personally appreciate if people stopped using it. I think that when people post malicious things on that app, we don’t know the extent of how that is affecting someone. It is not funny to affect someone personally and hide behind it anonymously. I hope the rest of SGA supports me on this measure.

Cody Isabel: My high school banned use of the app.

Nick Laning: We could ask IT to filter out Yik Yak on the Simpson Wi-Fi but we couldn’t prevent people from using personal data.

Tyler Stokesbary: We can create a resolution saying that SGA denounces the use of Yik Yak.

Rich Ramos: The reality is that most colleges aren’t going to block it. I will forward you all a letter that Creighton sent to the student body. You can use this letter as a model as you try to distribute this information to the student body.
Announcements:
- Thursday, October 9th, 7pm: Canvas Painting in the Black Box
- Friday, October 10th, 7-11pm: Salsa Night
- Sunday, October 12th, 7-8pm, Carse 171: Rotaract Meeting
- 600 people attended Midnight breakfast last week.