

USG

Fall Meeting 9

11/13/2023

I. Call to Order

- 6:07 PM

II. Roll Call

- Members not present at the time of roll call
 - Christina Somik (excused)
 - Jacob Maduakolam (unexcused)
 - Jesse Ghoman (unexcused)
 - Madaline Lopez (unexcused)
 - Manasvi Thumu (unexcused)
 - Nathan Thokkudubiyapu (excused)
 - Sara Rothenbaum (excused)
 - Syeda Amena (unexcused)
 - Yaksh Patel (unexcused)

III. Reading and Approval of the Minutes

- Approved

IV. Reading and Approval of the Agenda

- Pres. Almendras motions to add Resolution 2023-F9-1009 to the agenda under New Business
 - Seconded, approved
- Rep. Cruz: Motions to add an item for discussion “Student Body Inquiries”
 - Seconded, approved

V. Public Comment

- Melannie Agaton (Magato2@uic.edu),
 - Senior political science major
 - Was speaking in a private conversation with a friend before class about the lack of response from the University President on Palestinian deaths and ethnic cleansing
 - Student not in conversation said she was spreading Nazi propoganda and anti-Semitism and was “about to go off” but stayed in class
 - That student did not face any repercussions
 - Calling someone a Nazi is used to silence students and advocates and we cannot stand for this
- Jay campos jcamp22@uic.edu
 - Latine Student Coalition
 - Here to bring grievances to USG's attention
 - Each of the students with us today and in the organization has unique experiences (inaccessibility to resources, silenced voices, individuals and organizations have experienced microaggressions)
 - Why is it that an organization must partner with USG to gain support and funding?
- Diego Castillo diegoc2@uic.edu
 - ALPHA
 - Registering as a student organization CSI required communication with UIC Business which delayed the application
 - On Sept. 26 they were supposed to be hosting an event in the Cardinal Room the door was locked and no UIC Business support was given
 - Dia de los Muertos event problems
 - Used as a poster child without support
 - National convention this summer yet no UIC Business funding so they had to reach out to LARES for funding yet UIC Business still puts us as an advertisement and tool
- Armando Romero aromer67@uic.edu

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- 4th yr political science major
- USG represents students but it is not accessible to students because commuters cannot come to late meetings
- Participation with students is lacking, student organizations need help in all aspects related to the current USG committees
- Need representation to be active on campus not for own political clout
- USG is not representational of students
- USG wants to remain nonpartisan but when UIC falls on the side opposite of students, you need to stand up
- USG mirrors problems UIC and UI System has
- Will you stand with students or continue supporting the administration?

VI. Guest Speakers

- None

VII. Old Business

- Resolution 2023-F8-1006 “All Around the World Before Finals” Tabling Event
 - Favored, passed
- Resolution 2023-F8-1007 Thanksgiving Dinner
 - Rep. Flores: I have two questions, will there be a vegetarian option and where will it be held?
 - Dir. Heybeli: Yes, we will order the best vegetarian option when we purchase the food order tomorrow. It will be in the Commuter Center or Inner Circle. I reached out to the Commuter Center and am waiting for a response
 - Secretary Pettineo motions to add “and a vegetarian option” to the resolution
 - Seconded, motion carries
 - Rep. Patel: Is this still going based on RSVP?
 - Dir. Heybeli: Yes
 - Treasurer Caballes motions to add desserts such as cookies, brownies, and/or cupcakes and drinks such as water, soft drinks, and lemonade to the resolution
 - Seconded, motion carries
 - Favored, passed
- Resolution 2023-F8-5004
 - Dir. Alramahi motions to amend the resolution to say camera sling bag for \$39.99 instead of utility cart for \$98.99 and total allocation from \$1254.95 to \$1195.96
 - Seconded, motion carries
 - Rep. Omar: Did you explore warranty options?
 - Dir. Alramahi: We looked into other camera options and found this to be the best option because it is good quality and comes with extra since there is a kit that comes with it (tripod and microphone). We didn’t go past looking into a warranty. I am not well-versed but there was no option that we could see
 - Treasurer Caballes: We cannot have monthly contracts
 - Rep. Yousuf: Did you figure out a structure so we know who is using it and when?
 - Dir. Alramahi: We changed to having the camera in a sling bag instead of the cart we would have it in the President’s office or the closet
 - SOH Zhou: The closet in the office does lock
 - Rep. Rivera: Who would be allowed to use the camera?
 - Dir. Alramahi: We will use a Google form for the PAC Director to monitor and anyone can use it. 2 PAC members will be trained so that the PAC member can handle the camera at the event

