

St. Norbert College

Student Government Association



Minutes of the General Assembly

October 18th, 2021

9:00pm, Mulva Library Room 218

Call to Order by Executive Board (9:00)

Land Acknowledgement Statement (Oliver Dressel)

Attendance (Porter Beilfuss)

Helen Bui absent

Andrea Fuentes absent

Welcome to the Vice President of Student Affairs, Dr. Joseph Webb

Started in his new role in July, from Pittsburg Pennsylvania. Worked at Penn State Burks previously before arriving at our institution. Very excited to be here on campus, formally introduce himself to our organization, do not hesitate to reach out to him. Engage with many students on campus, understand the culture on campus, the work that SGA is doing. ADvancing our work moving forward. Looking to put together class initiatives, for each class an engaging activity. Enhance their educational experience as a cohort. Work with each of the class reps to put on programs, events, etc. One of the things they are looking to do is a welcome back activity for each class NEXT fall. This spring they plan to work with each one of the class reps to plan. Send an email out to the class to vote on leading activity. Many more parts, but a brief synopsis. Grateful to be here at our meeting.

Motion to move on to new business by Hess. Seconded by Beilfuss. None opposed.

New business (9:10)

SAFAC Surplus Fund - SGA Project (Molly Freye & Helen Bui)

Possible ideas, example of "maintenance-less" investments

John Seckel at the Campus Center is in charge of the SAFAC funds. Accumulated due to students being sent home for COVID pandemic. It is a lot of money to use. \$100,000 for the student government association to use. NEEDS to benefit the entire student body, cannot be something that requires maintenance. In the past, a surplus of money has been used for the walkway between Sensenbrenner and Main Hall (brick walkway). This does not require much yearly maintenance, other than clearing in the winter. Many ideas have been proposed by members. Possible ideas include: a new walkway by the Norbert of Xanten statue by Cofrin Hall, since many water puddles gather there in heavy rain. Another idea is a new program for the LSE office that will generate data, track events, and help student orgs. Also, increase seating in Phil's. OR possible new parking lot for students. Other ideas; ice rink in the winter for students to use. Or possible endowment for a counselor of color on campus. A counselor in the Counseling & Psychological Services department.

--

We would like everyone to think about this money and proper uses for it. What would you like to see? What would students like to see? We would like this money to go towards something in the next month. It is for SGA's use and SGA's use only... student money that will go towards the student body. Be intentional

In the spirit of the Norbertine value of *stabilitas loci*, a deep commitment to the local community, we acknowledge this land as the ancestral home of the Menominee nation, which holds historical, cultural, and sacred significance to the community. We acknowledge the living history and contributions of the indigenous communities that inhabited this land prior to the establishment of St. Norbert College, as well as the sovereign Native American Nations who continue to contribute to the flourishing of our communities.

on how you bring up this surplus fund to students. Be transparent, but open to new ideas, and no empty promises.

Webb: Would it be possible to set up a possible request form for student organizations/clubs to submit?

Freye: A system already exists (the SAFAC fund) ; in this case it is unspent SAFAC dollars, collected over the years but especially piled up the last couple of years

Goddard: An opportunity for something big to happen, the use of the money to be spent on something that usually does not occur. An opportunity to do something BIG! Are there outdoor spaces that you have seen on other campuses that could be used here? Have you seen any furniture that needs to be replaced in classrooms?

B. Tully: possibly something behind GMS in the field area, since it is an open area.

Freye: A possible river walk down along the river - but what could the maintenance costs of that be?

Gonnering: We could think smaller and accomplish a lot more, instead of one big project.

Dutton: How much money is accumulated in this account each year?

Freye: I am not sure how much, but my guess is 40K. The last two years have been a big stockpile since many events have been limited due to the pandemic.

Dutton: Can we start something larger now, and possibly continue the funds in coming years towards this larger project?

Dressel: Majority of the fund is spent each year, each semester students pay \$75. We need to be careful not to budget away future SAFAC funds from students in coming years.

Beilfuss: I feel that some of these ideas should not be the student surplus fee paying for them anyway, such as new furniture or a new parking lot. That should be money budgeted by the college and should not be paid for by a surplus account for student life.

Thomas: How do we know what the college plans to budget for, and what students should contribute?

Freye: We need to have a conversation about what buildings the college plans to invest in. It is in our realm, but we need to see if the college has it in their plans. An email should be coming forth soon.

Gonnering: Motion to move forward. Seconded by Allen. None opposed.

Letters to the Student Body (Molly Freye)

Freye: We are working against all of these issues on campus together. Two separate letters to address to the student body. Two separate battles. I would like to have the SGA compose two letters.

