

STUDENT SENATE MINUTES
February 5th, 2019

The Senate President called the Senate meeting to order at 7:30pm and announced that the meeting may be filmed or audio recorded and may be available to the public. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ROLL CALL:

Roll was called and quorum was established with 85 senators present.

Not there for roll call:

- Chhaged
- Cornair
- Evans
- Girschick
- Kaur
- Lima
- Randhawa
- Sangha
- Wright
- Yoss

AMENDMENTS TO THE MINUTES:

- There were none.

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA:

- Chairman Sandifer Moves to approve Student Senate Bill 2019-1019: Resolution Supporting the People of Cuba and Gators Affected by the Tornado in Havana, Cuba by unanimous consent. Approved.
- Chairman Sandifer Moves to approve Student Senate Bill 2019-1020: Resolution Recognizing the Installment of Juan Guaidó as Interim President of Venezuela by unanimous consent. Objected. Will be heard during first reading.
- Chairman Sandifer Moves to approve Student Senate Bill 2019-1021 Student Body Resolution Supporting the Permanent Funding of More Disability Resource Center Learning Specialists by unanimous consent. Approved.
- Chairman Hurdle moves to hear the approved absence petitions as a block by unanimous consent. Approved.
 - Motion to approve the aforementioned block by unanimous consent. Approved.
- Chairman Hurdle moves to hear the failed absence petitions as a block by unanimous consent. Approved.
 - Motion to approve the aforementioned block by unanimous consent. Approved.

PUBLIC DEBATE:

- Chairman Sandifer:
 - Over the weekend, the Judiciary Committee heard many different pieces of legislation, including one related to de-funding the University endowment to coal and fossil fuels, and reallocating that to renewable methods.

- Ultimately thought further resolution explanation was necessary, therefore the committee tabled the resolution.
 - Will be coordinating a meeting with representatives from the Vice President's office to learn more about this initiative.
 - Would work in coordination with Divest UF.
 - Contact Chairman Sandifer with any questions.
- Minority Party Leader Gatos:
 - Expresses that the Inspire Caucus does not endorse Senator Zelin's objection to Student Senate Bill 2019-1020: Resolution Recognizing the Installment of Juan Guaidó as Interim President of Venezuela.
 - The Inspire Caucus does however support the democracy of the party.
 - It is important to know that Senator Zelin is free to vote however way he pleases.
- Senator Zelin:
 - Reiterates Minority Party Leader Gatos sentiments of that Inspire Caucus is not endorsing Senator Zelin's objection to this legislation.
 - Will serve as these people's spokesman (referring to those who are here to protest Student Senate Bill 2019-1020: Resolution Recognizing the Installment of Juan Guaidó as Interim President of Venezuela).
 - Believes the bill ties a political ideology to the Senate and student body, in which he thought that endorsing leaders internationally was strictly off limits in the chamber.
 - Is not comfortable voting on a resolution that "oversteps" these previous stipulations.
 - Stands in solidarity with anyone that has been directly or indirectly affected by the discord in Venezuela.
 - Believes Student Senate does not have any position in taking a side regarding the hotly debated political state of Venezuela.
 - Hopes that there will be a diplomatic and peaceful resolution to this conflict.
 - Says that his objection will not be followed by a "Pro-Con" debate.
 - Encourages everyone to consider these implications, and pass a resolution that supports Venezuelan students.
- Jonathan Settle:
 - Presents a PowerPoint presentation regarding problems found within Student Senate Bill 2019-1020: Resolution Recognizing the Installment of Juan Guaidó as Interim President of Venezuela.
 - Wishes to go clause by clause in hopes of helping the chamber realize how politically charged the legislation is.
 - Presents a housing affordability index, showing that riots were occurring in places where people not as "better off."
 - Says that extreme poverty has fallen since 1998, as well as other points signifying an improvement in life in Venezuela, in support of the Maduro administration.
 - Notes that food deficit is not abnormal in Venezuela.
 - Notes that the bill does not talk about the United States' sanctions.
- Alan Gadze:
 - "How many sheep does it take to screw in a lightbulb?"
 - Asks senators who have served less than 1 year to raise their hands.

