



AUBURN
UNIVERSITY

Student Government Association

**Student Government Association Senate
Minutes
Monday, July 12, 2021**

Open Forum

Rett Waggoner
President

Cole Callahan
Vice President

Stephen Sadie
Treasurer

Tyler Ward
Executive Vice President of
Cabinet Administration

Claudia Hubbard
Executive Vice President
of Communications and
Marketing

Michael Thomas
Executive Vice President of
Initiatives

Molly Boudreaux
Executive Vice President of
Outreach

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- a) Dionne Meadows (She/Her/Hers)
 - a. Believes that someone pending confirmation for a Judicial Branch position has concerning beliefs.
 - b. Names this person to be Stephen Morris.
 - c. His social media has caused adverse feelings.

Roll Call 7:35

1. Approval of Minutes
 - a) Approved.
2. Executive Officer Reports
 - a) Rett Waggoner – President
 - a. Had a meeting with Trustee Newton last week to discuss Executive Goals.
 - b. Attended two meetings with Graduate Schools Council in efforts to figure out which priorities of Graduate Students the Student Government Association can get behind.
 - c. The kickoff for Auburn 2040 is this week.
 - d. This Friday there is another city breakfast with Mayor Anders.
 - e. Before the next Student Senate meeting there will be the SEC Exchange in Knoxville, Tennessee.
 - i. The Executive teams of the Student Government Association from all SEC Schools will meet and exchange ideas and experience.
 - f. Concerns have been raised regarding the social media of Stephen Morris.
 - i. A recent Supreme Court case decided that it is not up to public institutions to read private statements to see whether a student can participate in public organizations.
 - ii. Wants to ensure that everyone is thinking clearly and approaching this situation with the respect and attention this decision deserves.
 - b) Stephen Sadie – Treasurer
 - a. Breaking down Student Activity Fees in AU Access in order to understand what is being spent but not rebutting what is being spent.
 - i. Be aware of feedback on this.
 - c) Claudia Hubbard – EVP, Communications and Marketing
 - a. The “Summer in SGA” recap email will be coming out in a couple of weeks.
 - b. A poll regarding Student Government Association apparel was sent out, as well as the link to the headshot photos taken last semester.
 - d) Molly Boudreaux – EVP, Outreach
 - a. Auburn 2040 kickoff is this Thursday in the Auburn High School Auditorium at 5:30pm.
 - i. Come prepared to take notes, and reach out to your committee to encourage them to attend.
 - b. Continue to get freshmen excited about the first events of the school year, including Hey Day and Welcome Week.



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- e) Tyler Ward – EVP, Cabinet Administration
 - a. Freshman Forum applications are still open; there is an information session next Thursday at 6:30pm.
 - b. In another situation similar to the situation at hand tonight, there was an overturning of the ruling due to the argument being based on religious beliefs.
 - i. Think about every word carefully tonight; this is a big decision to be made as the Student Government.
- f) Michael Thomas — EVP, Initiatives
 - a. The NPHC Legacy Plaza is set to be completed in April 2022.
 - b. The Edge is still on track to open in the Fall.
 - c. Gathering information on the grade replacement initiative and taking it to new offices.
 - d. An additional executive goal regarding rentable laptop devices is pivoting to loanable devices, which targets laptops.
 - i. Working with the library and bookstore on this.
 - e. Safety Net: primarily an idea of something that would be great to see be carried through.
 - i. Involve at least three offices: Auburn Cares, Auburn Housing, Tiger Dining
 - ii. Seek to serve students that may be on the brink of dropping out of college due to financial reasons.
 - iii. A package would be available to students in need offering housing and dining for the whole semester.
 - iv. This promotes the important idea of the Auburn Family as a whole.

2. College Reports

- a) At-Large
 - a. Office hours will be held in two different sessions.
 - b. Have received positive feedback on the new Tiger Cards.
- b) College of Agriculture
 - a. No report.
- c) College of Business
 - a. Found a location to store the office hour signs.
 - b. Schools Council should be getting back to them regarding Welcome Week within the next week.
- d) College of Architecture, Design, and Construction
 - a. Meeting with Schools Council to plan Welcome Week event.
 - b. Looking into office hour details and places to store the office hour sign.
- e) College of Sciences and Mathematics
 - a. No report.
- f) College of Education
 - a. Working on finalizing office hour times and location for the fall.
- g) Samuel Ginn College of Engineering
 - a. Schools Council is helping put together the Welcome Week event.
 - b. Location to store office hour sign has been decided: Professional Engineering Suite.

