



The Catholic University of America Student Government Association 2021-2022 Senate Session 7-10

March 14th, 2022
8:15 p.m. – 10:15 p.m. EST

ROLL CALL

Vice President - Monica Wallace
Secretary – Jordan Gehrig
Parliamentarian - Mike McCabe

Class of 2022

Gerald Sharpe _____
Alan Cunningham _____

Class of 2023

Matthew Drauschak _____
Patricia Kwiatek _____

Class of 2024

Jamie Besendorfer _____
Matthew Michels _____

Class of 2025

Maevis Fahey _____
Ashley Martin _____

School of Architecture

Melissa Kazanci _____
Vacant _____

School of Arts and Sciences

Maura Schlee _____
Garrett Farrell A

Busch School of Business

Isabel Buckley _____
Raegan Lehman _____

School of Engineering

Emily Bowman _____
Margaret Bubel _____

Rome School of Music, Drama, and Art

Kyle Holcomb _____
Sophia Pelekasis _____

School of Nursing

Brooke Lackey _____
Christina Hermann _____

School of Philosophy

Michael Moore _____
Tony Crnkovich _____

School of Social Service

Grace Birth _____
Vacant _____

School of Theology

John Scott _____
Andrea Suarez _____

Key:

X- Here, A- Absent

NOTE: Below is an agenda of all items scheduled to be considered for the present meeting. Notification is hereby proved that items on the agenda may be taken out of the order presented, two or more agenda items may be combined for consideration, and an agenda item may be removed from the agenda or discussion relating to an item on the agenda may be delayed at any time at the discretion of the presiding officer.

Any legislation or business being presented has been provided to the Vice President at least 48 hours prior to tonight's meeting and to all other members of the Senate at least 24 hours prior to tonight's meeting. The Vice President reserves the right to postpone debate of legislation based on the time constraints of the Senate meeting

CALL TO ORDER -- ROLL CALL 8:15 PM

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE 8:16 PM

PRAYER 8:17 PM

Senator Moore opens up with the Hail Mary.

1. Public Comment 8:17 PM

A. Public comment will be taken at the start of the session. Comments will be limited to one minute per person. Persons making comments will be asked to begin by stating their name for the record, and if applicable naming the college or organization they represent. In accordance with Senate bylaws, the Vice President may prohibit comment if the content of that comment is a topic that is not relevant to, or within the authority of this body, or if the content is willfully disruptive of the meeting, irrelevant, repetitious, slanderous, offensive, inflammatory, irrational or amounting to personal attacks or interfering with the rights of other speakers.

Phil Ahearn is a senior politics major here to voice his support for resolution 042. He wrote a similar resolution last year that passed unanimously to protect students.

Justin Lamoureux is a sophomore politics in sociology double major and he is here today in favor of resolution 042. He practices the Catholic faith both here and at home. This resolution protects against discrimination and is in line with the Catholic social teaching. In the infamous lost sheep parable, Jesus stressed that shepherds should find their lost sheep and that there will be more rejoicing for the one sheep that has been found than the 99 others. The LGBT community are those lost sheep and they have been since the beginning of time. You senators as influential members are our shepherds, part of the same flock, and are tasked with looking out for each other.

Isabella Bowmay is a junior musical theater major and is here with Centerstage to support Senator Holcomb's resolution. Lots of people are here and supporting this resolution.

Ash Samoas is a junior social work major and is against resolution 039. She holds two jobs and because normal work study is capped, she would have to find another job. She is also here in

support of resolution 042. As a member of the LGBT community, she is wholeheartedly in support.

Nate Highley is a senior communication major and is here to support Senators Cunningham and Holcomb's resolutions.

Abby Anger is a senior politics and psychology double major and tomorrow at 7 PM there is a town hall with President Garvey.

2. Adoption of Agenda 8:25 PM

Motion to adopt the agenda by Senator Besendorfer and seconded by Senator Michels

Motion to adopt the agenda→ Passes

Vote on adoption itself→ Adoption has passed

3. Approval of Minutes 8:26 PM A. Session 7-9 (February 21, 2022)

Motion to approve by Senator Moore and seconded by Senator Lackey

Motion to approve the meeting minutes→ Motion Passes

Vote on approval of meeting minutes for Senate 7-9→ Approval Passes

4. Committee Reports 8:26 PM

A. Senator Sharpe, Rules and Administration

Senator Sharpe states that the committee is down one Senator and is working on filling that void. Himself and Senators Moore and Holcomb are working on bills about who can run for what seat, so look out for that.

