

# The Catholic University of America Student Government Association 2023-2024 Senate Session 9-3



November 13th, 2022  
8:15 p.m. – 10:15 p.m. EST

## ROLL CALL

**Vice President** - Alex Harvey

### **Secretaries**

Catherine Weatherwax and

Santiago Quiros

**Parliamentarian** - Matthew Cutrona

### **Class of 2024**

Anthony Arreaga-Cacao   X  

Matthew Michels   X  

### **Class of 2025**

Neil D'Attelo   X  

Jeffrey Lance   X  

### **Class of 2026**

Bennett Bert   X  

Michael Kish   X  

### **Class of 2027**

Jack Hermes   X  

Clare Tong   X  

### **School of Architecture**

Elisabeth D'Albero   X  

Jacob Henry   X  

### **School of Arts and Sciences**

Correy Crawford   X  

Jordan Gehrig   X  

### **School of Business**

David Fritz   X  

Max Morris   X  

### **School of Engineering**

Allison Ewing   X  

Maria Hargrave   X  

### **School of Music, Drama, and Art**

Anthony Graf   X  

Kyle Holcomb   X  

### **School of Nursing**

Whitney Paulson   X  

Mary Grace Raddell   X  

### **School of Philosophy**

Kolbe Tucker   X  

### **School of Social Service**

Kendall Germain   X  

Gabriela Pereira-Ruano   X  

### **School of Theology**

Ryan Corey   X  

Andrea Suarez   X

**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 Hermes** leads a general opening prayer.

**1. Public Comment 8:20 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.

**Anthony Curioso**, a sophomore Music Education Major and former Senator, voices his opposition against Bill 002. It is a disservice to the student body, he says, to keep changing the bylaws back and forth, as the wording it presents was already changed and voted on the previous year. For the integrity of the Senate, he opposes the Bill.

**Mia Flores**, a sophomore History Major, is against Bill 002, as it will make a great change increasing the lack of transparency between senators and the student body.

**Executive President Fahey** gives her remarks, first saying that it is great to see everyone. She begins by condemning the racist and sexist incidents in Flather Hall. She invites all students, especially minority students, to come to the joint SGA-CCE *We Are Family Event* the coming Wednesday from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. to reunite the student body. She expresses her joy over a successful second Nugent Dinner with President Kilpatrick, faculty, and members of the student body. She ends by congratulating the three new senate appointees, **Senator Henry**, **Senator Pereira-Ruano**, and **Senator Germain**, giving the Senate good luck and sharing her openness to help out.

## **2. Swearing in of Appointed Senators 8:25 PM**

Motion from **Senator Crawford** to vote on confirmation, seconded by **Senator D'Attelo**.

Vote on confirmation → Passes unanimously

New Senators appointed: Senator Henry, Senator Pereira-Ruano, and Senator Germain

## **3. Adoption of Agenda 8:23 PM**

Motion from **Senator Suarez** to pass the agenda, seconded by **Senator Ewing**.

Vote on agenda adoption → Passes unanimously

Agenda adopted

## **4. Approval of the Minutes 8:25 PM**

Motion from **Senator Holcomb** to approve the minutes, second by **Senator Graf**.

Vote on the Approval of the Minutes → Passes unanimously

Minutes approved

## **5. Senate Speaker 8:35 PM**

**A. Timothy J. Carney**, Assistant Vice President of Campus Services

Motion to suspend the rules by **Senator Paulson**, seconded by **Senator Kish**.

Vote on suspension of the rules → Passes unanimously.

