

Minutes

- I. Welcome**
- II. Roll Call Attendance**
- III. Approval of Agenda**
- IV. Approval of Minutes**
- V. Constituency Comments**
- VI. Position Reports**
 - A. Standards**
 - Standards met and is continuing the conversation about reserving two seats for freshman
 - B. Finance**
 - Finance met with Brenda from Campus Safety to discuss the Bethlehem bus idea; She thought it was a great idea and the next step is to be in touch with Risk management.
 - Joey will be in touch with Sodexo to talk about the Ramen machine idea
 - C. Campus Engagement**
 - The committee met with MESA last week during their meeting and further discussion is happening today
 - D. DEI&B**

- TATB went really well and we are looking forward to potentially having it again next semester
- We set out invites to admin inviting them to the diversity dinner

E. Institutional Committees

- Skipped in interest of time

F. AD-HOCs

- Skipped in interest of time

G. Recording Secretary

- Please be respectful of constituents, and be attentive

H. Director of Communications

- There is a request from staff of the Trexler Library for members of SGA to apply for a Student Advisory Board that is spearheaded by the library so please see the Groupme for more information
- OCE asked for our participation in Winter Spectacular so please check the GroupMe for more information

I. President

- We met with the alumni board to give them a recap of what we are up to this year
- We are exploring new communication options with SGA, as Groupme is not the most effective way to communicate
- The executive board is going to a conference with other Lehigh Valley Colleges and we plan on bringing back ideas from that as well
- We are holding a special election and voting opens at 7pm this evening
- MULE-A-THON is ramping up, please sign up and support!

VII. New Business

VIII. (R stands for a comment made by a representative, C stands for a comment made by a constituent)

A. HRL and JED Discussion

- Substance Free Housing Proposal presented by Karmen, Natalie, and Ashley
- Last year, Muhlenberg worked with JED which is a foundation based in NYC that helps with emotional health
- Substance Free Housing can be in three formats; students commit to a substance free lifestyle but when overage they could partake in drinking outside the community, they would still not bring that into the living community.
- The highest level is a full recovery program for students to get help recovering from different addictions
- The middle is a mesh between the both, and it could potentially look like that 100 students are open to the idea of substance free housing
- Muhlenberg also did some benchmarking with colleges including Drexel and Rutgers
- At this point, HRI is at the stages of creating a proposal for Substance Free housing
- The goal of substance free housing is to provide a space that is free from the presence of substances so that students can focus on their health, well-being, and academic pursuits while at the college
- The organizational structure would count as a TRAC community in HRL so it gets support from the college directly with a faculty or staff advisor

- Within the TRAC community, there will also be designate programs that happen each semester, and there will also be opportunities for student leadership(community leader)
- There will be an RA who is present and overseeing the students living in the Substance free community
- In terms of TRAC, it is Themed Residential Academic Communities
- In terms of location, it needs to be flushed out whether it be a combined community including 1st year students, or potentially separating 1st year students and upperclassmen
- HRL wants to make sure that their is large-scale program for students who are living within the TRAC community
- HRL would want to revamp their website to ensure that students are able to find this information and that it is accessible; There is also potential for partnership for working with other LVAIC schools in the valley
- They also would like to be able to provide a peer led wellness group for students.
- What are SGA'S thoughts on 1st year community specifically or a combined community for all class years
- R: As far as being substance-free, would that be on an honor code system or a room check system?
- There would be a substance free housing addendum for those residents to sign and then there would be a process for dealing with anyone who broke their agreement
- R: If the first year community were to take place, how would HRL navigate the planning process of floors.

- Those interested are hoping for a top level of a building so that anyone who was not in the housing would not be walking through the area of residents while under the influence.
- R: There is confusion amongst the 1st year element of it as 1st year students are not 21
- C: There is an understanding that after the closure of ML, Brown and East are the most affordable? If there are students who want to live in housing with substance, would they be forced to live in housing that would be more expensive?
- By number this would allow everything to even out because of 3% flex policy
- Housing is able to hold about 2000 people if ML was including on the potential housing options for students on campus
- R: So this is based on an interest application, how do you do the review and prioritize each student?
- This is something that would be institutionally driven and every year this community would happen, and the change over from year to year would be based off location and students who are potentially interested
- There is mixed reaction as to whether this communities should be separate or combined class year(meaning just 1st year or upperclassmen)
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B. MESA Discussion and Vote

- R: Structurally, MESA will have as long as they need to give their pitch. Following that, we will have a strict 10 minutes of questions. Comments and questions will be limited to 30 seconds