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- h) School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences
 - a. Had a meeting with Schools Council in the last week of June to plan Welcome Week.
 - b. Setting up a meeting with the College of Agriculture to plan a joint tailgate in the fall.
 - c. Office hours will be Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11am-12pm.
 - d. Working on Schools Council constitution.
- i) Graduate School
 - a. Office hours have been finalized except the dates.
 - b. Graduate Student Council Department-level Senators are being finalized.
 - c. Finalizing Welcome Week event this week.
- j) College of Human Sciences
 - a. Office hours will be held on Wednesdays at noon in Mell, and the office hour signs will be stored in Spidle Hall.
 - b. Kona Ice Truck will be present for Welcome Week event alongside other giveaways and ambassadors in the lobby to help students.
- k) College of Liberal Arts
 - a. Office hours will be held in Central Dining Hall/ "The Edge".
- l) School of Nursing
 - a. Finalizing Welcome Week plans and office hours.
- m) Harrison School of Pharmacy
 - a. Working with Schools Council to make sure students are aware of when to register for parking, as this was an issue last year.
 - b. Working on coordinating organization meeting times.
- n) College of Veterinary Medicine
 - a. No report.

3. Committee Reports

- a) Gavin McElroy – Academic Affairs
 - a. Meeting with faculty regarding equitability.
 - b. Brainstorming marketing ideas for the rentable laptops initiative.
 - i. If you have any ideas, please send them to the Academic Affairs Committee.
 - c. New initiative regarding grades being put into Canvas in a more timely manner, including all grades being put in a week before finals.
- b) Reese Lisenby – Budget and Finance
 - a. Committee members did a great job on gathering feedback on initial budgets from student representatives.
 - b. Final budgets released in August.
- c) Hayden McDonald – Code of Laws
 - a. Meeting with the Executive Director of Elections.
 - b. Motion to suspend the rules of order and move PSSB 21-0823-01 from a future order to a current order.
 - i. Vote.
 - 1. Motion carries.
- d) Brandan Belser – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
 - a. Looking at Green Dot initiative and comparing what other universities are doing.
 - b. Concerned with vague verbiage on AU Alert emails.



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- e) John David Mathews – Student Affairs
 - a. Working on entertainment during basketball lines such as scheduling Breakfast with Bruce Pearl, performances by the dance team, and DJs.
 - f) Graf Sullivan – Executive Committee
 - a. Thanks to everyone for making the summer run smoothly.
 - b. Excited to see everyone in person.
 - c. Reminder to continue to be professional.
4. Liaisons
- a) Honors College – Luke Owens
 - a. Restructured meeting format to split meetings into two types.
 - b. Scheduled and planned meetings and events for fall.
 - c. Welcome Week event will be held on August 18 at 7pm; throwback theme.
 - d. Added a new academic committee and appointed a chair.
 - b) Black Student Union – Donovan Evins
 - a. Transitioning from old Cabinet to new Cabinet.
 - b. Attended a mixer event with Auburn Alumni; this was very informative and inspiring.
 - c) Student Veterans Association – Liyah Stewart
 - a. Would love support at fall events coming up including a benefit night at Draffhouse, a Gala, and fundraisers to send veterans to NatCon in January.
5. Current Orders
- a) PSSB: 21-0712-01 Judicial Branch Confirmations
 - a. Graf Sullivan, College of Engineering
 - b. Context provided by Senator Sullivan: standard confirmation bill sent by Rett Waggoner after application and interview process.
 - c. Senator Belser: He believes highly of the Election Committee, however he believes that Stephen Morris is unfit to serve. He believes that Stephen Morris would not judge without bias, as he has referred to the human population as “inhumane animals”.
 - d. Senator Williams: After seeing the things that one candidate pending confirmation has said, she does not have confidence that if something controversial came up, an unbiased decision would be made. Some things she has seen have concerned her regarding humans and equality. This is a confirmation, and not something the student body can elect. Because the Student Government Association is a representative of the student body, it must represent everyone.
 - e. Senator Sullivan: yields time to Dionne Meadows.
 - 1. She thinks that someone who is on the confirmation bill supports initiatives that are not inclusive to the Auburn Family. She states that he trivializes poverty and could not say that he would administer the position fairly. There needs to be empathy, understanding, and nonpartisanship.
 - f. Senator Devore: yields time to Mya Strickland, President of the Black Student Union.
 - 1. She is not confident in the approval of Stephen Morris as Chief Justice and is disappointed that the confirmation bill made it this far. She heard a comment made earlier today that was concerned about how Stephen Morris would handle a transgender person running for Miss Homecoming. Many people are watching this.