B. Senator Schlee, Academic Affairs

Senator Schlee thanks Vice President Wallace. The committee had a wonderful meeting before spring break. Her own resolution about audits is hitting the floor tonight. The committee is looking into better oversight for Program Board funding and if you are interested please reach out.

C. Senator Besendorfer, University Services

Senator Besendorfer states they did not have a meeting before break but will have one next week. There are no major project updates, other than better communication about graduation.

E. Senator Birth, Campus Life

Senator Birth states that they had a very fruitful meeting over break on Zoom. Senator Fahey has a resolution hitting the floor tonight and Senator Michels is looking into the Title IX taskforce.

4. New Business

A. Senator Cunningham, Class of 2022 (Resolution 039) 8:29 PM

i. Resolution to Increase Student Workers' Minimum Wage Requirement at The Catholic University of America

Senator Cunningham thanks Vice President Wallace and his co-sponsors. In 2016 DC raised the minimum wage and Catholic decided to use their university exemption. The average worker at Catholic gets paid \$10 per hour. This should be higher. The cost of living is increasing, as well as rent, groceries, gas, and metro fees. Some student workers like HSAs or students who work in President Garvey's Office work long hours for less than minimum wage. Our peers deserve a raise. Some may say this is not able to happen, but George Washington University, American University, Georgetown, and even Trinity right down the street recognise the dignity of work. Students put work into their jobs and schools should recognize the dignity of work. Your campus providing \$15 an hour can be a major decision factor. He had conversations with many different departments and no one wanted to credit for underpaying students. All offices agreed that raises were needed and some were already advocating for them. Catholic social teachings says that the economy must serve the people, not the other way around. The dignity of work must be protected as well as respecting the basic rights of workers.

Senator Scott wants to draw the point that student workers should not be relying on the university for a living wage for part time work. A living wage should go to work they do for a living like a full time job. Part time work cannot substitute for full time work. Unless you have some sort of very skilled work, a part time job is not the same as a CEO, and the university has no such work. Last time we met, the writing center wages were raised and it was justified because of the level of their job and workload. If we raise the wages for everyone, then people with higher skilled work will get their pay bumped up again. The cost of living is on the rise and the school should consider raising the wage, but \$15 across the board is not fair. Wages are based on the work people are doing. He agrees with the sentiment expressed by constituents and believes that it would cause more harm than good. He will be voting no.

Senator Cunningham thanks Senator Scott for touching a lot of bases. He wants to touch on part-time work deserving full-time pay. Our peers deserve raises. Our peers have to buy the same things as us. He can't convince you to change your mind but doing so will change the lives of hundreds of students and all other DC universities have been able to make this adjustment. It is interesting because this university has prioritized the campus community, such as staying on campus your junior year and paying more for meal plans. This priority does not extend to students who need to work.

Senator Besendorfer thanks Senator Cunningham. She voted in favor for the Writing Center resolution, but will not be voting in favor for this. She can attest to how much skill and work the Writing Center workers put in in how they deserve their raise. Some of her friends who have on campus jobs just see it as time to do their homework. She loves the community but the university is a business. The tuition is already going to be increased and this could increase it more. There are still a lot of on campus jobs available. Murphy's pays \$15 and they still don't have enough workers. She urges everyone to vote against this resolution.

Senator Cunningham responds that as someone who has actually held a job on campus, time is labor and when you are not fairly compensated that is wrong. When you're not fairly compensated for your work then there is a huge shortage, as seen with the HSAs. Even Murphy's which is one of the highest paying jobs on campus is still looking for people to work. When students hold an on campus job they are more likely to graduate with a bachelor's degree than those who don't. He had to drop working as an HSA for not being compensated and had to babysit. It is a burden to go out and have to find work

Senator Birth can attest with the sentiment of dividing on-campus jobs by skilled and unskilled. That negates the need of students and the strategic need of time for students. A lot of people have had problems finding on campus jobs and the school was not fulfilling a living wage. Trinity College advertised has higher wages than Catholic. She takes classes there and they have better facilities with us. The discrepancy between what we pay and what they pay is a lot in the prerogative of administration.

