



**MONROE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
STUDENT ASSOCIATION SENATE MEETING
MINUTES FOR
Tuesday, March 17, 2015 2:15 PM-Forums (3-130)**

Student Senators:

Senator Greco
Senator Tower
Senator Balzano

Speaker of the Senate:

Jeremy Carmichael

Deputy Speaker:

Michael Lavere

President:

Suhail Prasathong-*absent*

SL&LD Advisor:

Elizabeth Stewart

SL&LD Advisor:

Rebecca Herzog

SA Secretary:

Lisa Truman

Visitors: Ben Boggs, Monroe Doctrine; Ekaterina Jones, PTK; Christina Kalish, MCC Student; Carlos Sanchez, Hospitality Club; Brandon Noble, FYE; Rosanna Yule, MCC Marketing and Community Relations; Hency Yuen-Eng, MCC Marketing and Community Relations; Filimon Flogos, MCC Student; Dr. Susan Baker, MCC Student Services; Benjamin Lapchuk, Campus Ambassadors; Tony Filer, HGHRP; Clayton Jones, MCC Academic Services; Erik Kopp, Global Union; Kristie Edick, Travel Club; Maryjane Starr, Office of Student Life and Leadership Development; Howard Woodham, Peer Mentor; Justin Rothstein, WMCC The Pulse; Catherine Haehl, WMCC The Pulse; Marcus Blythers, Peer Mentor; Mason Powell, Peer Mentor; Michael Viele, MCC Student.

I. CALL TO ORDER (2:16pm)

A. Roll Call (See attendance above)

B. Senator Tower called for a motion to add an item to the agenda. A resolution of support for the continuation of Rational Tuition in the SUNY System. Rational Tuition is a promise between SUNY, the State of New York, and the students within SUNY to limit the increase in tuition to a maximum of \$300.00 per year. While this does not directly affect community colleges; it will affect students who plan to transfer to a four-year SUNY school.

Senator Greco so moved.

A vote was taken.

Be it resolved, the Monroe Community College Student Government Association approves the addition of the above resolution to be added to the agenda under New Business.

C. Approval of the March 10, 2015 Minutes.

Speaker Carmichael called for a motion to approve the March 10, 2015 SGA Minutes.

Deputy Speaker Lavere so moved, seconded by Senator Tower.

A vote was taken.

Be it resolved, the Monroe Community College Student Government Association approves the March 10, 2015 Minutes as written.

II. SPEAK TO THE SENATE

Christina Kalish, a MCC Student asked why her child was not able to ride the MCC Shuttle bus with her to MCC. The child attends the MCC Child Care Center and this would be very convenient for them. The shuttle bus driver told her she could not bring her child on the shuttle and she took a RTS bus on to campus. She asked the Senate to look into this matter for her. Speaker Carmichael stated he would check on this issue and follow-up with her.

Dr. Kress, the President of MCC, spoke on the SUNY MCC Budget Advocacy and the Middle States Accreditation Process. SUNY MCC Budget Advocacy is a group that values strong state investment in higher education. The amount of New York State aid has declined, and we are still below the level received in 2009. The amount received each year is well below the requested amount. Students attending MCC on a full-time basis should be paying approximately 33% after all base aid has been factored in, but in reality due to the shortfalls, they are paying 40% of costs to attend MCC full-time. The Budget Advocacy program has been working to restore base aid to requested amounts, which in turn is less costs to students. On the average, MCC does have a lower tuition at approximately \$3400.00/year as opposed to other institutions that charge around \$4000.00/year, but Dr. Kress stated she is aware of the sacrifices students make to attend college, and realizes that every dollar saved is important to students. Base aid restoration buys an affordable education and future for students. The reality is we are looking for state involvement to keep SUNY schools affordable. A question is asked regarding "Performance Based Funding", and Dr. Kress stated that has not been fully supported and does not look like that will be an option going forward.

Middle States Accreditation is a process MCC goes through every 10 years, with a mid-level check every 5 years. Accreditation is an ongoing process of improvement and accountability. An independent body comes in and assesses comprehensive standards and to ensure the institution is financially solvent and will sustain over time. Teams will be looking at standards and provide initial reports that may outline areas in need of improvement as well as areas of exemplary results. The process of accreditation is important in many areas of college acadamia, as well as financial aid that is offered to its students. MCC has typically done very well with the process and is always looking for areas to improve upon and welcomes the final reports.

Speaker Carmichael asks where the Academies Model falls in this process and if there will be a change in advisement to the college. Dr. Kress stated the Academies Model is based on a student's major, and their college advisors and mentors will specialize in that area. This is more of a streamlined experience for a student, and makes it less likely for anyone to fall through the cracks. There is more monitoring of a student's progress and it would make transferring seamless as all classes should be transferrable to the next college since advisement in said field would begin at the time the student decides on a major. Dr. Kress thanked all for the opportunity to speak and reminds the SGA that our elected student officials have the most opportunity to directly impact our students in a positive way.

Dr. Holmes, Vice-President of Student Services took the floor. MCC is working on reviewing its Title IX policies and procedures. Title IX, in part, pertains to sexual harassment and sexual assault. The members of the SUNY system are adopting a system-wide definition of affirmative consent. There will also be an amnesty policy for those who may report a Title IX violation. This is important if a student is perhaps under the influence at the time of the violation, they might be hesitant to report it. The amnesty policy ensures the victim will not be disciplined for coming forward. This is a way to protect the victim and to ensure they are not further victimized by reporting an incident. MCC is going to make all aware of Title IX, where to go if they feel they were a victim of sexual harassment or assault, and what community resources are available to them. There will be a victim's bill of rights, all incoming students will receive Title IX training, a video will be shown to all, posters will be displayed, instructions directing students how to report and where to go to do so, and MCC student groups will be provided training. The goal is to have all aware of what exactly a Title IX violation/issue is, where to go to report it, and what resources a victim has available after the fact. Dr. Susan Baker, of the Student Services Division is our Title IX Coordinator, and the college will train nine faculty/staff personnel as Title IX Deputies. It is extremely important our students feel safe. We must connect the victims to the resources available to them. We want to ensure all incidences are reported, and the victim feels comfortable doing so.