- Asks the preceding question to those senators who have served longer than a year.
- Expresses his thoughts toward passing Student Senate Bill 2019-1020: Resolution Recognizing the Installment of Juan Guaidó as Interim President of Venezuela.
 - Remarks that the Student Senate have no business deciding foreign leaders.
- Being on the wrong side of history is not a good thing.
- Believes that the senators should not be voting favorably on something because they are told to.
- Asks, “Are you an independent thinking Gator?”
- David Johnson:
 - Mentions Elliott Abrams, who pled guilty for illegally funding a right-wing terrorist group in Nicaragua aimed at civilians
 - Believes that the Trump Administration is using this crisis in Venezuela to tap into oil fields.
 - The Student Government’s proposal has violent implications.
- Juan Fospelhas:
 - Speaks about instances in which the U.S. has interfered with Latin American and Caribbean countries.
 - Since the founding of the United States, there has been constant interference by the United States, including the acquisition of Puerto Rico, involvement in Panama, interfering in Haiti multiple times, the Cuban Revolution in 1951 and many more instances leading into present day.
- Omar Omar
 - Starts by saying that today would have been Trayvon Martin’s 24th birthday.
 - Recognizes himself as “President of the Student Government.”
 - Hypothetically request munitions from Florida State University due to the “monopolization” of Student Government currently.
 - Finds Inspire Caucus’s actions “morally repugnant.”
 - Is disappointed in Student Government’s stance on this issue.
 - Asks why stances are not being taken in other crises around the world.
 - Says that when Omar was here previously to speak on topics he was passionate about, the Student Senate was “silent” when he pleaded for some statement against a fascist movement, in which had a direct impact on his life.
 - Will not forget this event.
 - Is not proud to be Gator.
 - “Have you learned from 2003?”
 - No good has ever come from United States intervention.
 - Asks why people cannot think for themselves.
- Dean Jean
 - Believed when he first heard, Student Senate Bill 2019-1020: Resolution Recognizing the Installment of Juan Guaidó as Interim President of Venezuela, he thought it was a joke.
 - The false propagation of Guaido is an insane issue all-its-own.
 - “Maduro was elected on what election officials deemed a fair election.”
 - A good amount of Venezuelan students actively support Maduro.

- Their voices are being silenced by people who are getting their news from headlines.
 - Says that Student Government alienates people of color.
 - “Stay out of Venezuela.”
 - “Stay out of Latin America.”
- Alex Chain:
 - Prefaces that he is of Colombian descent, with Venezuelan family.
 - Does not believe that this is the means to acknowledge such a humanitarian crisis as that in Venezuela right now.
 - States that he does not believe in Student Government and states that he believes Student Government does very little to truly help students on campus.
 - Believes that very few people on this campus believe in Student Government as well.
 - They do “Token” efforts to bring in voters.
 - Says that Guaido does not want Student Government’s endorsement.
 - “Who do you think you are?”
 - “Expects this” from the Impact party.
- James Morgan:
 - “If Russia, China, and North Korea decided to write a resolution identifying Hilary Clinton as president, would Student Government write a resolution supporting this?”
 - Student Government said that the Richard Spencer incident was not in their power to do something, yet they think they can decide who should be Venezuela’s president.
 - John Bolton has openly talked about this issue being a “big business” opportunity.
 - These people are not here to defend a democracy.
 - 84% of Venezuelans are against American Intervention.
 - This is about whether or not you want America to continue South American intervention.
 - Urges people to vote against this resolution.
- Spice Spiegel:
 - Reads a peer-reviewed article titled, “Manufacturing Consent in the 2018 Elections of Venezuela and Colombia.”
 - Addressing election results, media, and other things.
 - Asks people where “they get their news from.”
 - Shares concerns with reporters writing about Venezuela who cannot even speak Spanish.
 - A selection bias is present throughout the United States media.
- Nicola Garibaldi:
 - Did not come here to convince anyone tonight.
 - Believes that the senators’ minds have already been made up.
 - The problem with the Maduro regime is that “it didn’t go far enough.”
 - If you want change, “that’s is what is coming.”
 - “You are not going to like it at all.”
 - Not everyone in the U.S. are in favor of military intervention.
 - Asks what Venezuelans the senators are listening to.

- Says that every time a coo has risen, it has been crushed by the working class of Venezuela.
- Victory will come from the working people of Venezuela, the workers of the world.
- “You know what side you are on.”
- “We cannot let this motion pass tonight.”
- “As my comrade says, ‘who are you?’”
- “You are supporting this resolution because of the evil things that the U.S. does to other countries.”
- “I’m just going to keep talking.”
- “We are not going to leave quietly.”

