

Student Government Association
Transparency Report
Winter Quarter 2021

Contact: Alyssa Isberto, aisberto@depaul.edu

President's & Vice President's Report

Contact: President Alyssa Isberto, she/her | Vice President Watfae Zayed, she/her
aisberto@depaul.edu | wzayed1@depaul.edu

Overview

During the Winter Quarter, DePaul's Student Government Association (SGA) continued to advocate for student concerns, especially with the continued stress of remote learning. We are also committed to amplifying the voices of marginalized communities.

Solidarity with Marginalized Communities

SGA continues to represent and advocate for marginalized students on campus, especially with the recent attacks on the Black community and APIDA community. In the Winter Quarter, SGA released a statement condemning the violent insurrection at our nation's Capitol and amplified the BSU's list of demands. For Spring Quarter, SGA is working on a solidarity statement for the APIDA community and further supporting their needs, especially with the rise of Anti-Asian hate crimes in the past year.

Hate Speech Policies

We have been working with the Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity (OIDE) and the Speech and Expression Advisory Committee (SEAC) to update the Community Guidelines and implement policy that condemns hate speech on campus.

Ethnicity Options

We are working with Provost Salma Ghanem to expand ethnicity options on DePaul's applications and surveys to include a category for Middle Eastern/North African (MENA) students. We also signed onto a solidarity statement from UIC to support their efforts in expanding their ethnicity options.

Club Sports Logo Usage

In partnership with DePaul University Athletics, we were able to revise the Athletics policy to allow Club Sports access to the DePaul logo with the name of their sport included.

Resolutions

SGA wrote and passed several resolutions throughout Spring Quarter

- PDF Grade Option
- Institutional Sustainability Policy
- Early Registration for Commuter Students
- 2021 Graduation Ceremony Ad Hoc Committee

Petitions

Two petitions circulated among the DePaul community made by our fellow students at DePaul: 2021 Graduation Robes Petition and PDF Option Petition. SGA signed into the statement to ally ourselves with the petition and also worked on spreading the word to other students. SGA also signed onto a petition for the Biden administration to lower the student debt; this was made by a

student from another university and was being circulated among different student governments across the country.

New Senator Positions

During constitutional revisions, which SGA holds every quarter to update our guiding document, we added three new senator positions. We will now have three Senators for Intercultural Awareness rather than just one, one of which is responsible for advocating for the LGBTQ+ community while the other two are responsible for advocating for intercultural awareness at large. We will also have a senator responsible for advocating for disabled students.

Internal Initiatives

This quarter, SGA held three training sessions for our members in order to increase the quality of our work and our service to the DePaul community. Those training sessions include a diversity and equity training with the Office of Diversity and Equity (OIDE), a health and wellness training with Health Promotion and Wellness (HPW), and mission and ministry training with the Division of Mission and Ministry (DMM).

In order to improve how SGA functions, we held numerous sessions to discuss the good and bad aspects of SGA and how we can improve. Those conversations started within each of our standing committees (Student Affairs, Operations, Diversity and Equity, and Academic Affairs) and staff members. We then opened the conversation to the DePaul community at large. SGA strives on making our organization more accessible, transparent, and equitable.

SGA was also able to fill three of our vacant positions. Those communities include Senator for Graduate Students, Senator for Transfer Students, and Senator for Veteran Students.

In order to increase transparency, SGA has also started weekly newsletters to give updates on our weekly general body meetings. To sign up, check out our DeHub page.

External Committees

- Joint Council
- Restarting Campus Operations Task Force
- University Athletics Board
- SRAC
- Policy Review Group
- EVP/CFO Search Committee
- Provost Review Committee

Treasurer's Report

Contact: Camila Mariana Barrientos

cbarrie1@depaul.edu

Throughout the 2020-2021 Winter Quarter I, as the Treasurer, engaged in countless zoom meetings, emails and other miscellaneous actions in order to maintain the transparency of SGA's finances. As I continued to strive for accessibility and equity, I worked on updating the budget and once again properly presented it to the SGA general body.

Although it is part of the job description, I did not maintain my role with the Office of Student Involvement and was not kept in contact with Natalie Stone.

Aside from the clearly designated Treasurer job, I continued to be an advocate at the general body meetings and in my everyday life. Nonetheless, I continue to work closely with the rest of the SGA cabinet and arrive at those meetings to ensure that the inner workings of this organization are maintained. Through it all, I always make sure to contribute to meetings, support my fellow SGA members, and assist in any work being done by SGA (ad hoc committees, resolutions, social media, awareness) etc. This Winter Quarter was difficult and rather slow for the University and SGA. With that, I digress, and as always am open to questions, comments, or concerns.

Student Affairs

Contact: EVP of Student Affairs, Marcus Robertson
mrober65@depaul.edu

Chair Updates

- Facilitated efforts by Cindy to kickstart a video series familiarizing students with UCS mental health counselors.
- Stepped down as chair of mental health ad-hoc committee.