Senator Cunningham says that at the end of the day the school is a business and every other business has made the transition of paying \$15 an hour over 5 years. This will not happen overnight.

Senator Fahey thanks Senator Cunningham for bringing this to the floor and she looks forward to supporting this. This is a very robust resolution and she would like to know what administrators he spoke with and if this will hurt work-study.

Senator Cunningham says that it is difficult to understand the entire process and he had to go all over to find answers. Career Services was in favor of this. Financial Services talked about the logistics and work studies and they would be able to support raising work-study. When he talked to HR they said that they just sign off on everything. Budgeting said that every program grade school asks for the budget separately so that is why wages differ between some departments. But many said that they were open to supporting this.

Senator Martin thanks Vice President Wallace and Senator Cunningham. She has a couple of questions, especially regarding skilled versus unskilled workers. She is leaning towards not supporting this resolution. When she thinks about a worker getting a raise, she sees it as going off of merit and how hard you worked. She did have a question about the school saying that they did have the capabilities to pay \$15 an hour but she's wondering where these funds are coming from and if it will affect anything else. She is confused about what changed between then and now and finds it odd that they haven't done this yet.

Senator Cunningham believes that all workers deserve a pay raise. In terms of funding, the university is a business and will save money instead of investing in students. When he talked with the budgeting department they said that they would adjust the budget to fit the new criteria. All other universities in DC did this so Catholic can as well.

Senator Schlee thanks Vice President Wallace and Senator Cunningham for bringing this to floor. She's been in contact with him while he has been working on this resolution and knows all of the hours and hard work he has put in. Her biggest concern is how this will be perceived by administration. The increase of \$5 over 1 year for the university versus states increasing the minimum wage in the course of five years is a lot. It is a big economic cost that even states cannot do. The university has been suffering in all departments including dining, CACS, and in the Politics department. This 3.9% increase of tuition that is happening next year would hurt her if she was still in school. Work study jobs are available but they are scarce and hard to find. Right now is not the time to be raising wages and she's worried that administration will not take this seriously. Staff, faculty, administration, and professors have taken pay cuts so as not to cut jobs and yet we are asking for a huge increase. She finds this a little offensive and has a hard time seeing how we will be taken seriously. This is not the time to propose a huge pay increase but yet make it a slower increase in more realistic situations like the Writing Center. That was one small section on campus that was increasing and was able to easily be calculated. She believes that this legislation is too drastic and will be voting against it but she does respect it.

Senator Cunningham clarifies that when he says that a detailed plan will be made by the 2023/2024 school year he does not fully expect wages to be raised but for the university to look into it and commit to a plan to change. This is not the full implementation of it and he is sorry for the confusion.

Senator Birth agrees that professors, faculty and staff are suffering, but that means students are suffering as well. It is a lot harder for her to pay her tuition since she has lost her summer job. We are elected by constituents and primarily concerned for them. She has to ask where their needs lie. Senator Cunningham said that the resolution is asking for a detailed plan and not assuming that the university has this money but that the university should seek this money.

Senator Lehman wanted to voice her support for this resolution. She sat outside of President Garvey's office and made just over \$8 and worked for the Dean of Students and made \$10. Her family can't give her any amount of money and it is not possible for others. Student workers work hard and there's a lot to take on including a full course load. She fully supports this resolution.

Motion to vote by Senator Michels and seconded by Senator Hermann → Motion passes

Vote on Resolution 039 → Vote passes with 16 yays and 6 nays

B. Senator Fahey, Class of 2025 (Resolution 040) 9:10 PM

i. A Resolution to Audit the University Website

Senator Fahey thanks Vice President Wallace. There are lots of important conversations happening tonight, and the university website has so many problems. This seems like a no brainer, but the solution lies past just fix it. She meet with David Williams the Director of Web Strategy and learned that there are essentially over 130 sites on the university website with between 15,000 and 20,000 pages. Each office has a content editor department, but with turnover and oftentimes older editors with no new training, it leads to slow updates. This resolution calls for a full audit of the university website before next academic year. She wants to aim high with this resolution and create concrete steps.

Senator Moore thanks Vice President Wallace and Senator Fahey. He is behind this resolution all the way. A lot of work needs to be done and both prospective and current students strongly support it.