- R: We will be taking ONLY TWO questions related to the Instagram post. Please do your best not to repeat anything
- Ellen: We do this process because the only thing SGA is looking at if they meet the THREE requirements to be a registered student organization at Muhlenberg College: The club needs to originate from the interest of at least four students, It must be open to all students (which is different from does it represent all students) and finally whether or not SGA is able to financially support that organization.
- C: MESA is here to create an affinity group for all underrepresented Middle Eastern Students. They are promoted to create a sense of unity and a peaceful environment for all students. MESA is open to all students who are interested in learning about the underrepresented middle eastern culture. Affinity groups should be a safe space for students on Muhlenberg's campus. They are asking for an affinity group so students can share in the appreciation and understanding of Middle Eastern culture. The four of them wanted to start a Middle Eastern Student Association which is not currently a space that is provided for them on this campus. MESA is open to every single student on campus who is interested in learning about their culture, heritage and traditions. MESA is looking to have different cultural fundraisers including having speakers and any type of events. They are not here to fight, and they want to teach people about Middle Eastern Culture. This club is not about political events, it is about education of current events and providing a space for community and culture to be shared. As a Muhlenberg Community, we are supposed to respect differences on our campus.

- Campus Engagement Recommendation: For those not present at last week's campus engagement meeting, our committee and other members of SGA and the student body met with MESA in order to help alleviate any lingering confusion that was present during club approvals. MESA made the helpful clarification that while they are open and welcoming to the entire student body, their specific goal is to be a safe space for under-represented middle eastern students on campus. They have updated their instagram to reflect this change as well. In General Assembly, it is helpful to have meaningful discourse and ask questions before voting, however the meeting last week ended up getting to a point where no one felt that they were being heard or seen. After talking to MESA it's evident that this is an organization that provides a necessary space that is greatly beneficial to the campus community, and we, as a committee, recommend that we do approve this vote.
- R: Can you reiterate any financial expenses that you are expecting to have?
- C: They do not have anything scheduled at the moment but their biggest expense would be to buy supplies for fundraisers.
- R: What are you planning on fundraising for?
- C: They are looking to fundraise for a wide range of things
- C: Since you are planning to be the Middle Eastern Student Association do you plan on being inclusive of ALL identities?
- C: They plan on representing and including ALL STUDENTS
- R: The finance committee provides seed money for fundraisers so that they can use that money to kickstart their fundraising, and then pay it back.

- C: Given that part of their mission statement was to represent underrepresented middle eastern students, would they be open to every identity on campus
- C: Yes, they plan on being open to all students on campus
- C: What is their mission statement in terms of Muhlenberg College
- C: They plan on representing all students
- C: Do you serve as the Middle Eastern Student Association, or the Arab Student Association?
- C: They are the middle Eastern student association, because not all students from that geographical area identify as Arab and there are a multitude of identities in the Middle East
- C: What do they classify as underrepresented or overrepresented groups?
- C: The people presenting the club felt as their culture were not represented and they want to be a space where all clubs are represented
- C: Because of the history of the club and the region, do they have planned ways to mitigate conflict within the club discussions?
- C: In terms of mitigating conflict, they want to be a safe space for all people to have civil discussions. This is not a place to hate, they just want peace.
- R: Underrepresented can also be underrepresented on this campus. We need to consider the value of providing safe spaces for all of the students on this campus?
- C: As a Jewish leader on campus, as a population, we are worried about anti-semitism, will they stand against anti-semitism in their club?

- C: They serve as space for everyone and they do condemn anti-semitism, racism and islamophobia
- R: This is an affinity group which serves as a Home to these students and if this particular political issue was not such a large factor we would not be debating this to the same regard so we need to make sure that we are not being unfair or treating them differently due to the current political climate of the rest of the world.
- C: A group of students in the constituency stand with the Executive Board of MESA.
- R: This club has been in the works since September correct, before the political conflict came into the public media?
- C: Yes. During their FYS, they were further reminded that this is a club that is very needed at this school and were helped in the steps of then further creating that club.
- **CLUB APPROVAL VOTE: PASSES**

C. Special Election Speeches

- Rachel Alexander (she/her) '25
- Ben Allan (he/him) '25
- Juliette Amram (she/her) '27
- Josephine Glass (she/her) '27
- Ben Hennig (he/him) '26
- Shanjin Howlader (she/her) '27
- Robbie Kohn (he/him) '27
- Emmy Lin (she/her) '26
- Max Makovsky (he/him) '24
- Jason Rackas (he/him) '26

IX. Adjournment

Cursor Parking Lot!

Click in one of these "parking spaces" so that your cursor stays here and out of the way during the meeting

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