Senator for Commuter Students, Cindy Rocha:

- Started aforementioned video series.
- Wrote a resolution calling for early registration for commuter students who live far from campus, using data from a survey she wrote.

Senator for Veteran Students, Justin Jackson:

- Got elected to Senator for Veteran Students,
- Has been looking into ways to improve the transfer process at DePaul.

Senator for Community & Government Relations, Adora Catherine Alava:

- Held a Dialogue on Student Advocacy and Leadership event.
- Worked with the Illinois Board for Higher Education and specifically the subcommittee on Diversity and Equity to focus on accessibility and affordability programs for students in Illinois colleges in accordance with the budget.

Senator for Transfer Students, Israel Monroy-Acevedo:

- Got elected to Senator for Transfer Students.
- Participated in substantive discussions with SGA and members of the DePaul community on topics like tuition, sustainability, and increasing student representation.

Operations Committee

Contact: EVP of Operations, Wesley Janicki (he/him)

wjanicki@depaul.edu

Committee Updates:

- The Operations Committee worked on several initiatives together that pertained to increasing outreach to students and how to best serve them.
- The Operations Committee used much of our time as a committee to debrief General Body meetings and to discuss further work based thereon. Outside of this, the Committee held a “Good, Bad, Improve” session regarding the current SGA constitution.

Chair Updates:

- Wesley was active in many of the similar areas as in the fall, primarily as regards sustainability, the university’s mission, and larger SGA wide projects.
- For sustainability, Wesley continued to hold meetings with the Sustainability Committee and attend meetings of the “Unofficial” DePaul Sustainability Group, a coalition of faculty, staff, and students interested in moving forward a core set of sustainability initiatives at DePaul. [Resolution 02.09](#) includes a list of most of these demands, and the group plans to present a comprehensive proposal to university leadership in the spring.
- Advocacy from the fall on including sustainability in the new mission led, in part, to sustainability’s inclusion. The text of the mission can be found [here](#).
- Wesley worked with other members of SGA early in the quarter to write a [resolution](#) in support of continuing the Pass/D/Fail grading policy adopted early on in the pandemic.
- Wesley also worked with fellow members of SGA to plan and host a Dialogue on Student Advocacy and Leadership.
- Wesley serves on a number of committees, including on SGA’s Constitutional Revisions Board, as the deputy chief justice of Judicial Board, the Facility Operations Committee, as the chair of the Sustainability Committee, as a member of the Mental Health ad hoc committee, and lastly the IRMA-SGA working group.

Senator for First Year Students, Alik Schier (he/him):

- Alik was active in engaging with fellow members of SGA at our General Body meetings, and posing tough and insightful questions of administrators visiting SGA.
- Alik has continued the planning to support his primary initiatives to end unpaid internships on campus, expand resources and support for queer and LGBTQ+ students, and end the relationship between DePaul and the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP).

Senator for Second Year Students, Julianna De Leon (she/her):

- Julianna spent her time in the winter continuing to learn SGA and meeting with administrators.
- Julianna also will be assisting with the logistics and planning of potential in-person events for SGA as the university begins to open back up.
- Julianna supported, and will continue to, SGA by serving on Judicial Board. She also sits on the Organization Outside Speaker Review Board, vetting speakers that organizations seek to bring to campus.

Senator for Third Year Students, Brandon Tejeras (he/him):

- Brandon, like his other fellow Senators on the Operations Committee, spent time adjusting to his new role and reflecting on what he can do within SGA.
- Brandon continued to take time to listen to his fellow third-year students and reflect on their struggles with the virtual environment and advocating for them at our GB meetings.
- Brandon, like Julianna, serves on the Judicial Board in addition to serving as one of SGA's representatives to the Speech and Expression Advisory Committee (SEAC).

Senator for Fourth and Fifth Year Students, Johnny Milas (he/him):

- Johnny started the graduation ad hoc committee this quarter, which he currently chairs. This committee is currently working on supporting seniors and the graduation and commencement procedures.
- Johnny also hosted a graduate school workshop in conjunction with the Career Center in early January.
- Johnny serves on SGA's Constitutional Revision Board, Judicial Board, as another of SGA's representatives on SEAC.

Senator for Sustainability, Judy Zakieh (she/her):

- Judy is working on implementing a number of green ideas at DePaul, like a sustainability newsletter, as well as a host of other small changes, that will certainly lead to big change.
- Judy serves on the Facility Operations Committee, meeting with the administrators behind the facilities at DePaul, as well as most institutional sustainability efforts.

Senator for Graduate Students, Nate Wilson (he/him):

- Nate was elected during our Internal Elections and is still orienting to SGA, but is poised to begin his work in the spring quarter on promoting diversity and equity at DePaul.

