



**49 UA Council Session 6 Meeting Minutes**  
 November 29, 2017, 7:30pm - 9:00pm in W20-400

<b>Living Group</b>	<b>Representative</b>	<b>Present?</b>
Baker	Makenzie Patarino	
Burton-Conner	Emma Desoto	x
East Campus	Alexandra Stanton	x
MacGregor	Eleanor Wintersteen	x
Maseeh	Robert Bugilarelli	x
McCormick	Laura Bergemann	
New House	Emily Tang	x
Next House	Elizabeth Gaylord	x
Random House	Ryuga Hatano	x
Simmons	Jacqueline Liu	x
Interfraternity Council	Arjun Mithal	x
Interfraternity Council	Jack Gordan	x
Interfraternity Council	Sean Parks	x
Interfraternity Council	Michael Trinh	x
Living Group Council	Emily Fleischman	x
Off Campus	Megan Kralj	x
Panhellenic Association	Ayomide Fatunde	x
Panhellenic Association	Leigh-Ana Rossitto	x
Panhellenic Association	Meredith Loy	x

Olivia Brode-Roger  
Leah Flynn Gallant  
Pravy ASA

President's Questions 7:00 - 7:30

1. Roll Call 7:35
2. Approval of 49 UAC 5 Minutes 7:35 - 7:40
3. Conference and Travel Grants Vote 7:40 - 7:50
4. Confidentiality Policy Vote 7:50 - 8:00
5. Elections Spending Discussion 8:00 - 8:25
6. Discussion on Diversity-focused Academic Requirement 8:25 - 8:50
7. Closing Remarks and Open Discussion 8:50 - 9:00

**7:35pm We have quorum! Yay!**

**7:36pm Vote to approve 49 UAC 5 Minutes.**  
**16 in favor. 0 opposed. Approved.**

**7:37pm Quick updates on Advising**

After last Council Alexa and Sarah met with the Undergraduate Officers about advisors. We talked about a thorough matching system, mid semester check-ins, more holistic advising, evaluation system, expansion of associate advisor program, and system to easily answer student questions (ex. Piazza). We will be setting up meetings with the Undergraduate Officers, someone from the UA, departments, and students within each department (contacting officers in student groups). Starting with 5 departments (same as the ones MindHandHearts are working with to address culture): 18, 20, 2, 21L, 12.

A lot of course 2s take the same class, can probably announce to a large project class. Also has course 2 version of Anne Hunter.

**7:42pm Travel Guidelines**

Guidelines themselves didn't change. Jon is working with Colin to have a system for students to not have to front the money. Working on getting a list of major conferences by department. Right now it's probably through course admins and undergraduate groups. We also amended the Finboard guidelines. Stuff in red is new.

Jack: There is a minority of say seniors who in their senior spring are taking a lighter load and aren't full time students. Would they be precluded from this?

- We don't know yet what the demand is for that and we only have a limited amount of money. But there's nothing against having part-time.

Motion to amend the travel grant policy to include part-time students.

**Vote: 16 in favor, 0 opposed. Vote passes.**

Adding a sentence: if the conference in question is not a well-established conference, etc. Leah: Should clarify that UA is providing the funding difference, SAO is the conduit.

**Vote on the new travel guidelines: 16 in favor, 0 opposed. Travel guidelines pass.**

The next thing is the new Finboard bylaws, which has more details about general application process, allocations, appeals, etc.

**Vote on changes to the bylaws: 16 in favor, 0 opposed. New finboard bylaws passes.**

### **8:01pm Updated Confidentiality Policy**

First major change is that things are not confidential by default. Second major change is there are only 3 levels:

1. You can share it with anyone in the undergraduate student body
2. You can list it only with specific people
3. You cannot share the information with anyone

Jack: What do the faculty think about changing the default to not confidentiality?

- There will be pushback and we may have to go back and keep it as confidential. But based on feedback from the Councilors it seemed restrictive for students to have it default to confidential. Although it may be where we end up, I think there is no harm in starting here.

Jack: I don't see any good way to enforce confidentiality for Level 2 documents.