Garabaldi and others refuse to leave the podium during public debate, after he refused to yield his expired time. Senate President Murphy entertains a motion. There was a motion for a 15 minute recess in the Senate Chamber. Motion is seconded. In the eyes of the chair, recess is granted.

Senate President Murphy calls the meeting back to order at 8:45pm.

ROLL CALL:

Roll was called again, and quorum was reestablished with 85 senators present.

Not there for roll call:

- Chhaged
- Cornair
- Evans
- Girschick
- Kaur
- Lima
- Randhawa
- Sangha
- Schulte
- Wright
- Yoss

PUBLIC DEBATE CONTINUED:

- Alfredo Ortiz:
 - States that he endorses Senator Zelin’s objection to Student Senate Bill 2019-1020 Resolution Recognizing the Installment of Juan Guaidó as Interim President of Venezuela.
 - Commends Senator Zelin for upholding his responsibility to his constituents.
 - States that Minority Party Leader Gatos has been instrumental in helping Puerto Rican freshman.
 - Expresses that he is grateful to Minority Party Leader Gatos, Senator Beltran, Chairwoman Hernandez, and both the Inspire and Impact party for their help in support Puerto Rican students and the waiver.

- Expresses that he cannot stand in favor of the resolution that is being discussed, Student Senate Bill 2019-1020.
- Would like to speak on the topic of Puerto Rico and the effects of Hurricane Maria.
 - “Found it incredible” that after Hurricanes Irma and Harvey, there were Facebook pages created to help students and inform them on what they could do to receive financial aid.
 - States that no such thing was done for the victims of Hurricane Maria.
 - Victims of Hurricane Maria received a “discrete” email, and some did not receive the email at all. States that some students had to find out about the waiver through secondhand sources.
 - Would like to petition that the same amount of importance and respect is placed upon Puerto Rican, especially those who were present for a “living nightmare” such as Hurricane Maria.
- States that two days after the government shutdown, aid was immediately extended for those who needed it, however, the same importance was not placed upon those who experienced and were dealing with the effects of a Category 5 hurricane.
- “The effects of a Category 5 hurricane does not compare to a government shutdown”
- As previously stated in another Senate meeting, Puerto Rico will be dealing with effects of Hurricane Maria for 40 years.
- Believes something must be done to help those Puerto Rican students receive the financial aid that they deserve, but also “desperately need”.
- Feels as though the Student body should pass resolutions helping Puerto Rican students until results have been achieved.
- Jesse Cosme:
 - States that he found out about the hearing of Student Senate Bill 2019-1020 Resolution Recognizing the Installment of Juan Guaidó as Interim President of Venezuela yesterday, and admits that he is very emotional.
 - Expresses that he greatly sympathizes with “his Latin American brothers and sisters”.
 - States that Latin American is going through a very hard time, across the board.
 - Was president of the Puerto Rican Student Group as an undergraduate student, and has continued to hold those ties even as a graduate student.
 - Was “confused” when he saw WEPA’s name on the endorsement.
 - Does not understand why it is thought that U.S. intervention in any matter could help the situation.
 - Believes that what Alfredo Ortiz spoke about is very important.
 - States there is a level of convenience that comes with Student Senate Bill 2019-1020 Resolution Recognizing the Installment of Juan Guaidó as Interim President of Venezuela.
 - “Admonishing a socialist regime, in a lot of ways, is very politically convenient in the United States.”
 - States that it was not politically convenient to “admonish the people who failed to deliver aid in Puerto Rico”.