Rules suspended for guest speaker

**Tim Carney** stands to give his presentation.

Mr. Carney gives an overview of the upcoming construction on the Edward J. Pryzbyla University Center, with visual aids of the plans for the new bookstore and post office. The plans are scheduled to begin January 24, 2024, and will be completed by August 1, 2024, in 3 phases. The first phase was the Nest, which has been completed, and the second phase is the 2nd floor renovation of the DSS office and moving the Housing Services office to the second floor as well. He clarifies the reasons for moving the bookstore, which include the expenses of the lease on Monroe Street, the end of the contract with Barnes and Noble, and the inefficient operation of the bookstore. The clear solution is to move the bookstore back to campus. He shows a slideshow of renderings of what the new bookstore will look like, including blueprints of the new layout, colors, and the flow of the new space. He confirms that the Market will remain open, even with the construction of the new post office. Mr. Carney then shows renderings of the new post office and emphasizes that the new system will be much more efficient. He also presents many new branding ideas, including new color schemes and slogans which are not yet finalized but are in the process of being decided on. Mr. Carney then pivots to discuss the new mural in the Pryzbyla Center. He mentions that the current mural is around 20 years old and has some damage, so there has been considerable desire to replace it. The changing of the mural will be part of the 3rd phase of the renovations on the Pryzbyla Center. It will have a blue color scheme.

He then opens the floor for a period of questioning.

**Senator Paulson** rises to ask about car traffic around the new post office and raises her concerns of a safe walking path for students.

**Mr. Carney** discusses the idea of a new stop sign saying he is in support of the idea.

**Senator Hermes** rises to ask whether the lockers in the new post office will be available.

**Mr. Carney** clarifies that the lockers will actually double in number in addition to still being available.

**Senator Crawford** expresses his concern at packages often being left at dorms and at Father O'Connell Hall. He asks what students can do to ensure the safe arrival of their packages at the new post office after the location change.

**Mr. Carney** encourages students to get a tracking number and watch their packages to ensure they arrive at the correct location.

**Senator Gehrig** asks about Cardinal Cupboard and whether a new location has been determined for that organization during the construction in its current location.

**Mr. Carney** says that they had not considered a new location, but it will not be a significant trouble to determine a temporary location.

**Senator D'Albero** asks how students can purchase textbooks while the bookstore is in the process of moving.

**Mr. Carney** says that the new hybrid ordering system will allow students to order textbooks online from the marketplace, and there will still be a representative in the bookstore until we are able to move entirely to a new ordering system online.

**Senator Henry** asks about students who prefer physical textbooks to online books.

**Mr. Carney** clarifies that just the ordering system is online, and physical textbooks will still be available.

**Senator Raddell** asks if the same vendors will be used for merchandise at the bookstore, and whether the address of the Pryz will change.

**Mr. Carney** says that most vendors will remain the same, and the address will also remain the same.

**Senator Tong** asks how construction will impact students.

**Mr. Carney** says that students will still be able to cross through the Pryz, but will not be able to walk around on each specific floor as it is undergoing renovations.

**Senator Graf** asks whether the fonts have been finalized, because he does not like them.

Mr. Carney says that the fonts and specific design decisions are not yet decided officially.

Motion to reinstate the rules by **Senator Holcomb**, seconded by **Senator Suarez**.

Vote on reinstatement of the rules → Passes unanimously.

Rules reinstated.

## **6. New Business**

### **A. Committee Chair Updates 8:55 PM**

#### **i. Senator Michels, Rules and Administration**

**Senator Michels** shares how he and his team discussed Bill 002 in their last meeting. It sounds correct, so the debate will be interesting. He supports Senator Bert's **Resolution 003** promoting campus safety. Ends by stating that Committee Chairs must have the power to operate and set the times of their meetings. To deprive them of such is a violation of the bylaws.

ii. Senator Gehrig, Academic Affairs

**Senator Gehrig** starts off by thanking her committee's tireless work. Senator D'Albero is working on help-request for Window facilities, repairs taking approximately  $\frac{2}{3}$  of a day. **Senator Raddell** is looking at the possibility of replacing Starbucks with a student-run cafe. **Senator Hargrove** is looking into SGA Express reimbursement plans for tickets back home. **Senator Fritz** is looking into the Kane Fitness Center's hours. **Senator Graf** continues his work to fix the water fountains in Ward. And finally, Senator Gehrig herself is looking into increased funding for music education majors' tests, as well as funding for professional headshots and photobooths.