**Motion to vote on the confidentiality policy. 16 in favor, 0 opposed. Passes.**

### **8:10pm Election Code Amendment**

Currently the election code says campaign materials spending is limited to 1-2% of tuition, which today would mean \$450-\$900, but on the election packets it is \$210. We want to bring this cap to \$250 to bring it in line with what has actually been spent in the last few years. Currently this money is also being paid out of pocky by people who run, and we want this to be paid for by the UA to not preclude anyone from running.

Jack: How much are people currently spending?

- Unclear, but you do have to submit something if you win listing your expense.

We were planning on creating a new cost object for recurring expenses. For next semester we can reallocate funds, but next semester this will be a line item.

Rob: Add something that says this number will be reevaluated every few years.

Michael: What's preventing SuperPACs?

- It's not allowed. This also isn't a problem at MIT but in other public universities there are other superPACs funding student government elections. To actually answer your questions this is the limit you or anyone else can spend on the campaign.

Arjun: Does this cover candidates who drop out?

- You have to get a certain number of signatures, which is a non-trivial amount of work. I think you can still be reimbursed.

Michael: Has there been an issue of outside supporters?

- Usually it's the candidate's friends but the candidates will say to not do that. It hasn't been an issue in the past.

Change to all candidates submit a statement of campaign finances, not just all winners.

New language:

The Commission shall limit the value of campaign materials to \$250. Campaign materials include anything spent on the campaign by candidates or supporters. All support campaign materials can be reimbursed through the UA. After campaigning ends and before elected officials are installed, all candidates shall submit a statement of campaign finances to the Commission -- even if no expenses were acquired.

**Vote: 15 in favor, 1 opposed. Bylaws pass.**

### **8:31pm Discussion on Diversity-focused Academic Requirement**

In 2015 the Black Student Union sent out a set of [recommendations](#) to the MIT administration about ways MIT can do more to have an inclusive environment on campus. This proposal was presented to UA Council in 2015 and failed, which was a surprise to the officers. One of the proposals was to have a diversity-focused academic requirement. This would be a way for MIT to say we are prioritizing diversity and inclusion because it's hard to get MIT students to prioritize things if they aren't on the same level as the academics. The BSU recommendations looks at the HASS classes to compile a list of classes that would satisfy the requirement. This is a pretty common requirement at other universities, ex. Stanford. Another idea is to have a have some kind of seminar, like a freshmen seminar, as a way to talk with your peers about themes of identity and inclusion.

Michael: When this was brought up in 2015 the most controversial part was the diversity requirement. I don't think it's the UA's place to decide what goes into the academic program. We aren't a policing body and shouldn't push for specific directions in that.

- Part of the reason why I think this is relevant today is because the UA and other students are part of the process to look at the first year experience, including the GIRs, and think this is a useful conversation to have.

Emma: I don't think a seminar is the best way to do it, because seminars are taken on PNR, so it wouldn't be taken seriously.

Ayo: We already have more requirements than other schools and would rather students learn it in a different way.

- This wouldn't be adding a requirement, it would be one of the 8 HASSes.

Jack: Would rather this be a seminar, maybe it's in your dorm facilitated by the house team. If you're with people you know you might be more willing to think about these issues and consider other viewpoints if you're comfortable.

Allie: Speaking behalf of Dormcon, we don't want to have mandatory academic programming in dorms. Speaking as me, there was already lots of jigsaw-ing with HASSes.

Michael: I think this would make it harder for hass majors.

- I think there are classes within each hass major that falls within in.

Ayo: I think a good starting point would be to put together a list of classes that satisfy this requirement and would want to know how this is logistically feasible. If the list is long enough and could feasibly have a lot of classes that could double with HASS-S/A/H then it would be better.

- If the only concern is around logistics we can have a conversation about logistics but before that we should have a conversation about it's value. I think having a hass class isn't more restrictive than mandatory seminar.

Ayo: Should be on the faculty to create more diversity focused classes not on the students.

Arjun: We could also make a CI-H/CI-HW a diversity focused class.

This should be learning about communities and cultures that aren't your own, but also having a discussion about things.

Emma: Looking through the CI-Hs it looks like most of them would qualify, so I don't think it's a huge logistical issue.

Leah: This was written in reaction to national things like the Black Lives Matter protests a few years ago. I think ultimately this seeks to develop cultural competencies, which is the number 2 or 3 thing employers look for.

Jack: How can we use the advisor-advisee system to work into this?

**9:12pm Adjourned.**