- Asks the people of the chamber to reflect on why they are doing this.
- States that if you want to stand in solidarity with the people of Venezuela, you must be accurate with your language.
- Points out flaws within the resolution, stating that some of the things cited have not yet happened.
- Will fully support a resolution that stands in solidarity with the Venezuelan people.
- Describes what life is like for indigenous people who have chosen not to partake in the capitalist ways of the United States.
- “Where is the resolution for them?”
- Asks the chamber to think about topics like this, be careful with language, and pay attention.
- Senator Witte:
 - Would like to thank those who have worked on Student Senate Bill 2019-1021 Student Body Resolution Supporting the Permanent Funding of More Disability Resource Center Learning Specialists
 - Describes why this resolution was so important to those who depend on the DRC.
 - Thanks everyone who voted to pass the piece of legislation.
 - Thanks Senator Meyer and Senator Rhodes, as they were instrumental in gaining awareness for the DRC.
 - Thanks Chairman Sandifer for standing behind Student Senate Bill 2019-1021 Student Body Resolution Supporting the Permanent Funding of More Disability Resource Center Learning Specialists at the Judiciary Committee meeting.
 - States that there is an excuse to party on a Tuesday due to the Chinese New Year.
- Falisha Kurji:
 - Member of Divest UF.
 - Divest UF is a group of people advocating for divestment from fossil fuels to renewable energy.
 - Believes that UF should be investing in students’ futures and not the industries that threaten our future.
 - Introduced a resolution that would call action to UF participating in divestment.
 - After hearing Chairman Sandifer’s comments on why the resolution was tabled, and would like to explain an endowment.
 - States that 3% of the endowment is invested in oil companies
 - 3% of \$1.9 billion is \$57 million.
 - The UF Foundation and UF ICO manage this endowment.
 - It is immoral to invest in fossil fuels corporations.
 -
- Senator Calzon:
 - Mentions resolution she will be writing on Women’s History Month.
 - If anyone is wanting to help in anyway, see Senator Calzon after the meeting.
- Senator Perez:
 - First in line of a many students from the Hispanic caucus to speak.
 - The UN Commissioner for Human Rights casted doubt on this past election in Venezuela.
 - The UN confirmed 5.9 million Venezuelans have fled the country.

- This current (Maduro) administration has incited so many destructive riots that so many people have fled from the country in response.
 - Riots that have, “literally burned to the street my Dad’s neighborhood in Caracas.”
- This resolution does not call for a military intervention of the country.
 - This resolution supports the opposition of a fraudulent election.
- The overwhelming majority of Venezuelans do not stand with this regime.
- Senator Beltran:
 - States that she is President of WEPA.
 - Does not represent all people on this resolution.
 - Other resolutions that have been approved in the past support these claims in Student Senate Bill 2019-1020: Resolution Recognizing the Installment of Juan Guaidó as Interim President of Venezuela.
 - The resolutions have shown support of Venezuelans, not military intervention.
 - Not only the United States have supported this interim president, but other Latin American countries have as well.
 - Notes that the president Venezuelan Student Association has expressed support of Guaido.
- Senator Diaz:
 - Inspire senator for District D.
 - Is a sponsor of Student Senate Bill 2019-1020: Resolution Recognizing the Installment of Juan Guaidó as Interim President of Venezuela.
 - Stands in solidarity with those who are suffering from this crisis in Venezuela.
 - In an effort to be democratic, encourages those who oppose this bill to have a conversation with Senator Diaz after the meeting.
- Senator Leyva:
 - States that Juan Guaidó holds the “interim” President role, not the permanent Presidential role.
 - We are advocating for the student body and the world whole, who stands for democracy.
 - States that Maduro was in direct violation with the Venezuelan constitution.
 - Not calling for military intervention.
 - Is asking for freedom of speech and press.
 - This resolution expresses that the University of Florida expresses the support of a transparent democracy.
- Senator Rangel:
 - Speaks on behalf of Student Senate Bill 2019-1020: Resolution Recognizing the Installment of Juan Guaidó as Interim President of Venezuela.
 - This resolution addresses the geopolitical climate of Venezuela.
 - This is not the first time that the Student Senate has passed legislation supporting Venezuelans both on campus and off campus.
 - Polls have shown that of 1,008 responses, only one was in favor of the Maduro regime.
 - Does not support the government because it is a dictatorship.
 - Has family testimonies that lead to this stance on Venezuela.

- \$3 billion in humanitarian aid is waiting at a border that has been militarized from entry.
- States that food is being given in exchange for votes for Maduro.
- Senator Haydar:
 - Not here to speak from an ideological corner, or from his personal political beliefs.
 - The reality of the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela does not warrant a debate of this issue.
 - Gives a quick history of Venezuela and how the country has reached its current state.
 - An illegitimate branch of government cannot call for a legitimate election.