iii. Senator Kish, University Services

**Senator Kish** passionately expresses how his committee has been as productive as can be. They are looking into how CSSA can help combat human rights violations in China.

iv. Senator Ewing, Student Resources

**Senator Ewing** presents her committee's recent work, thanking **President Harvey** for his contributions as well. **Senator Tong** is looking into proper standardization for Learning Communities and AP class credit. Attention is given to Senator Morris's **Bill 003** on the floor tonight. **Senator Ewing** announces that Dining Services will email a system update for when services will be closed during the holidays. Hopefully, she ends off, the committee will add a couple of senators from the recent appointees.

v. Senator Corey, Campus Life

**Senator Corey** presents his committee's resolution ideas. First, Senator Lance is working on the possibility to add more meatless options on Fridays of Lent at Garvey Hall.

**Senator Hermes** is working on a resolution to have a vending machine selling protein bars at the Kane Fitness Center, to hit the floor the earliest by December, as well as a resolution to have a dining location in the Pryzbyla Center open on weekends other than market, Murphy's being a possibility.

**B. Senator Bennett Bert, Class of 2026 (Resolution 003) 9:00 PM**

i. A Resolution To Increase Safety Training for Students and Faculty

**Senator Bert**, with co-sponsor **Senator Michels** by his side, gives a short speech regarding

his resolution to increase safety training for a better-prepared school community in the face of active shooter threats.

Most of us were here, he starts off, in the spring when there was a false threat to university. There was a big police response, sirens going off everywhere, and a lot of panic, but while I was in class, my professor did not do anything as we watched police cars drive by. This resolution aims to prevent this from happening again.

He reached out to student leaders, including RA's and OA's, to see what they thought about this, getting their support. **Renaud D. Scott II** became the new coordinator for the Office of Emergency Management, having a great vision for safety at Catholic University. Developed training modules are offered regularly but not well attended. This should be added to as many student organization trainings as possible. Also, the Office of Emergency Management should provide informational links to faculty, staff, and students, something that was much needed last year.

Currently, self defense trainings offered by the Department of Public Safety are during the day so many students are not able to go. They should be during the evenings instead.

**Senator Michels** adds on the importance of this issue. Over the summer he worked in DC. On July 5, there was a murder right in front of his building. It is always best to be prepared for the worst.

**Senator Crawford** was in the Office of Admissions when the false threat occurred. It was scary, as we had parents there. The staff handled it by starting a Q & A session for the parents. It is crucial to always put safety first.

**Senator Corey** asks what defines a student organization. As leaders, would the Senate and SGA also get safety training?

**Senator Bert** assumes that they would be willing to add it as part of SGA orientation. Training should be applied to all student leaders and their organizations, as we want to extend it to as many students as possible. **Senator Michels** adds that this should be left ambiguous for now.

**Senator Gehrig** agrees that this issue is very important. She asks if active shooter training would be included, and would it be different for students and faculty members?

**Senator Bert** responds by saying that the new coordinator of the Office of Emergency Management told him that the new training method includes a slideshow and a video. The office staff left it open-ended if the training would be the same for both students and faculty.

**Senator D'Attelo** expresses appreciation for the work on the resolution. He asks if it would be mandatory for organizations and faculty to complete the safety training.

**Senator Bert** explains that it would not be mandatory but up to professional staff leaders, serving as an open invitation for student organizations to reach out.

Motion to vote by **Senator Gehrig**, seconded by **Senator Paulson**.

Motion is approved.

With 25 ayes, the resolution is passed unanimously.

