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Ithaca College Student Governance Council  
Senate Meeting Agenda

Monday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022 | 7:00 P.M. in Campus Center Taughannock Falls Room

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**Call to Order: 7:02 PM**

**Roll Call:** Leticia Guibunda, Carlos Abreu, Max Powers, James Zampetti, Austin Ruffino, Lila Weiser, Grace Madeya, Noah Richardson, Harley Grossman, Vincent Tavernese, Mary Holland-Bavis, Lorien (Ithacan), Ariana (Ithacan), Provost Stein (Guest Speaker), Himadri Seth, Esther Moore

**New Business**

- **Community Session**
- **Guest Speaker:** Melanie Stein: Interim Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs
  - Going through the pandemic coupled with economic implications have created a stressful time for college, a lot of energy is going into managing this.
  - Main things were working on: faculty are engaged in a wholistic curriculum revision. Every department is currently looking at their curriculum and finding areas of growth. Academia tends to add things to the curriculum, so now faculty are revising it.
  - Faculty size reduction matches shifting (declining) student body size. The biggest part of this was the faculty reduction last year.
  - New School of music, Theater, and Dance is bringing together two strengths of the college
  - Currently hiring 3 deans. Feedback has been solicited and we're currently building candidate pools. Candidates may start coming to campus next month.
  - New President Cornish as of today
  - Question from Leticia: Is there any avenue for students to input feedback regards to shaping curriculum?
    - Answer: Curriculum revision happens at the department level (Usually within a curriculum committee) and some of these do involve students. If students are interested in being involved, they should reach out to department chairs.
  - Question from Vincent: Faculty backlash to School of Music, Theater and Dance merge. What has the process/obstacles looked like from your perspective?

- Answer: Making a structural change will provoke some level of resistance. Due to tenure, faculty can have long careers in one institution and may get accustomed to a particular way of doing things.
  - Provost Stein has been trying to engage with faculty who have concerns.
- Question from Vincent: Are graduate programs still being reevaluated in the School of Music?
  - Answer: the program is still suspended. We are reflecting on the model of the delivery of the programs. To go forward, the college needs to be financially stable and the issue with these programs is that the financial model is problematic.
  - In the Provost Office, there are 3 Associate Provosts, one of whom has central oversight over professional and graduate programs (this is a new position and will hopefully help get the programs back on track).
- Comment from Lila: There are concerns over mental health in Whalen graduate students as they are overworked due to the graduate program suspension
  - Answer: Not surprising, and reveals there's problems in the model
- Question from Lila: Is there a plan to hire a permanent provost?
  - Answer: President hires Provost. Provost might be what's coming next.
- Question from Lila: What might you say to a student who has concerns over the sustainability of this institution?
  - Answer: We've invested in a lot of facilities, and we have a strong balance sheet. We are in a strong position to weather this storm, and relative to other institutions, we are in the middle in terms of being sustainable. We have a strong faculty and reputation, and the school is very well managed, so there's little to no concern over institution sustainability.
- Question from Austin: Cross-curricular classes is an issue because of the physical time schedule
  - Answer: There's currently a Schedule Grid Advisory Committee looking at this, the goal is one grid that could accommodate all departments.
  - Schools have had the opportunity to build up independent identities, but it does create an isolating effect and it's understandable that students want to move beyond these barriers.
  - With the three Dean's searches, there's an opportunity for collaboration.
- Question from Leticia: Learning outside of the classroom: how can we make this a more regular occurrence? Is this within the academic affairs jurisdiction?
  - Answer: There are many occurrences, but they are scattered. The Day of Learning in response to the Antisemitic acts on campus was big and connected, so that may have been why that event was more successful.
  - Provost Stein likes the idea of having a themed day in future years similar to this event.
- Question from Grace: Add/drop date was one week this semester, as opposed to the normal two. Since the first week was virtual, this threw some students off.
  - Answer: Unaware of this but will look into it. Don't want the add/drop period to be an obstacle.
- Question from Vincent: What are the changes to the ICC?