Motion to vote ruled dillaroty by Vice President Wallace.

Senator Pelekasis reiterates what Senator Moore said. She is trying to double major and has been given so much invadil information. She is curious if each department will be held accountable for updating the website.

Senator Fahey says each department will have to update the website.

Motion to vote by Senator Hermann and seconded by Senator Michels → Motion passes

Vote on Resolution 040 → Vote passes with 22 yay's and 0 nay's

C. Senator Schlee, School of Arts & Sciences (Resolution 041) 9:19 PM

i. A Resolution to Require Schedule Audits for All Students

Senator Schlee thanks Vice President Wallace. She doesn't know if the microphone actually works or not. She thanks everyone for listening to her. She is bringing forth another thing that she is most passionate about. All students should be aware of where they stand on their progress and courses. She won't go into her speech about the suffering CACS goes through, but with that comes a lack of misinformation to students. Students do not know how many courses they have to take. The website is inaccurate and the information is often wrong. Auditing can help situations and prevent moments like students realizing they can't graduate or in her case graduate early. It is easier to make changes earlier rather than later as everyone only wants to be here for four years or less. The more information students have the better. Audits should occur whenever the student believes they are a senior. Some students do special programs so it can be tricky to definitively say when some

students are seniors as not everyone has a fourth year. Requiring audits is an extra layer to protect students so they can still take extra classes they might need or change their schedule. With online school, some might have gotten lost and we have to keep them on track. She urges everyone to vote in favor.

Senator Besendorfer will be brief. She remembers when she committed and the day she got into Catholic. The next thing that she looked into was what AP credits would transfer. Her friends who committed to other schools knew so much information and she could not find the same information anywhere. One of her roommates switched majors from nursing to business and is not sure where she is in terms of graduation which is scary. She is 19 and confused and deserves guidance.

Senator Buckley voices her support and thanks Senator Schlee for bringing this forward. This is a really important issue and if this resolution existed before she was a senior, she would have graduated early. It is especially important because the whole idea of having a schedule suit is already in place with CACS but students are not aware that it exists. The Business School does it automatically but she did not know CACS did. This is a great start and she looks forward to seeing how it goes.

Senator Schlee thanks Senator Buckley for her support and helping her create the resolution. She wanted to add on that she did her audit with Patricia Galindo and was able to create a great relationship with her. She was able to reach out to her with questions and guidance when she didn't know who to go to.

Senator Cunningham wants to stress the importance of being accurate. He is a senior and was told that his literature class was not on the required list. He had to find where it was on the list and if things were up to date, it could've prevented this.

Motion to vote by Senator Besendorfer and seconded by Senator Holcomb → Motion passes

Vote on Resolution 041 → Vote passes with 22 yay's and 0 nay's

D. Senator Holcomb, Rome School of Music, Drama, and Art (Resolution 042) 9:31 PM

i. A Resolution to Clarify the Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy

Senator Holcomb thanks Vice President Wallace. Last year Senator now Secretary Ahearn passed this resolution. When he reached out to the Dean of Students John Sawyer, he was told that changes to the Code of Conduct come from a higher up document, the Anti-Harassment and Anti-Discrimination policy. He has heard so many stories about people not feeling welcomed or being treated poorly and wants to change that.

Senator Michels thanks Senator Holcomb for reintroducing this legislation tonight. This is an

incredibly pressing issue on campus. When he got his packet on how to apply the Catholic at the very bottom on the back page was the anti-harassment policy. It had all of the protected classes but he noticed that sexual orientation was omitted. This resolution updates the one Senator Ahearn passed unanimously last year. We have to uphold the dignity of the human person and protect our people.

Senator Besendorfer gives her full support. She voted in favor last year and will be doing it again. She fully Echoes everything that was said.

Senator Holcomb thanks her.

Senator Scott can't recall the similar resolution last year, but believes he voted yes. It is obvious that the beliefs are already there just not in the outlines. He asked to be informed if this is incorrect, but federal law and DC law say that you shouldn't be discriminated against because of sexual orientation. He would very much appreciate it if that was the case because it is very needed. It should be clearly outlined so people can see it. It might be productive if we say we stick to our policy to actually enforce it. This resolution makes stuff clear.