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- g. Senator McDonald: Asks for context on the tweets that have been mentioned.
- h. Senator Belser: The code on confirmations does not specifically say the role of Senators for a confirmation. Cites the code regarding Senate impeaching a candidate; a legitimate reason to deny a candidate for a position is for any action that is unbecoming.
- i. Senator Sullivan: Bringing up the code makes a good point, but he is concerned about the precedent it would set if this was struck down based on political beliefs. Cites the tweets that he was sent. Political views should not be considered.
- j. Senator Turnipseed: Reads the role of Chief Justice in the code; political views do not have anything to do with the ability to uphold the role of Chief Justice. If a precedent was set upon political views, this would be very dangerous and it does not affect the responsibilities of the role.
- k. Senator Turnipseed: yields time to Gwen Charles.
 - 1. It is dangerous to vet candidates based on their political views. She would expect them to go through the Twitter for every other person pending confirmation; everyone has the right to say what they want to say, regardless of whether you agree with them. Stephen Morris is a student who can share his beliefs. View the candidate from an objective standpoint; everyone is nominated for a reason.
- l. Senator Belser: To clarify, he was not trying to use political beliefs and does not want to call anyone out on their political stance. If anyone pending confirmation used the phrase “inhumane animal” to reference people, they are unfit to serve in any position in the Student Government Association. He encourages other Senators to remain non-accusatory.
- m. Senator Dickinson: yields time to Mya Strickland.
 - 1. She echoes what Senator Belser said and feels as if the topic is being diminished but it is just talking about human decency. There are many different types of people on campus, and they all matter and deserve representation. When controversial topics arise, they should be treated fairly.
- n. Senator Harris: Cited a tweet from Stephen Morris as an example of non-bias. Neither side is right for standing to create bias. His Twitter is not purely leaning toward one side or the other.
- o. Senator Seckinger: Inquires about the Code of Laws stating that a list of qualifications and duty of positions should be made available for each position a week before confirmation. She does not recall receiving this.
- p. Senator Sullivan: If there is anyone who was a part of the selection process, he requests that they provide context on this point by Senator Seckinger.
- r. Senator McDonald: Stephen Morris had the best responses to the application questions, had the best list of qualifications, and had the best interview.
- s. Senator Williams: yields time to Jordan Denson.
 - 1. Cited two counter-examples of biased opinions from Stephen Morris’ Twitter against transgender people in the LGBT community. States that people have free speech but not



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freedom from consequence. States that everyone must be catered to, and highlights that there are a lot of members of minorities present speaking against this person.

t. Senator Sullivan: yields time to Stephen Morris.

1. He wants to allow everyone to speak their opinions before he responds to the statements.

u. Senator Williams: yields time to Dionne Meadows.

1. The concept that hate speech does not exist is false; Stephen Morris cannot represent everyone well.

v. Senator Harris: There was no mention of race in Stephen Morris' tweet. There were people of all races involved in the Black Lives Matter movement; Stephen Morris did not specify race.

w. Senator Turnipseed: yields time to Allen Li.

1. He was on the Election Board, and objectively thought that there were other candidates that could fill the position of Chief Justice in an effective way to avoid controversy. He tried to be unbiased; there were concerns with Stephen Morris' ability to work with other people on the team and in the Student Government Association. He believes that wholistically, there was a better candidate.

x. Senator Williams: She is blown away by the passion in students' voices and states that everyone must remember that this is the Student Senate. It means a lot that students are coming and voicing their concerns; it is the duty of the Student Senate to vote in the best interest of the students.

y. Senator Devore: Thinking back on her time so far in the Student Senate, the Student Senate unanimously voted on a Resolution urging Auburn leadership to prioritize social justice and doing the best to help minoritized students. There are a lot of minoritized students speaking tonight. Just because something has been politicized does not make it political. These are issues of social justice regarding African-American individuals, those in poverty, and transgender individuals.

z. Senator Sullivan: yields time to Stephen Morris

1. America is all about free speech. He is happy that everyone is in attendance, and happy to defend himself.

2. He is grateful for a high level of confidence from Student Government Association President Waggoner, will always apply the law, and will never insert personal beliefs. It is not his job to make the law, and he will faithfully apply the law if confirmed. The Judicial Branch should be free of partisanship. He has several ideas to improve the Judicial Branch, including increasing awareness of the Judicial Branch designed to benefit minoritized students, plans to travel to Montgomery to hear a case from the Alabama Supreme Court, and working with Dr. Brown to develop legal writing skills.