### **C. Senator Max Morris, Busch School of Business (Bill 002) 9:13 PM**

#### **i. A Bill To Allow Freedom of Deliberate Votes**

**Senator Morris** rises to introduce his bill. He says that it's pretty straightforward, it just involves removing the names of senators from the votes on the official minutes. This is an issue that has been brought up by current and former senators, who have applied for and been denied jobs at federal intelligence agencies because the way they have voted has been uncovered in background checks. This means that senators are not free to vote based on how they feel, and thus cannot vote freely. Senator Morris says that while this bill would remove transparency between senators and their constituents, his personal solution will be to post stories on Instagram to communicate to students how he voted in the most recent senate meeting. This way, the transparency between him and his constituents will be protected and he will be protected to vote freely without worrying about background checks possibly preventing him from being selected for a job later on. He says that out of the 3500 undergraduates, each senator represents about 300 students, and that number is small enough to enable a senator to get to know each of his constituents so that they are free to ask him in person how he voted. Additionally, the senate meetings are open to the public, so students are welcome to come and observe each meeting and see how each senator votes if they are so inclined. The official minutes do not hold so much value that it's imperative for us to keep our names attached to each vote. In fact, many senators as well as students are unaware that the minutes are posted for the public to see after each meeting. This goes to show that no one looks at the minutes, so it's not worth risking future jobs by putting our names next to our votes on a document that no one



reads except future employers. Senator Morris says that the SGA Senate is not so important that we risk jobs for the sake of transparency. We are for transparency, but we do not support intimidation.

**Senator D'Attelo** says that although he voted on the bill last year, he would have voted differently if he had known that his future job was at risk.

**Senator Tong** says that this bill aims to protect us in the long run, and that as someone who aims for a job in the FBI, she wants to be aware of the possibilities included with the extensive background checks and wants the freedom to vote freely on important issues.

**Senator Morris** emphasizes that the goal of each senator is to represent the students.

**Senator Graf** encourages the senators to think about their power. He states that none of the senators fell into their role, but rather worked hard to campaign and be elected so they could be the voices of the students they wanted to represent. He states that the senators must be bold and trust in their constituents when there is a diverse senate and a controversial issue on the floor. Senator Graf says that this bill fights for cowardice, and that we cannot hide behind anonymity. He says that each senator promised to represent the students fearlessly.

**Senator Morris** says that he does not deny that the senators are representatives. He emphasizes that the Senate cares about making CUA better, but the SGA Senate is not serious enough to justify risking future employment, especially since it cannot make real change but rather just makes suggestions. He also says that it's not reasonable to act like the senators will suddenly be voting for awful things once they are not being exposed for their votes in the minutes. He says that he ran unopposed for his position, and he did not initially want to be a senator.

**Senator D'Albero** says that her role as a senator is to be a true representative of her constituents and allow that position to follow through with her to her future jobs. She says that she wants to be proud of what she votes for, knowing that she truly represents students and that acting on behalf of her school should not be a reflection of her personally.

**Senator Kish** says that there is a difference between freedom and license. He says that his vote should not be seen as Kish's vote, but rather the vote of his half of the class. The recent increase in abstentions should not be happening, and instead the senators should be voting the way the students want them to.

**Senator Paulson** says that no one looks at the minutes. However, in the minutes, you can see

the record of who said what in the debate. Not only the yes and no votes are recorded, but also each person's reasoning. She says that she was just hired after an extensive background check and was never questioned about her involvement in SGA. She asks everyone to read the minutes because hard work goes into accurately representing everyone's ideas.

**Senator Morris** says that the minutes are summaries- direct quotes are entirely different. Things can easily be misconstrued. He has heard from many that this has impacted their jobs. He doesn't want to remove names, and it would be easier to keep a summary and maybe quotes.

**Senator Ewing** says if senators have a strong enough opinion to vote, they should take advantage of the time provided to defend their vote. Senators should be proud of what they vote for, especially with an opportunity to defend themselves.

**Senator Morris** expresses concern that it is nuanced and that information is lost in the summary, and that everyone has bias when they are summarizing. He says that as much as he loves SGA, it is not serious enough to risk impacting our futures.