Senator Holcomb tells Senator Scott that he is correct. Federal law does say that, and all universities are a place of business so they have to follow federal law. This policy should be clearly outlined so everyone can feel protected.

Senator Birth's understanding is that the university has a religious exemption from omitting sexual orientation and the code of conduct. By admitting it the school is recognizing that right. She asked everyone to vote in favor.

Senator Sharpe says that the same issue came up last year. Administration told SGA they interpret the anti-harassment clause that quotes and other basis XYZ to include sexual orientation. He is here with Senator Scott. This is to codify what is already the case. There are protections in place for students who are being abused for your sexual orientation. This resolution passed last year and nothing happened. With no change in leadership he does not see how this isn't redundant, especially because it is already in place. He is struggling to see why when the university rejected the recommendation they would change their stance now. At the same time he urges anyone facing discrimination because of their sexual identity to inform the authorities.

Senator Holcomb acknowledges that yes it is already protected by federal law and it is listed in all other protected clauses. This resolution differs because it not only edits the Code of Conduct but the higher up document which was the Anti-Harassment and Discrimination document. All changes for the Code of Conduct come from those documents. Many students want to see this change.

Senator Fahey thanks Senator Holcomb for bringing forward this resolution and looks forward to supporting it. She has personally thought a lot about the policy on harassment and discrimination. She has witnessed a professor discriminate on the basis of race and wonders what to do next. If she

talks to them will it affect her or her grades and she thinks that there are so many barriers for students to self advocate. All of us have heard or experienced something and if this resolution will do one thing it will encourage more students advocate for themselves in the formative college years of their life

Senator Holcomb thanks Senator Fahey and she is 100% correct. It is our job as elected representatives for classes in the schools to open doors and start conversations

Senator Moore echoes what Senator Sharpe said. Discrimination should not be tolerated. Anti-discrimination and adherence to the Catholic faith both must be applied. We cannot sacrifice one for another. He believes that this 100% can be added with a particular wording and would have to be done with legal and theological experts. Just adding sexual orientation without taking into account Catholic teaching could lead into other teachings being questions question. He'll be voting no with the current wording but would vote yes if the wording was done in a way to protect the Catholic teaching.

Senator Michels is not quite sure what Senator Moore was referring to. We are the Catholic University of America And have both American and Catholic principles to uphold. This resolution is not asking for much as the truth would not want people harassed or discriminated against.

Senator Scott agrees with Senator Moore's statements. After carefully reading the second and third whereas clauses, the context of the sexual orientation wording does not go against the Catholic Church's teachings. Catholic University teaches for the Catholic Church. He can't see anywhere for confusion. It is already in the nature of to protect federal state and local law. Senator Birth brought up religious exemptions but there is no religious exemption to harassing people. The Catholic Church does not preach harassment of people nor can it condone those actions. He could be ignorant of the fact but there is no such document writing to tell people to go out and harass others.

Senator Holcomb says that Senator Scott is much more well-versed in doctrine than he is. He's just making sure that there are protections that should already be followed and based on laws that are distinctly written out to make people feel safer on campus.

Senator Suarez honestly supports this resolution and thank Senator Holcomb for bringing this forth. She does not see any problem with it not following the Catholic teaching. This resolution would make the university more welcoming and a better environment for those in the LGBT community. Harassment is something that nobody should experience but a lot of people go through. This would be a very good start to making a bigger stop to make those on campus feel more welcome.

Senator Holcomb thanks her.

Senator Crnkovich thanks Senator Holcomb and is fully in support of the efforts that no student should face harassment. He echoes what Senator Sharpe said. A similar resolution was passed in

the previous Senate and was not implemented in the higher up document. Administration does talk to each other and in 2021 they changed the Anti-Harassment and Anti-Discrimination document. Such terminology is included in local DC law so he does not see the benefit and will be voting no.

Senator Holcomb repeats once again that it is our job as representatives to pass legislation for the concern of our constituents. If this is clearly written out into document students can feel welcomed on campus as this is their home and it is our jobs to make them feel at home.

Senator Birth could go on for hours as a social worker that something that is proven is that not seeing yourself represented in documents is a deterrence when trying to get help.

Senator Michels says that the policy states any other basis under federal state and local laws. Let's say that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 did not include the word race in the statements, how would it look and how would have people reacted to that. What type of message is this sending? People should see themselves and feel protected.

