

**Truman State University Student Government
Seventh Session of the 2021-2022 Executive Committee
October 20, 2021**

Convened: 8:00 p.m.

1) Preliminary Items

a) Roll call

2) Auxiliary Reports

a) Speaker of the Student Senate

i) O. Smith:

(1) We are going to talk about the absence policy. We will start talking about Appropriations next week.

b) Academic Affairs Committee Co-Chairs

i) Purinton:

(1) I met with Dr. Berke the Monday before midterm break and we talked about accessibility and the three options that she gives in her biology class. She thinks that in the STEM areas we should be able to put more stuff online and make more things cheaper.

(2) Another thing that I wanted to mention is that our committee is looking into creating a financial hardship form that can be accessible in Portal and on syllabi. Creating a form where students don't have to go to their professors directly would be great, and we want the academic advisors to be able to push that.

(3) Choosing the Winter Commencement speaker is going on right now and the application deadline is this coming Monday, October 25th. I've contacted everyone who needs to be at those interviews.

ii) Montúfar: Who else would be included in the financial hardship form conversation?

(1) Purinton: Probably the Registrar and Financial Aid.

(2) Montúfar: It would be a good time to think of anything else that would be useful to disclose in this form in case we want to add it all at once.

c) Diversity and Inclusion Committee Chair

i) Cooper:

(1) My committee had a very productive meeting this week. The first thing we talked about was the resolution for establishing a gender and sexuality diversity center. We're also working on writing a petition to gauge student support for this center.

- (2) My meeting with Donna Liss about getting an option to change your pronouns on Portal will probably happen next week because she has not yet responded to my email. I would also like to get pronouns to show up on professors' class lists. If anyone has concerns about Portal that they would like for me to bring up in that meeting, let me know.

d) Environmental Affairs Committee Chair

e) External Affairs Committee Chair

i) Owsley:

- (1) We met with Tyana Lange and had a conversation to see where our goals aligned in working with External Affairs and marketing.
- (2) The City Council is trying to pass a law that would change vacancy appointment methods in the city and would allow Mayor Burden to appoint someone new instead of allowing the second person in the election to fill it. Our committee is writing a resolution to support some aspects of it. I want to include a section about appointing a Truman master's in leadership student.
- (3) We also talked generally about other resolutions that we're interested in writing.
- (4) Montúfar: Could you tell me a little bit more about the student directory?

(a) Owsley: We are just working to create a better directory for on-campus organizations. Another thing that was brought up by another one of my committee members was something akin to a RateMyProfessor but for TruPositions, so that people would have more information going into the position. We're going to try to talk about it and then write a resolution to encourage making it happen.

(b) Smith: That sounds very useful, but my guess is that the administration would worry about representing the job in a certain way or just how it might affect current employees.

f) Health, Wellness, and Safety Committee Co-chairs

i) Grandstaff:

- (1) We had a productive meeting Monday, partially because Owen sat in and partially because we just got a lot done. We've got our vast array of projects all divided out as well.
- (2) We are meeting with Andrew Ficus next Tuesday at 2:00 p.m. UCS is a pretty big deal with our committee and just on campus right now so send us any questions or anything that you've heard on campus.

- (3) We're going to be doing some more stuff with the Wellness Committee, specifically looking at what a wellness champion might be (people who deal with wellness on campus that aren't counselors). We also want to collaborate to have all the wellness information in one place and also to get all the wellness events on Portal.
- (4) We also have a resolution in the works. For anyone who doesn't know, a list of demands has been spread at Mizzou about more accountability for sexual assault situations. We can't just say that we formally support it, but we're going to be working with Ryan Nely to sort that out.

g) Student Affairs Committee Chair

i) Bishop:

- (1) We will be joining with Purple Friday to provide a cookie event. The plan for the roundtable event is still on the third floor of the SUB in early November and Warren is working on sorting out documents that were used in the past so that we can use them now.

h) Purple Friday Committee Chair

i) Bono:

- (1) As Adam said, we're working on the cookie event on the 29th. Our first committee meeting is this weekend and we want to come out of it with some wristband designs and some themed events for later on.
- (2) We tabled Tuesday on the quad for the Homecoming event.
- (3) Montúfar: We sent out a doodle for when to meet to decorate Mike's car for the parade, so come if you can!

i) Parking Appeals Committee Chair

j) Legislative Director

i) King:

- (1) No report

k) IT Director

i) Myers:

- (1) We're still working on getting access to the website.

l) PR Director

3) Executive Reports

a) Treasurer

b) Secretary

- i) Reynolds: I sent out the committee attendance sheet and I wanted to clarify that you all are in charge of determining what is excused/unexcused for your

committee members. I will be checking that sheet periodically and I'll reach out to you if I have any concerns.

c) President and Vice President

i) Montúfar:

- (1) We had a meeting with Dr. Gooch yesterday and talked about the gender and sexuality diversity center. We've had support for that since 2010, so it's definitely an ongoing conversation. She wants to talk to Lori Shook, who is the campus planner, so we can move from conceptual conversations to finding where it might be. I also gave her the letters that we wrote on National Coming Out Day.
- (2) We also talked to Dr. Gooch about the Offstead classes that are offered. I took an Ofstad class and I think it's great to have some rolling faculty and I wanted to know how to do more of this... the answer is money. It would be an interesting opportunity, so let me know if that's a project that your committee might be interested in so that we can include you in those conversations.
- (3) Smith: A research group that I'm in is having us go to an event on Friday because there will be a lot of tabling and a lot of alumni will be present.
- (4) Montúfar: It might be too soon, but it's a good idea to consider alumni if we need to raise funds.