**Senator Holcomb** says that senators should be voting the way the school wants them to vote. The majority of constituents want to see how their senators are voting and thus they should be held accountable. If you are worried your ideas will be misconstrued, speak to the secretaries. He says that it is disheartening to hear that SGA is not that serious, and asks why we are all here if that is true. Senator Holcomb says that this bill is a disregard for transparency and that it is a step backwards in accountability. In order for SGA to be taken seriously, senators need to be held accountable and connect with their constituents. He emphasizes that all senators have the right to speak and clarify their positions, even if not in debate but also the open floor. He encourages senators to take responsibility for how they vote. He says it is hypocritical to hide information from the student body.

**Senator Morris** says that this bill is not about transparency. It's about how our futures are affected. He says that we are here for 4 years, and then have another 65 or 70 years after graduation. Even before we turn 25, our brains are not fully developed and prepared for the best decision making. He says that we should not be held accountable for votes made at 19 years old.

**Senator Holcomb** clarifies that he did not mean to call Senator Morris a disappointment, but rather that he was disappointed that many people do not take the SGA Senate seriously. He says that it's true that they can only recommend actions, but that they are here to represent constituents.

**Senator Hermes** says that many universities that have student governments do not publish their minutes. If the meetings are public, the minutes should not be private. Abstentions have risen in frequency substantially and it is not acceptable, and it will continue to happen if senators are not protected.

**Senator Bert** says that the Senate is that serious, and that people do read the minutes. Posting our votes on our instagram stories is not efficient, and he says that he would rather do that when he has a comment. Instagram stories can also be found by background checks. Silencing votes will only silence debate because people will vote anonymously. We should be encouraging debate.

**Senator Morris** says that the minutes take a while to get posted- the minutes from this year have not even been posted on the SGA website yet. The instagram story solution is not mandatory for everyone, but he wants people to know how he voted. The most effective way to maintain transparency is to form relationships with your constituents.

**Senator Lance** says that as a politics major, the chances of him finding a job from SGA votes are slim but they exist! It's better to be safe than sorry, he says that he will vote in favor.

**Senator D'Albero** says that she strives to maintain leadership, accountability, and representation as a student leader. She says that many new freshmen know her because she is intertwined with the community and wants to take accountability for how she is representing the students around her. She says she has had experiences in which people have come up to her and asked her to vote in a specific way in an upcoming meeting, and she votes with her constituents' opinions in mind. Senator D'Albero says that she does not vote with personal interest. She clarifies that she does not want to remove transparency so as to increase debate. While this could raise more questions for the senators, we should remember that we are not here for us, we are here for the community.

Motion to extend the meeting until 10:30 PM by **Senator Suarez**, seconded by **Senator Corey**.

Vote on extension of the meeting → Passes.

Meeting extended until 10:30 PM.

**Senator Kish** proposes an amendment to the bill. He says that an amendment would involve a final tally of the yeas, nays, and abstentions, along with the schools and classes that voted each way, but not the names of individual senators. Article V, Section 3, Clause 4 of the Senate

Bylaws is amended to read "When a roll call vote occurs, the final tally of the yeas, nays, and abstentions, as well as the schools or classes of Senators, shall be published in the Senate minutes along with the final vote tally."

Motion to propose an amendment to the bill by **Senator Kish**, seconded by **Senator Lance**.

Vote → Passes.

A period of debate ensues on the amendment itself:

**Senator Graf** says that this is a great idea. If the senators from the same class or school vote separately, they will be more protected.

**Senator Michels** says he feels it is a last minute decision to amend a bill that's on the floor. He encourages that the bill be sent back to committee to work on the amendment. He says that the committee meeting can be open invite as well.

**Senator Morris** expresses concern that if the bill went back to committee that the committee would simply vote not to send it back to the floor.

**VP Harvey** clarifies that the Bylaws state it requires a majority vote of the committee to send a bill to the floor or to terminate legislation in committee.