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- Web Administrator Suarez: When we first get the camera we will train the PAC members how to use the camera and we will also teach other members how to if they want to learn
- Rep. Cruz: If the camera breaks what do we do? Will we have to buy a new one?
 - Dir. Alramahi: Hopefully that would not happen since we would keep it safe
- Rep. Flores: I looked on Amazon and I see it has a 3-year warranty option for \$89
 - Rep. Omar: I think we should get a warranty to keep it safe in case it breaks
- Treasurer Caballes motions to add a purchase of a warranty of up to \$150
 - Favored, motion carries
- Favored, passed

VIII. New Business

- Resolution 2023-F9-1008 USG Office Supplies
 - Rep. Santana: Instead of paying for office supplies with our funding, can we just use our own personal money to do that instead of using USG money?
 - Rep. Klimek: Yes, we can look into that and discuss it this week
 - Rep. Narang: Can a better photo be added?
 - Treasurer Caballes: Yes, I will send a better one
 - Rep. Rivera: This is almost \$100 on food and snacks and I don't feel comfortable using the funds to buy snacks for USG
 - Rep. Cruz: If we are going to spend this money we should put it into chairs because they are falling apart
 - Rep. Fonseca: We should take inventory of the supplies we have to see if there are any repeats
 - Treasurer Caballes: I will take inventory
 - Pre. Almendras: I agree about the chairs. We got them from departments that didn't want them. We can gear this resolution towards office improvements and I think we should reimagine how we use the office space and I will create a task force to do so so keep an eye out for that
- Resolution 2023 F9-1009 USG Campus Safety Week
 - Rep. Narang: I motion to add myself as a chief sponsor
 - Favored, motion carries

IX. Items for Discussion

- Student Body Inquiries
 - Rep. Cruz: The community came out to speak to us and discuss how to represent them. I'm embarrassed to sit here and get called out and it means we have failed as the House of Representatives. We need to talk about this so I wanted to add this
 - Rep. Yousuf: Thank you for adding this. I felt disappointed too and I felt like the issues they thought we were failing at I agreed with them, we have restrictions on what we can say or do as a body but those we are supposed to represent feel not heard or represented
 - Rep. Sands: We should have Zoom meetings so commuters and those with jobs can give their input and as Representatives make sure that is available
 - Rep. Flores: I wish we had said something to them while they were here. I wish we acknowledged them more
 - Rep. Omar: Jay mentioned collaborating with USG as an outside org and I don't know if we are allowed to do that but I know a lot of us want to do that and we should figure out how to collaborate with organizations instead of being under the USG banner
 - Pres. Almendras: I know those public comments were very negative towards the work we have been doing. I think this is the result of us not telling them what we are doing. Student org support and room reservation changes have been in our officer reports. This includes increased student org funding to expand to catering and confirmed we decreased

fees by \$15 while also giving departments what they need to support student organizations. In regards to addressing the Israel and Palestine conflict, we have discussed this a lot and though we have not discussed much as a body, we have been listening. When SJP members were intercepted by UIC Police, we met with UIC Police about how to better interact with students. We've been in touch to ensure their free speech is protected. I told the VC of Student Affairs that it is a right to boycott UIC businesses and called for a meeting to discuss the right to do this as well as to discuss increasing hate towards Jewish and Palestinian students. The public health idea of One Health is the concept that your health is tied to the environment, those around you, and animals. I think about the phrase One Campus because we are all in this together. I would like to meet with everyone this week to further discuss this