- Answer: Recognizes that it's challenging to understand. The themes are staying, but there will be more flexibility in what classes you can take (i.e., the themes are guidelines, but courses may be taken across themes). Additionally, if you're in a major that covers a perspective, you do not have to take another course (i.e., a biology major would not have to take a specific ICC with a Natural Science designation). There are also conversations around dropping the E-Portfolio requirement.
- Question from Austin: Financial literacy among [college] students is low, has there ever been consideration to implement a required financial literacy course (similar to the alcohol.edu module).
  - Answer: Provost Stein is interested in bringing up this idea with Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, or the Career Development Center. It may not be a requirement but would be a good idea to make available to students.
- Question from Lorien (Ithacan): When would the change in ICC be implemented and has this been announced to students?
  - Has not been announced and may not impact any students currently on campus. There is an FAQ page on the website that may have more information.

**Approval of the Minutes (2/28):** Vincent motions to approve, Grace seconds, motion passes 5-0-0

## **Continuing Business**

- **Senator Reports**
  - Grace Madeya:
    - Communications Committee
    - Working on dining bill with Leticia, if you're interested talk to Grace
  - Nick Viggiani
  - Himadri Seth
    - Attended International Club, aim is for domestic students to get involved with the club
    - Going to meeting with International students later this week with Diana Dmitrova. Hoping to gather student concerns and brainstorm events.

## **Officer Reports**

- **Vice President of Campus Affairs**
  - Regarding Grace's dining, hoping to partner with Office of Religious and Spiritual Life for Ramadan fasting options
  - Tri-Council meeting is this Wednesday. SGC will be talking about the new mask policy and the Tri-Council statement regarding Anti-Semitic action steps
  - Day of Learning was very successful and would be great to see this continue in some way in future years
  - Nominate organizations for OSE awards! (Info can be found on Engage)

- The Ithacan is going through the Editor-in-Chief selection process
  - Today we welcomed President Cornish!
- Vice President of Academic Affairs
  - Scholarship Committee is looking for members. Time commitment is only 3 hours on Saturday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - Bereavement Policy is completed, and the proposal will be submitted soon. Meeting with Dr. Copenhaver-Johnson soon to discuss it and get the policy submitted to APC.
  - President Cornish is holding office hours March 10<sup>th</sup> during the noon hour
- Vice President of Business & Finance
  - \$72,220 left in the account
  - 10 organizations requesting this week
  - Appropriations Committee is looking for members
- Vice President of Communications
  - Attended President Cornish's introduction today
  - Campus email: survey was very successful
  - Tabling in Campus Center Wednesday the 9<sup>th</sup> from 9 AM-3 PM
- Senate Chair
  - Elections Engage forms are going live in about a month
    - All seats are open
  - Confirmations are now digital and on Engage
  - Consider SGC person of the year
- Chief of Staff
- Student Trustee
- Residence Hall Association Designee
  - General body meeting tomorrow at 8, we will be planning SexFest (sexual health event)

## **Open Agenda**

- President Cornish was announced the 10<sup>th</sup> president today
- Mask Mandate Discussion: what are senators hearing from constituents?
  - Grace: Concerns over timing (would've rather it happened a week or so after Spring break). Also concerns over specific majors' interactions with the public, and some concerns with immunocompromised students feeling as if they were being overlooked
  - Vincent: Similar concerns over timing, especially since we had an outbreak after Thanksgiving
  - Himadri: Also heard the biggest concern being timing
  - Max: Very sudden (announced on Tuesday, implemented Friday), some confusion over how that decision was actually made
  - Harley: Also concerning that the change went into effect on the same day as a massive prospective student day.

- Lila: Responding to Vincent: there is no requirement to have a negative test when returning from Spring break.
- Austin: Samm Swarts is good at responding to email and may be able to clarify questions regarding return from break.
- Leticia: Reason for lifting mandate would be in accordance with Tompkins County lifting the mask mandate.
- Harley: Emerson has been out of PCR tests, they've only been giving out rapid tests
- Leticia: Offices can and have designated spaces that mandate masks, if students are interested.
- Austin: SGC will be following college policy at meetings. A survey did go out to SGC if you want to express concerns. If students-at-large have more concerns they can come to meetings.
- Lila: appreciated the way Provost Stein communicated
  - Vincent: appreciated that she acknowledged her mistakes (i.e., not understanding that the add/drop period had changed)
  - Carlos: Has also found that she is very open in her answers and willing to listen to students.
- Lorien: Are there current plans to talk to Samm Swarts again?
  - Austin: Don't have plans to have him as a guest speaker again, but would be happy to convey student concerns

**Adjournment:** Vincent motions to adjourn