Senator Besendorfer has a bunch of thoughts. Regarding the end including sexual orientation or not, the fact that everyone is debating it now shows that it is not explicitly written. This resolution is just codifying long-standing traditions and practices. Second of all, as Senator Fahey mentioned, any conversation in this matter is a hard one for people to have. Both of the theology senators are not in conflict with this resolution and while she's not an expert on Catholic Social teachings, she knows the Church does not stand for harassment. Not everybody who attends Catholic is Catholic and while 80% of students are Catholic everybody belongs here and we are welcoming to all. This was unanimously passed last year. In Senate there's a long-standing practice that the legislation we bring forward is the voice of the student body who deserves to be heard. We should not give up because the university did not implement this. This resolution is dealing with a different document And it would be very nice to see it explicitly written out. She is in full support and urges everyone to vote in favor.

Motion to extend the meeting until 10:25 by Senator Michels, seconded by Senator Besendorfer.

Motion to extend the meeting→ Motion Passes.

Voting on the extension of the meeting→ Vote Passes.

Senator Kwiatek wants to express her support of this resolution. Including sexual orientation and these two documents will make those in the LGBT community feel loved and protected.

Senator Schlee is no theologian and will never be one. She was here last year when this came to the floor and had to be reminded that she did in fact vote in favor of it, but this time she does not know how she will vote. She is concerned about the repetitiveness of this resolution. It is hard because there's a fine line between standing up for what you believe in and becoming an annoyance

with administration. For example her water fountain resolution she revisited it the next year in a similar manner but found a different way to approach it. She asks if Title IX has any correlation to this as she's not read up on Title IX recently. The new Title IX coordinator brought up a good point about the Code of Conduct. Potentially a good route with a likely solution would be better educating students through the dean of students or RA re-training. At this point she does not know how she would vote. She would love to hear Senator Holcomb's thoughts about Title IX in relation to this.

Senator Holcomb will let Senator Michels talk about Title IX. This resolution is different and has been added on because he made the effort in meeting with the higher ups such as Dean Sawyer and realize where the first resolution went wrong and fix that.

Senator Michels says that in terms of Title IX he will not be speaking on particulars as he is not a legal scholar nor on mock trial, but according to Title IX on the basis of sex is open to interpretation and they see the importance of putting that language in. He tells Senator Schlee that she could vote yea or nay or abstain but would love to have her voting in favor to help make these changes.

Senator Birth wants to say that she is all for educating the student body on this but there needs to be a clear system in place with clear-cut repercussions.

Motion to extend the meeting until 10:33 by Senator Besendorfer, seconded by Pelekasis.

Motion to extend the meeting → Motion Fails.

Senator Sharpe will make it quick. He would support the resolution under the provision of what Senator Moore proposed an hour ago. We are getting close to the deadline and he does not want this to be sent back to committee. It would support it if it doesn't violate the other teaching of the Catholic Church.

Motion to vote by Senator Hermann and seconded by Senator Suarez → Motion passes

Vote on Resolution 042 → Vote passes with 18 yay's and 4 nay's

5. Vice President, SGA Updates 10:21 PM

Vice President Wallace will try to go very fast with these updates. There is an open seat in the Architecture School and her and President Anger have two meetings to fill that seat. There's a town hall with President Garvey tomorrow at 7 and she will see you all there. The Menstrual Equity Task Force has an event a week from today from 7 to 8:30 in Caldwell Auditorium. She had an update on Resolution 035 which was the lighting resolution. President Anger was able to have a meeting

and move forward with coordinating a meeting with DPS and based on DPS's recommendations, will make more concrete steps to fixing the lighting issue. There are three meetings left so if you want a resolution to come forth to the floor see her.

6. Open Floor 10:22 PM

Senator Pelekasis is in an opera and it is currently tech week. She would love for everyone to come and see it March 24 and 26. She is also working on a resolution to make music therapy a minor so if you are interested let her know.

Senator Moore is going to go super fast. Over spring break he went to Poland and has given everyone a Divine Mercy Chaplet.

7. Adjournment 10:23 PM

Motion to adjourn by Senator Michels and seconded by Senator Besendorfer → Motion passes

Vote on motion to adjourn → Vote passes and meeting is adjourned