- Rep. Irlbacker: When it comes to USG, we are doing a lot for the student body but not seeing others know. We are only catering to niche students and not reaching a larger student body so we need to change. We released a statement about political extremism last year and that still rings true. If students feel we are not meeting their needs then we need to think about
- Rep. Ali: I spoke with Dilay and Matthew about addressing Israel and Palestine. We were not able to come up with an official letter but hopefully next week. We represent the student body and not the university's beliefs. The university statements are one-sided and I think it is important to know we represent the student body and those needs
- Rep. Sands: What specific actions will we take to better our organization?
 - Pre. Almendras: several things. Rep Saba and I talked about a forum to bring students together. We are talking to the university about student concerns and needs (specifically the Chancellor Status Committee) to ensure plans to protect freedom of speech and expression with the Chicago statement next semester.
 - Rep. Sands: Is there a spot on our website where we are updating our minutes?
 - Web Administrator Suarez: Yes, updated weekly
 - Rep. Sands: I think we need to send out a letter of solidarity. The idea of our university being unified is one we hope to achieve but if society is riddled with systemic issues then our college is part of that and student voices don't always align with that and it can make student voices not feel heard.
- Rep. Devi Kannan: We should donate something to refugees to show our support. I think as soon as we get camera equipment we need to set up the livestream right away. We should post what we are doing on social media so students know about updates
- Dir. Alramahi: They want to hear from us as well as voice their concerns. Maybe we should have a town hall this semester so that we can respond because public comment we cannot respond to
- Rep. Ahmed: I second what Rep. Saba was saying. There's lots of discontent about the silence from USG. We don't represent the university but rather the students at the university. It's embarrassing that we have not released a statement in support of Palestinian students on campus because we are not being representative of students. Many students who do not know about USG only know about our silence
- Rep. Santana: In LAC, Dir. Aparna put me on free speech. If anyone wants to work with me on this issue then let me know because this is important and I know we don't want to be viewed this way
- Rep. Yousuf: About us being silent, I was one of the students who approached Matthew. Our being silent shows we don't care about our community or what is happening. Neutrality sometimes gets the better of us. Is this silence due to a formal USG rule?
 - Pres. Almendras: In terms of the silence, we have been taking action on this. I will host multiple meetings to discuss this and create an action plan

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- Rep. Devi Kannan: DIC should have a meeting with them to discuss their concerns
 - SOH Zhou: We cannot respond to public comment but their contacts are in the minutes
- Dir. Heybeli: We didn't take action not because we didn't care but because this is a really sensitive topic and we want to express ourselves the best and represent our community best. We work and represent all students and we will do our action plan and have a meeting this week where everyone is welcome
- Rep. Santana: This is a political concern because if we are not helping an organization at UIC and this happens again then we do not have a policy on this. I wanted to work on building this policy but did not get the green light
- Rep. Flores: There might be stuff going on behind the scenes but not on social media. We are seen as neutral or taking a side. Would something be done if they didn't come in or are we doing something now just to look good? I think we should restructure the constitution to be able to respond to public comment
- Rep. Pablo: Our silence is our compliance. There is no such thing as being neutral in the face of racism. If the budget is \$17,000 for the USG Gala then we have more than enough money to use our power and influence to combat these issues. We can use money for donations for refugees or workshops or speakers for activism
- Rep. Omar: The guest speakers were not part of SJP and so if organizations on campus have concerns about us not talking about that issue then clearly it is a problem and we should take action
- Pres. Almendras: We have a statement ready but I was advised by students to not release it but I will reassess it this week about the statement and action planning. In regards to funding, donations are not allowed
- Rep. Flores: It is hard for reps to put out their own initiatives. I want reps to have more freedom in what they want to do. Rep. Pablo has a great idea about workshops and we can collab with cultural centers

X. Ex Officio Reports

a. Report of the Advisor

- i. Eric: My first comment is regarding the public comment. I appreciate them in this space. I want you to think broadly about our student body. We have occupied a niche space. We are the most diverse institution in Chicago. There are a lot of things going on in the world for example we are not mentioning the Congo and what students are feeling about that. Be thoughtful about whatever message you put out. If you have questions about what I am saying I will be happy to answer. I am very sensitive to what is going on in the world. It is important to be informed and think about what you say to be responsible, respectful, and thoughtful. I am being thoughtful because I know a lot is going on in this world and campus is a microcosm of everything going on
 - 1. Rep Yousuf: Do you think revealing our veil of neutrality is bad?
 - a. Eric: I don't think any of us are neutral but you represent a large body of students. I don't believe in silence but rather in speaking with thoughtfulness. You are not an activist group. As an individual, you might be but you represent a larger population than yourself but I don't think students should be silent about any student experiences. Someone talked about supporting the refugees and that is a thoughtful action about the Venezuelan population in Chicago
- ii. Advisor: Rae Joyce is here.
 - 1. Rae Joyce: I am the Director of SLCE if you need anything to help your own leadership journey or as you think of things, I will help you