- 1) Board of Trustees Information
- 2) Sexual Assault Resources & Support

Each committee please share out 2-3 sentences of what you heard, and will be shared out to the student body. Students can understand that the BoT is not a stereotypical image of white men in a room. Need clarification around recent elections and how the recent elections took place. What happened and what will happen going forward. NEED students to have correct information, dispel any misinformation. Second letter will be from the Sexual Assault Task Force, aimed at recent sexual assaults on campus. Cannot know locations due to the privacy of the survivor. What is SGA doing to actively provide resources and have open communication for students to talk to us.

Beilfuss: I move to open the floor for discussion. Seconded by Gonnering.

Allen: I believe this would work great to dispel any misinformation.

Gonnering: With the letters, how do we want to break it down?

Freye: One of the things the committee members of the BoT did before our meetings was meet with Julie Massey. Fr. Jay Fostner was a former priest who was a former VP of the college. Under allegations against his sweeping of Title IX cases under the rug at the college. Was not accused on the SNC campus of being an abuser. His position was removed in 2019, is no longer an employee of the college.

The BoT can have a max capacity of 45 members. The Norbertines need to have 20-30% representation among the BoT members. The Norbertines appoint or elect the new priests they would like on the BoT.

Not the BoT who elected Fr. Jay back to the board, but the Norbertine Order.

In the spirit of the Norbertine value of *stabilitas loci*, a deep commitment to the local community, we acknowledge this land as the ancestral home of the Menominee nation, which holds historical, cultural, and sacred significance to the community. We acknowledge the living history and contributions of the indigenous communities that inhabited this land prior to the establishment of St. Norbert College, as well as the sovereign Native American Nations who continue to contribute to the flourishing of our communities.

Very ambiguous among the student body, but it is clear we are fighting for victims and survivors of sexual assault, not against Fr. Jay. Need to clarify this among the student body so they know the correct information. Moving on to the next letter...

Gonnering: I agree it is a good idea for this to be put out. Right now REH is putting on something that students are required to attend in regards to . Also an email from the President's Cabinet. Are students getting TOO much information and email overload?

Freye: RA's and upperclassmen RA's need to hold a meeting for their residents to provide resources in response to what happened. Reaffirming what has happened on campus and handing out pamphlets. I think it is important that students know that the peers they elected care and support them. We have to keep this momentum going and can't stop the communication now. Students need to drive this home, we are the ones that can make a difference. We are the ones who create the culture and verbally state this is the culture that we want. I am biased in this regard, for I am very passionate about this topic.

Hess: I caused a minor stir in my BoT meeting. I had a two hour meeting with Fr. Matt today on campus. I asked him very blatantly why the election is how it is. He made it clear how everyone voted for Fr. Jay. On that note, he wanted everyone to know that because of the makeup of the Norbertines there exists a very large population of very old Norbertine men who support Fr. Jay, that is how he ended up back on the board. A few years ago an internal investigation occurred at the Abbey, which proved to be not credible. That is the information he wanted us to know.

Dressel: Any more questions on this matter?

Freye: If anyone would like to help with these letters, the Sexual Assault Group will be responsible for the second, the Executive Board for the first letter. Let us know if you would like to contribute. We are hoping the GA will sign these letters. We will vote as a GA before the letter is sent out.

Hess: Motion to move on in the agenda. Seconded by Beilfuss. None opposed.

Project Task Spreadsheet - Better Communication (Porter Beilfuss)

Helping us track accomplishments and provide updates to student body

In the shared drive, please edit this as you complete your task force work.

Gonnering: We did have our first meeting with the Student Opinion Survey Force. Looking for us to provide questions for this survey.

Freye: Can we complete a Google form so that everything goes towards your team.

Dressel: Who will complete the form?

Gonnering: The task force. Jonathan Contreras chair of the committee.

Hess: I motion to move forward. Seconded by Beilfuss. None opposed.

Committee & Task Force Updates (9:35)

Board of Trustees Fall 2021

Enrollment Management Committee (Bella Jansen & Aaron Gonnering)

Gonnering: On the admissions side of things, they recapped our enrollment for this year. We came in at 624 students, 579 deposits, our goal was 560 students in the first year class. With international/transfer students we brought it up to a bigger number. Meltdown lost a few from June until now. The melt rate is 10%, the US rate is 12.5%. Definitely retaining more students than other colleges in the country. They did go over some net tuition comparison for students throughout the years. Numbers are on an uptrend, as we know. They talked about website design.

Jansen: They talked about the new design of the website, it is updated at this point. Hard for prospective students to find what they are looking for. Again, trying to make things sleek, easy to find. Going through webpage by webpage, the college started with the athletics department.

In the spirit of the Norbertine value of *stabilitas loci*, a deep commitment to the local community, we acknowledge this land as the ancestral home of the Menominee nation, which holds historical, cultural, and sacred significance to the community. We acknowledge the living history and contributions of the indigenous communities that inhabited this land prior to the establishment of St. Norbert College, as well as the sovereign Native American Nations who continue to contribute to the flourishing of our communities.