Dr. Holmes touched on declining enrollment at MCC and noted it is all of our jobs to get the word out to prospective students about what a great education they can receive at MCC. SGA should collaborate and work together to stabilize and increase enrollment. Dr. Holmes stresses the three key elements a college SGA is responsible for; first, to speak to the Administration for the students, second, speak to the Administration with the students, and lastly to speak to the students for the Administration. He asks that we all put out the message that MCC is affordable, and has one of the highest graduation rates in the state. Students are some of the best ambassadors. Even Legislators listen to students more than college administrators. Dr. Holmes thanked the Senate for the opportunity to speak, and looks forward to coming back in the future.

III. REPORTS

Senator Balzano

She is currently brainstorming to develop a design for the elections posters and banners. She welcomes all creative people to please join her.

Deputy Speake Lavere

The past weeks he has been involved in many SGA activities. First, he is in the process of gathering student's opinions by request of the Faculty Senate. He was looking for information regarding finals week for the fall semester of 2015. The way the holiday falls this year, they are looking for a preference of the best way to handle finals week so as not to have finals on Christmas Eve. There would be either a three-day finals week, or a four-day finals week, which would include a Saturday. Next, he is continuing to look into gym hours and protocol for checking in. He had recently read in the Monroe Doctrine that the weight room had added morning hours on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 5am-7am. This is great for those students who cannot make it there during the day. He is working on the screening procedure for entering the weight room as there is no consistency in how people are checked who are entering. Finally, he is excited to be a part of the upcoming constitution committee that will hopefully create a more functional constitution. He also wants to finish the yearlong objective of a club hockey team for next year.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

a. Resolution to appoint new members to the Constitution and By-Laws Committee of the Brighton Campus Student Government Association.

Resolved, that the Monroe Community College Student Government Association approves the resolution to appoint new members to the Constitution and By-Laws Committee of the Brighton Campus SGA.

Speaker Carmichael called for a motion to approve the resolution.

Senator Greco so moved, seconded by Senator Balzano.

Discussion: There was no discussion.

A vote was taken.

Be it resolved, the Monroe Community College Student Government Association Senate approves the resolution to appoint new members to the Constitution and By-Laws Committee of the Brighton Campus SGA.

b. Resolution to approve \$2800.00 in funding to the Campus Ambassadors for their 2015 Spring Retreat.

Resolved, that the Monroe Community College Student Government Association approves \$2800.00 in funding to the Campus Ambassadors for their 2015 Spring Retreat.

Speaker Carmichael called for a motion to approve the resolution.

Senator Greco so moved, seconded by Senator Balzano.

Discussion: Ben Lapchuk, a member of the Campus Ambassadors spoke of their "Infusion Retreat". It is a 5 day trip and they spend the year planning and fundraising. There will be 32 separate charters of Campus Ambassadors in attendance and it is a great way to build relations and take back information and ideas to the MCC community.

A vote was taken.

Be it resolved, the Monroe Community College Student Government Association Senate approves \$2800.00 in funding to the Campus Ambassadors for their 2015 Spring Retreat.

c. Resolution of support for the continuation of Rational Tuition.

Resolved, that the Monroe Community College Student Government Association approves the resolution of support for the continuation of Rational Tuition.

Speaker Carmichael called for a motion to approve the resolution.

Senator Tower so moved, seconded by Senator Lavere.

Discussion: Senator Tower stated five years ago Rational Tuition was passed. This resolution supports a continuation of Rational Tuition. If this is not continued, SUNY colleges and universities could raise tuition as much as they like. This would put a cap of \$300.00 per year as the amount tuition could be raised, and would keep any tuition funds within the school. SUNY funds that would be raised due to an increase in tuition could be allocated to anything within the state and decided within the state government as to where the funds would go. Students need to plan financially for their education and not having any idea what tuition may be from one year to the next will not allow them to plan ahead.

A vote was taken.

Be it resolved, the Monroe Community College Student Government Association Senate approves the Resolution of support for the continuation of Rational Tuition.

V. DISCUSSION ITEM

There was no discussion item.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

VII. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Speaker Carmichael addressed Deputy Speaker Lavere regarding the finals week options discussed in his report. He wanted to know if any other ideas were on the table or just those two choices. It will be difficult for working students to take the day off on Saturday and he hopes professors will be flexible if this is the option that is decided upon. Michael Viele, an MCC Student asked about the possibility of having in class finals as is done on occasion. Deputy Speaker Lavere noted these are most likely departmental finals, which are designated for finals week.

Michael Viele, an MCC student, noted it would be nice to hold more events in the later afternoon/evening as to engage more non-traditional students in campus activities. This would be great for on-line students as well who do not get to campus often. Senator Tower agreed evening events would be more convenient for some students.

Speaker Carmichael announced OrgSync would soon be going away and the college will be utilizing Blackboard for campus life. It currently uses Blackboard for academics.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Speaker Carmichael called for a motion for adjournment.
The meeting was adjourned at 3:31pm.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Truman
SA Secretary