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- iii. Carlos: I had a student engagement conversation about MLK Commemoration Week. I have some comments about USG's social media presence
 - 1. Website: The USG introduction video from fall 2020 needs to be updated, fall newsletters are not made available, the USG calendar is not updated, committee and commission need to be updated because some say Spring 2023, agenda and minutes have not been updated since October 16th, resolutions have not been updated since Oct. 2, USG events are not updated, some links are not working
 - 2. Facebook: Engagement is nonexistent but Instagram is strong
 - 3. YouTube: The highest engagement is 13 views. I recommend you use Instagram to promote the live stream.
- iv. Carlos: If you want to have a conversation about anything, I am always open

b. Report of the Student Trustee

- i. Attended UIC Homecoming/Tailgate Festivities this Past Friday!
- ii. Graduate Student Council (GSC) Meeting
- iii. Met with Tremayne Price
- iv. Met with Chancellor Miranda
- v. Continuing Collaboration with Vice Chancellor Dixon re. Metra
- vi. Will be Attending the Board of Trustees Meeting this Week at UIC!
- vii. View full report for details
- viii. Report filed

XI. Officer Reports

a. Report of the President

- i. Met with Treasurer Caballes to check in on our financial affairs, initiatives, and future events. Thank you to Treasurer Caballes and the Treasury committee for keeping our business in order!
- ii. Attended Director of Legislative Affairs Ramakrishnan's last LAC meeting of the semester. The committee is doing amazing work on the Civic Engagement Campaign, Bill of Rights, Safety panel, and outreach to legislators. I thank them for all their hard work!
- iii. Planning to write the Bachelor's Accelerated Masters Program in Psychology Memo by this Friday with Director Asad. I look forward to working on this further with Director Asad and Rep. Thokkudubiyapu!
- iv. Huge shout out to the Director of Campus Life Gupta, Deputy Chair Irlbacker, and the CLC for organizing Connecting Student Leaders! Around 20 organizations joined USG at Vintage Bar and Grill to connect with each other and enjoy the food- it was a great night!
- v. USG Faculty OER Leadership Award Subcommittee met to review the program, discuss committee responsibilities, and prepare next steps and objectives
- vi. HOCO Tailgate was a great success and full of campus pride! The cupcake truck provided by USG went through 400 cupcakes in 30 minutes
- vii. Future meetings and events:
 - 1. USG Campus Safety Week Planning Meeting (11/13)
 - 2. ThankFUL Event from 11 AM- 2 PM on Tuesday, 11/14
 - 3. USG Week of Giving
- viii. View full report for details
- ix. Report filed

b. Report of the Vice-President

- i. Homecoming Tailgate was a success

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- ii. Continuing to communicate with the Campus Care Gap Assessment Committee on our plan of action to address student wellness on campus
 - iii. Reach out to me if you would like to serve on the Chancellor's Athletic Advisory Council
 - iv. View full report for details
 - v. Report filed
- c. Report of the Treasurer
- i. Met with Chief of Staff Basta
 - ii. Attended the Connecting Student Leader's Event and Homecoming Tailgate
 - iii. Started organizing the "USG Fall Social" with DOS
 - iv. Finalized the items to buy in the "USG Office Supplies" Initiative with my committee
 - v. Ordered catering for the USG Coffee, Cocoa, Cookies, and Careers Event
 - vi. \$119,704.57
 - vii. View full report for details
 - viii. Report filed
- d. Report of the Speaker
- i. Only 1 GBM left after this! Will be in the ARC
 - ii. Continuing to meet with Representatives individually
 - iii. Attended the LAC and SSC meeting, thank you for having me!
 - iv. Attended CLC's Connecting Student Leaders event on Thursday
 - v. Attended UIC's Homecoming Tailgate on Friday
 - vi. Time yielded to Rep. Shukla: USG Fall Semester Social
 1. Monday, 11/27 6-8 pm (our usual GBM time)—mark your calendars!
 2. Venue: Pompei on Taylor
 3. No formal dress code, but dress your best! This is a special occasion and we'll be taking lots of pictures, so wear something you feel nice in
 4. White Elephant activity \$10-15
 5. Spotify playlist to add to
 - vii. View full report for details
 - viii. Report filed
- e. Report of the Chief of Staff
- i. Held check-in with Director of Public Affairs Zaina
 - ii. Held check-in with Director of Student Success Asa
 - iii. Held check-in with Director of Diversity and Inclusion Dilay
 - iv. Held check-in with Treasurer Matthew Caballes
 - v. Attended the Connecting Student Leaders event
 - vi. View full report for details
 - vii. Report filed
- f. Report of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee Chair
- i. Had a meeting with the Disability Cultural Center, Director Margaret Fink
 - ii. Had a meeting with the Equity and Inclusion in Engineering Program, Director Elsa Soto
 - iii. Met with Chief of Staff Basta for COS checking of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee
 - iv. Visited the Gender and Sexuality Center, Black Cultural Center, and Rafael Cintrón Ortiz Latino Cultural Center
 - v. Attended the Black Cultural Center event "Hip Hop & Social Justice Activism Panel" on Tuesday at 2 PM;