ii) Kershaw:

- (1) We're working hard to fill out all of our spots, but so far there have been no applications. We've contacted everyone and nobody has responded. We really need people to do this, so if you have any suggestions for chairs especially, then please let us know. AFAC has to be a varsity athlete. OAF can't be affiliated with any fee-based organizations.
- (2) Montúfar: Chairs right now are a first priority. They serve two-year terms so they cannot be seniors.
- (3) Kershaw: StuGov dinners are now Thursdays at 6:00 p.m.
- (4) Kershaw: Last night we won our intramural soccer team! The next game is on Monday at 7:40 p.m.

4) Absence policy discussion

- a) Smith: At the top of this document is the previous absence policy, and if you scroll down the things that we want to eliminate are in red, and the things we want to add are in green. We created a new excused and unexcused absence policy. I wanted to

revamp the removal process so that the language is a little less complicated. The duties of the secretary might need to be updated in the constitution.

- b) Smith: The policy as it is right now is that there are things that are defined as excused. You get 5 absences total, and only one of those can be unexcused. There is a lot of gray area left for the Secretary to decide if certain things are excused, and we had a lot of questions about the weight of missing different commitments.
- c) Smith: Generally, there are 3 types of excused absences. The first is when you know that something is coming up that will conflict with a commitment and you fill out a form like the one Abby has created for our attendance this year. The second is a university event, like a class. The third makes emergencies completely excused and does not leave those situations up to the Secretary. Basically we don't want to track excused absences anymore. For the unexcused absences, you should get as many absences as commitments that you have. For example, Abby has to attend Gen. body, ExComm, and office hours, so she would have 3 unexcused absences.
- d) Kershaw: I think the first thing we should talk about is the unlimited number of excused absences. I am unsure if unlimited is the best way to go, because you could run into a problem where someone serves an important role in Student Government and an important role in another organization, and then they always choose the other organization.
- e) Smith: We did talk about that in the necessary obligation excuse. I don't think there's a great way to eliminate the need for the Secretary to use their discretion in some moments. I hope that it would be construed by a Secretary that attending another organizational event is not an excuse.
- f) Grandstaff: The last bit says "one-time event", which hopefully means that it will not be a recurring issue.
- g) Montúfar: I think that we should include the language of a one-time event earlier in the document to stress that it should *not* be a repeat event. You wouldn't want an eboard event for another organization to supersede our ExComm.
- h) Bono: I'm in favor of unlimited excused absences, but I think it would be good to include a clause about a certain number of absences inhibiting the body in that an ExComm member could bring it up. Like if a future Secretary has a million events and can only attend half the meetings, that would be inhibiting the body.
- i) Purinton: Am I reading this correctly that it has to be one of these three options for it to be excused?
 - i) Smith: I believe that right below that in section two it says that members may petition the Secretary for extraneous circumstances.
 - ii) Purinton: I think you've done a wonderful job and I like the changes you're trying to make. My concern is that the ExComm before winter break I took off because I knew that I did not have the capability to fulfill my duties on

Student Government because I didn't have time to do this myself. Having people petition to take that time off does concern me.

- iii) Smith: I understand, I think that you make a fair point. My question is are you concerned that the emergency policy or petitioning the Secretary for an excuse would result in someone getting an absence when they needed to be absent? I would hope that any Secretary in this position would think about any types of these excuses, however I cannot guarantee anything. I would be willing to put something about mental health and wellness in here. I'm worried that making too many caveats would lead us down a slippery slope.
- iv) Montúfar: I would consider any mental concern that impedes your ability to come to a meeting to be a medical concern. Also, we have the form for the Secretary and I think we should include some more questions to ask in there so that we know the excuse is something substantive.
- v) Smith: I want to hope that nothing will be used in bad faith, and I tend to assume the worst. That's my perspective as to why this is written the way it is.
- vi) Grandstaff: As someone that worked on the wording, we definitely put a lot of thought into it. Part of the reason why there isn't a cap for excused absences is to make it more friendly. In my opinion, the discretion of the Secretary is extremely important in most cases.
- vii) Bishop: I think that the mental health excuse falls into the prolonged medical situation category.
- viii) Smith: Clause 5 of section 2 was a concern because we thought about if someone had a job and what we should do. This section concerns me because it is so specific to one situation.
- ix) Kershaw: If you're working everytime we have a General Body meeting, I think that would complicate things.
- x) Cooper: Right now a lot of people's deterrent from joining Student Government is they have so many obligations when we meet. I think it would be important for the Secretary to take into consideration these obligations. I think changing this would make Student Government more accessible.
- xi) Smith: Lastly, we believe that ad hoc committees should not have to take attendance
- xii) Kershaw: We only have two, so I don't think that we need to.
- xiii) Smith: There are a lot of things to consider, so I will make the changes and bring them forward on Sunday.

Adjourned: 9:11 p.m.