Gonnering: Looking for student recommendations, gander at the site, let Nina Rouse know in the office of communications. They are also looking at bringing the whole hub of everything together (Intranet) to put all the platforms together in one. Campus Groups is the provider of this “hub”.

Mission and Heritage Committee (Jon Hess & Oliver Dressel)

Hess: The meeting was an hour and a half long. Is this campus Catholic enough? They used some statistics used in 2019 of the senior class, 38.5% identified Catholic, reported 50% participation in the survey. The number was offset slightly by people who are shifting into different religions. We mentioned the statistics seemed somewhat shoddy, and did not have enough input from seniors. Disagreement that the campus needs to be more Catholic, or that we need more enthusiastic Catholic professors/faculty. They propose all of the classes should be seen through a Catholic lens. Want the Catholic viewpoint to be the first viewpoint that students see.

Dressel: This was the Mission & Heritage Committee, this is where the discussion should be happening.

Hess: When I met with Fr. Matt today, he asked me to clarify a lot of my beliefs expressed at the BoT meeting. Fr. Matt wants to find a better way of open communication between the campus and the Abbey. He wanted students to know that a lot of things students are seeking are what Norbertines at the Abbey are seeking. Wanted SGA to pursue an idea to open up that communication in some regard.

Principal question asked on campus: “Do you think in a growing minority on campus of those who identify as Catholic, how do we keep Catholic culture on campus?”

Student Affairs Committee (James Fitzwater, Porter Beilfuss, & Jonathan Contreras)

Beilfuss: Both Dr. Joe Webb and Dr. Corday Goddard presented on the work of the Student Affairs division. Dr. Webb presented on the creation of a strategic plan, working across divisions to enhance the student experience. Dr. Goddard presented on retention of students, currently at 80.2% as of 2020. Hoping to obtain a 90% retention rate. #1 reason students reported in their exit survey for leaving the college is financial/cost.

Risk Management and I.T. Committee (Stephanie Faudoa)

Faudoa: Met with VP Marc Bellingar. New two-step Google verification for all community members on campus. A new “Patch Wednesday” initiative to improve our college informational/technological security. Also discussed a better calendar for students signing up for the fitness center - not always do reservations to use the gym go onto students Google calendars.

Academic Committee (Molly Freye)

Freye: Three main topics in our meetings. One, a mini workshop on what the academic affairs employees have been doing on campus. Responding during the pandemic to be intentional, adaptive, and looking to the future - not “emergency management” mode.

Two, the new athletic director presented on student athletes and where the department is moving towards - recruiting more nationwide now. Making sure we are helping the student athletes, most are here for the top priority of academic experience

Third, mission & heritage experience. How Norbertine the classroom is? Is the theology department doing enough? Two theology professors on the call, shared real life examples. Do people understand what Norbertine values are? It seems there is a lot of ambiguity around the Norbertine tradition in general.

REMINDER: Send notes/summaries from the BoT meetings to Molly and Porter.

Makope: Motion to move forward. Seconded by Fitzwater. None opposed.

Student Organization Recognition Committee (James Fitzwater)

Fitzwater: Two groups: SNC Overseas, getting international students feel welcome and active in our community. SNC Wheels, a cycling club

Both organizations are looking for new members, have been approved by the committee, and will move on for final “yes” by Dr. Joseph Webb

Last one is the Knight Owl, still needs some work.

Hess: Motion to move forward. Seconded by Makope. None opposed.

In the spirit of the Norbertine value of *stabilitas loci*, a deep commitment to the local community, we acknowledge this land as the ancestral home of the Menominee nation, which holds historical, cultural, and sacred significance to the community. We acknowledge the living history and contributions of the indigenous communities that inhabited this land prior to the establishment of St. Norbert College, as well as the sovereign Native American Nations who continue to contribute to the flourishing of our communities.

LASS (Oliver Dressel)

Recruiting new members

Last year we worked towards reparations by raising the Menominee flag on campus. Jon and I are both seniors, we are looking for new members. New blood to continue the work, any young whippersnappers should talk with Jon or Oliver.

Old business (9:55)

None

Adjournment (10:00)

Hess: Motion to adjourn. Seconded by Klatt. None opposed.

Picture! (reminder, please dress business casual)

In the spirit of the Norbertine value of *stabilitas loci*, a deep commitment to the local community, we acknowledge this land as the ancestral home of the Menominee nation, which holds historical, cultural, and sacred significance to the community. We acknowledge the living history and contributions of the indigenous communities that inhabited this land prior to the establishment of St. Norbert College, as well as the sovereign Native American Nations who continue to contribute to the flourishing of our communities.