Diversity & Equity Committee

Contact: EVP of Diversity & Equity, Robbie Merkel (he/they)

RMERKEL@depaul.edu

Chair Updates:

- Student Representative on the Covid-19 Community Health Promotion/Education Team
 - Developing a campaign to promote the vaccine and combat misinformation on the vaccines effectiveness and ability to help end the pandemic.
 - We will be developing a way for students to submit videos 30 seconds or less, or pictures with captions explaining why they got the vaccine to encourage other students to do so when they are able to.
 - We are working on a panel of medical/scientific specialists at DePaul to talk about vaccines and their efficacy.
- Appointment to Hispanic Serving Institution Task Force
 - This task force will begin meeting at the start of Spring Quarter
- Undocumented Student Support ad hoc Committee
 - Co-chaired by Alyssa and Robbie
 - Had a series of meetings within and outside of the committee to go over goals for making the admissions process as navigable as possible.
 - Will be meeting with the sanctuary campus organization that was created to stand in solidarity with undocumented students — still figuring out objectives.
- Participant in the BUILD Pilot Workshops carried out by Student Affairs and OIDE.
- Introducing Land Acknowledgement Statement out together by OIDE and working group in Spring Quarter.
- Although I did not introduce the amendments to CRB, the Diversity & Equity Committee will have three new senators for intercultural awareness — one of them dedicated to serving the LGBTQ+ community— and we will now have a senator for disabled students.

Senator for First-Generation Students, Miranda Garcia (she/her):

- Miranda is working on a professional development with the career center geared towards first-generation students.
- Both Miranda and I have been in discussion about possibly expanding the first-generation cohort which provides a strong support network for first-generation students.

Senator for Mission and Ministry, Jessica Nalupta (she/her):

- Jessica has been working on creating more awareness surrounding the food pantry available to all DePaul students.
- Jessica has also been working on inviting freshmen to apply for the Vincentian Service Scholarship, while also advocating for student leaders and activists to be accepted in scholarship due to their importance in advocating for social justice issues.

- She has been attending weekly Meet Me at the Mission and supported their programs through co-hosting workshops.

Senator for Intercultural Awareness, Carolina Aceves (she/they):

- Carolina organized the Student Leadership and Advocacy dialogue in collaboration with OMSS PAs.
 - Here we saw a constructive conversation on the needs of the multicultural community.
- Carolina is also involved with the sanctuary organization created to stand in solidarity with undocumented students.

Senator for International Students, Nghi Thai (She/Her):

- Nghi has taken time off from her position for the moment.

Academic Affairs Committee

Contact: EVP Academic Affairs, Keith Norward
knorward@depaul.edu

Chair Updates:

- Keith has been a member of the Grade Challenge Review Committee for the College of LAS. Keith's role is to review the merit of a challenge presented by students who submit grade challenges to the committee.

Senator for the School of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, Mariana Byker (she/her):

- Mariana has been focused on:
 - Removing GPA requirements for LAS scholarships.
 - Redistributing funds to LAS scholarships.
 - Making students eligible for the Dean and Presidential scholarships for students once they reach GPA requirement after admission in DePaul.

Senator for the School of Music, Breanna Vazquez (she/her):

- Breanna has completed her service on the Dean Review Committee for the School of Music .
- She is an active member of the School of Music's Student Engagement Committee.
- Breanna has advocated and received more student representation on multiple committees within the School of Music.

Senator for the College of Science and Health, Sabah Sulaiman (she/her):

- Sabah has been working tirelessly to facilitate and increase communication between CSH faculty/staff and students.
- She has worked with Dean Dance-Barnes to bring more diversity and inclusion to the College of Health and Science.
- She is a committee member for the planning for the CHS 10th Anniversary .

Senator for the College of Computing and Digital Media, Erica Debelak (she/her):

- Erica was a member of the Mental Health Committee, focusing on forming the understanding of the importance in taking our mental health seriously, especially during this time.
- She has been finding ways to enhance the online learning experience for all students.
- Erica looks to be an integral part of DePaul's reopening plan in the Fall.

Senator for the College of Communication, Gema Tinoco (she/her):

- Gema spent this quarter researching and addressing polarization at DePaul.
- This Spring, we get to experience:
 - A forum hosted with faculty to discuss their thoughts and observations.
 - Data analysis presentation to DePaul to suggest bringing OpenMind Platform to campus by next Fall '21.
- Gema will be meeting with the Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity to discuss how the OpenMind Platform can be implemented.

Senator for the College of Education, Kevin Holecko (he/him):

- Kevin co-sponsored a Career Panel with Sigma Lambda Beta on Thursday March 18th, 2021.
- He will also be featured on Dean Zionts Review Panel in the future.

Senator for the College of Business, Mason Decker (he/him):

- Mason is collaborating with Assistant Dean Karen Burgard on outreach programs for incoming students, and ways to better engage the student populations within the Business School.
- Mason's Committees:
 - Member of Dean Donley's Student Advisory Committee.
 - Driehaus College of Business Dean Search Committee.
 - Grad-Ad-Hoc Committee.