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- vi. Had the weekly meeting with the Diversity and Inclusion representatives; brainstorming and working on our future events!
 - vii. Communicating with a Commuter Center Assistant to arrange CSRC place for DIC's future event.
 - viii. Attended the Connecting Student Leaders Event on Thursday, November 9
 - ix. Attended the Tailgate on Friday, November 10
 - x. View full report for details
 - xi. Report filed
- g. Report of the Legislative Affairs Committee Chair
- i. Met with HSI Symposium Leaders
 - ii. Last LAC Committee Meeting
 - iii. USG Safety Week Kick-Off Meeting
 - iv. Upcoming Events!
 - 1. Civic Engagement Lunch Talk: November 15th, 12PM-1 PM
 - 2. 1-1 Exit Meetings with all LAC Representatives
 - v. View full report for details
 - vi. Report filed
- h. Report of the Public Affairs Committee Chair
- i. Met with Chief of Staff Quinn and Web Administrator Mauricio
 - ii. Met with Vice President Michael to discuss outreach for the UIC Tailgate Competition.
 - iii. Met with Treasurer Mattoy and Web Administrator Mauricio to finalize merchandise and camera options.
 - iv. Attended the UIC tailgate last Friday. Thank you to everyone who came out and to Director Tejal and Vice President Michael for organizing it.
 - v. Make sure to keep up with the photo drive, make sure the pictures you upload are appropriate, and show what the event is/visual engagement with the student body. Make folders for each event that you make!
 - vi. View full report for details
 - vii. Report filed
- i. Report of the Student Success Committee Chair
- i. SSC Meeting 5 (last one)
 - ii. 1 on 1 with President Almendras to discuss an Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's program.
 - iii. The OER Subcommittee met last week Friday.
 - iv. Attended the UIC Tailgate for the first time on Friday.
 - v. Meet with Director Jean Riordan of Career Services tomorrow.
 - vi. The coffee, Cocoa, Cookies, and Careers event time changed from November 17th, 2023 to 1-3 PM
 - vii. View full report for details
 - viii. Report filed
- j. Report of the Campus Life Committee Chair
- i. President Matthew Almendras and I met with Jomar Francisco, Marketing Manager to discuss the Meal Swipe donation program.
 - ii. President Matthew Almendras and I had a one-on-one meeting to go over funding and other details of the USG campus safety week.

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- iii. Participated in and organized the student leaders' networking event. Grateful to everyone for contributing to the success of this memorable occasion. A special acknowledgment to Isaiah and Diya for their dedicated efforts.
- iv. Assisted in tabling for the homecoming tailgate with Vice President Michael. Thank you to everyone who stopped by. A special shoutout to Representatives Abdulmajid, Syeda, and Ashley for their valuable help and support. Your contributions made a difference!
- v. Reminder: USG is hosting Weeks of Giving, and we invite all organizations to participate! If your organization is interested, please contribute to our donation drive. The organization that donates the highest number of items will be rewarded with a celebratory meal. Let's come together to make a positive impact and spread the spirit of giving!
- vi. View full report for details
- vii. Report filed

XII. Announcements

- Pres. Almendras: Please let all of your friends know about the event tomorrow about meal swipes. 150 swipes donated is our goal during the 11 AM-2 PM slot. Keep a look out for further updates regarding a meeting this week

XIII. Adjournment

- Motioned, seconded, accepted
 - Adjourned at 7:43 PM