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3. He will recuse himself to prevent any conflict of interest. In an opinion writing process, there must be legal reasoning and nothing can be said unilaterally. Everyone will be voting; he will make sure that everyone's voices are heard and that Associate Justices' questions are heard.
4. Listed qualifications, including serving as the Vice President of Best Buddies, Week of Service Head Counselor for the Honors College (the Week of Service theme is serving those that are impoverished), member of Mortar Board, member of Cardinal Key, member of Lambda Sigma, member of Freshman Forum, member of Lobby Board, Be the Creed Nominee (nominated by an African-American individual).
5. Took a Constitutional Law class and learned about law that relates to Civil Rights. He recently completed an internship at the Lee County Justice Center. He has had multiple conversations and interactions with Senator Belser; none of which have been derogatory.
 - a. Senator Belser: Point of order; asks not to be referred to by name.
6. Everyone should be defined by their character, not their race or income. He acts in a non-biased way toward other individuals. He cites an academic study from a liberal organization.
7. His view on abortion stems from a strongly-held religious belief. He had classes with transgender individuals and would never want to use an incorrect pronoun. He prefers to call people by their name (and respects if the individual has made a change to their name if they have changed their gender). He believes that God created mankind as man and woman.
8. He speaks on unprotected speech and protected speech, and cites Supreme Court cases. He believes that he is being discriminated against, and would be more than happy to debate outside of this meeting. The mission of the Student Government Association is to serve, promote, and unify. If this confirmation is voted against, there will be a dangerous precedent set.
 - aa. Senator Belser: Stephen Morris did not acknowledge his Twitter statement including "inhumane animals". It was allowed for him to interject during Stephen Morris' time speaking.
 - ab. Senator Belser: yields time to Molly Boudreaux
 1. Stating identity as a white, Christian male, or being nominated by an African-American person, or bring friends with minoritized people are not qualifications.



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- ac. Senator Turnipseed: Motion to end debate.
 - 1. Vote.
 - a. Motion carries.
- ad. Senator Sullivan: Motion to pass this Bill as written.
 - 1. Vote.
 - a. Motion does not pass.
- b) PSSB 21-0712-02 Clarification of Escorts in 1009.2
 - a. Ashton Dickinson, College of Business
 - b. Senator Dickinson provides context.
 - c. Question from Senator Sullivan regarding the clarification of the bill.
 - d. Vote.
 - a. Motion passes.
- c) PSSB 21-0712-03 Clarification for use of Banners and Billboards
 - a. Ashton Dickinson, College of Business
 - b. Senator Dickinson provides context.
 - c. Vote.
 - a. Motion passes.
- d) PSSB 21-0712-04 Clarification of Campaign Staff Guidelines
 - a. Ashton Dickinson, College of Business
 - b. Senator Dickinson provides context.
 - c. Vote.
 - a. Motion passes.
- e) PSSB 21-0712-05 Schools Council Chapter Reformatting
 - a. Megan Starling, School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences
 - b. Hayden McDonald, College of Business
 - c. Senator McDonald provides context.
 - d. Vote.
 - a. Motion passes.
- f) PSSB 21-0712-06 Miss Homecoming 2021 Elections Timeline
 - a. Kyla Mathner, College of Education
 - b. Presented by Senator Turnipseed on behalf of Senator Mathner.
 - c. Senator Sullivan provides context.
 - d. Vote.
 - a. Motion passes.

Announcements

- a) Cole Callahan, Vice President
 - a. Yields time to Senator Sullivan.
 - i. Senator Sullivan: Motion to suspend the rules of order and introduce PSSC 21-0712-01 Commendation for Pearson Brown
 - 1. Vote.
 - a. Motion carries.



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- i. Senator Sullivan: Motion to pass PSSC 21-0712-01 as written.
 1. Vote.
 - a. Motion carries.
 - ii. No Senate meeting during syllabus week, but there will be committee meetings.
 - iii. Next Senate meeting is August 23.
- b) Jamie Calvert
 - a. Very proud of everyone tonight.
 - b. Everyone will miss Pearson so much.
 - c. Excited to see everyone in the fall; let her know if you need anything.
- c) Pearson Brown
 - a. Blown away and humbled; thanks to everyone for the commendation.
 - b. People do not care what you know until they know that you care.
 - c. Continue to find ways to connect with others and hear their perspectives.
 - d. As Senators, you are given amazing opportunities to make an impact.
 - e. War Eagle now and forever.
- d) Brad Smith
 - a. Close to hiring a new Assistant Director of Student Involvement.
 - b. Will be working more closely with the Student Government Association during the time of vacancy of the Student Government Association Coordinator position.
 - c. He hopes that everyone learned something from tonight to prepare you for the professional world; these are the things that you will engage in conversation about with people that are different from you.
 - d. He hopes that everyone walks out of Senate tonight with the ability to be confident in your own beliefs, and not have beliefs given to you.
 - e. Hurtful things were shared tonight; all staff offices are open; reach out to him.
 - f. Everyone's voices belong together and are important at Auburn.
 - g. Asks that everyone continues to grow with each other.

Adjournment 10:16