*****If you wish to hear any speeches given during public debate please request the recordings from senatesecretary@sg.ufl.edu*****

VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Student Body Vice President David Enriquez:

- Originally came here tonight to briefing the Senate on the cabinet’s agenda.
- The issue is not a political issue. This is a humanitarian issue.
- The Venezuelans know their history.
- We have heard an agenda that ignores the cry of the people.
- “We do not only respond to public consensus, we mold public consensus.”
 - Because this is a moral issue.
 - It is the right thing to do.
- This has everything to do with the fact that a dictatorship is wrong.
- Am saddened that some Gators do not stand with the Venezuelans.
- “Democracy is worth fighting for.”
- “Venezuela will be free. And it starts in each and every one of our hearts.”

SENATE PRESIDENT’S REPORT:

- In consideration of everyone’s time, Senate President Murphy does not have a report.
- Wishes to have a debate in first reading.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

REPLACEMENT & AGENDA:

- Senate President Pro-Tempore Shaw welcomes the senators.
- Open Seats:
 - Medicine
 - Vet Med
 - Nursing
 - Graduate and Family Housing
 - Business (will be no more interviews for this seat)
- Applications will be due Friday, February 8th at 12:00pm.
- Women’s Caucus meeting after the meeting.

BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS:

- Budget Committee will be meeting this week, time is unknown as of now
- No further report.

ALLOCATIONS:

- No report.

JUDICIARY:

- No report.

RULES & ETHICS:

- No report.

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION:

- Will be handing out SG polos after the meeting.
- No further report.

SECOND READING

There were none.

FIRST READING:

Student Senate Bill 2019-1020 Resolution Recognizing the Installment of Juan Guaidó as Interim President of Venezuela.

5 minutes of Presentation from the authors of the legislation.

- This resolution is to stand in solidarity for students affected by this crisis, not only on this campus.
- In 2018, President Maduro of Venezuela unconstitutionally and illegitimately held an election, and in turn there is an interim President currently, who is Juan Guaidó.
- Asks everyone to go to a Venezuelan Student Association meeting to hear these accounts.

First Round of Non-Debatable Technical Questions:

- Senator: Is the information in the second “Whereas” clause correct and accurate?
- Chairwoman Hernandez: All information in the resolution is correct and accurate. Willing to show Google Docs with all cited articles.

First Round of Con:

- There was none.

First Round of Pro:

- Senator Diaz: Today, we have seen an extreme amount of opposition, asks to look to at the facts of the case and make one’s own opinion.
- Minority Party Leader Gatos: Wants to reflect that the Inspire Caucus stands with Venezuelans.

- Chairwoman Dunson: Thanks those who came to state their opinions on this matter.
- Senator Calvin: Refers to the Allies' decision to not intervene to liberate Auschwitz during World War II. Uses this example to explain that sometimes America can do a lot more, and that people must make a moral decision. Thinks that this is the right decision to make.
- Senator: This legislation is for democracy, not military intervention.

In a vote 82 to 2, Student Senate Bill 2019-1020 Resolution Recognizing the Installment of Juan Guaidó as Interim President of Venezuela passes.

BILLS PENDING SIGNATURES:

There were none.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Senator Beltran:
 - Thanks everyone who voted to pass the Student Senate Bill 2019-1020 Resolution Recognizing the Installment of Juan Guaidó as Interim President of Venezuela
 - HSA election nominations and GBM will be held this Thursday from 7-9pm.
- Senator:
 - Gator Growl Applications for directors are due this Friday.
- Senator Pearson:
 - There is currently a group of UF students planning a freshman retreat in the upcoming fall semester.
 - Will be a three-day retreat in August.
 - If interested in becoming a counselor, please see Senator Pearson for the application or with any questions.
- Senator Diaz:
 - Florida Political Review will have a GBM on Thursday.
- Senator:
 - States that it is very nice to see so much support within the chamber.
 - Alpha Chi Omega will be hosting their annual philanthropy event, Purple Rain, on Wednesday.
 - It is a dodgeball tournament helping to raise awareness and aid to domestic violence issues.
- Senator:
 - There is an orchestra concert this Thursday at 7:30pm in the University Auditorium.
- Senator Calvin:
 - Less than 24 hours left to request an absentee ballot for upcoming Student Government election.
- Minority Party Leader Gatos:
 - Thanks everyone for coming out to the Senate meeting.
 - Will be releasing information in the upcoming months about student organization award ceremony.
- Senator:
 - The BIG Event is March 16th, 2019.

- Looking to make a Senate team for the event.

ROLL CALL:

- A motion to use voting records for final roll call by unanimous consent. Approved.

ADJOURNMENT:

- The meeting was adjourned at 9:47 pm.