**Senator Kish** says that the bill should not be sent back to committee because the committee has fewer individuals because everyone will be in their own committee meetings. He says that it would be best to make a judgment now, while the bill is on the floor.

**Senator Hermes** says that the wording in the Bylaws for the current bill is unclear.

**Senator Michels** says that this is an entirely different issue.

Motion to extend the meeting until 10:45 PM

Vote on extension of the meeting → Passes with 15 ayes.

Meeting extended until 10:45 PM.

**Senator Paulson** asks why not combine meetings? The job of the committee is not to stop legislation before it gets to the floor, and the committee will view it as a new bill after an amendment.

**Senator Morris** says the bill should be debated while it is on the floor.

**Senator Ewing** says that although she has been against this bill, she helped Senator Morris get it to the floor because it deserved to be debated. She says that she will not bring a vendetta in the vote whether to bring it back to the floor.

**Senator Morris** says he believes an amendment is a step in the right direction.

**Senator Gehrig** says that the bill cannot currently get the attention it deserves due to the late hour.

Motion to send Bill 002 back to committee by **Senator Gehrig** seconded by **Senator Paulson**.

Vote to entertain the motion to send Bill 002 back to committee → Passes.

A period of debate opens on sending Bill 002 back to committee.

**Senator Corey** says that senators should vote freely and avoid dividing themselves.

**Senator Hermes** asks what the reason is to send the bill back to committee.

**Senator Graf** says that clarification is needed on the proposed amendment.

**Senator Bert** says that the bill should go back to committee, and that senators should not vote based on personal reasons when voting whether the bill should be brought back to the floor. He says that he will vote to bring the bill back if that's what Senator Morris wants.

**Senator Morris** clarifies that he wants the bill to come back to the floor, and asks for senators to guarantee that they will vote accordingly.

Motion to vote on whether to send Bill 002 back to committee by **Senator D'Atello**,

seconded by **Senator Gehrig**.

Vote → Passes.

Bill 002 sent back to committee.

**VP Harvey** reminds senators to avoid interrupting other senators and to wait until they are recognized to speak.

## **7. Vice President, SGA Updates 10:30 PM**

Our next committee meeting will be Monday, November 27th in McGivney Hall. Since many of you will be traveling or on the road, I will be canceling the meeting next Monday's meeting to allow for flexible travel. Just as a heads up, our final meeting of the semester will be on December 4th in Caldwell Auditorium. There are many resolution ideas in the works for our final meeting of the year, so if you feel ready to bring legislation, please let me know.

Thank you to everyone who attended last Friday's Veterans Day Event. There were over fifty-six flags laid along the walkway behind the Pryz to honor all of the CUA veterans who fell in the line of duty from World War I to the Global War on Terror. The event was a tremendous success, and we had excellent support from Young Americans for Freedom, College Democrats, and College Republicans.

Last Thursday was also our final Nugent Dinner for the semester- we have been hearing great feedback from these dinners, and we look forward to hosting more in the spring.

Finally, feel free to set up a meeting with me to discuss your ideas for legislation or truly about any matter pertaining to the senate. I know a few of you have concerns about the productivity of committee meetings- and I understand the format of two committee meetings in between senate meetings can be difficult. So if you'd like to discuss ways that I can support you, please email me, and I'd be happy to support you.

## **8. Open Floor 10:32PM**

**Senator D'Albero** thanks everyone for the debate and reiterates that she is supporting the students of CUA.

**Senator Crawford** says he feels the Senate should be more focused on real issues rather than issues regarding the Senators. He encourages everyone to be focused on student values

and make an effort to make change.

**Senator Michels** reminds everyone to send their legislation to VP Harvey before the meeting so that senators can review it. He encourages collaboration among senators.

**Senator Holcomb** asks for apologies if he comes off too harsh. He remains glad that everyone was able to stand up and defend their opinions this meeting. Although there was a lot of underground lobbying, the Senate is more effective and resolutions are likely to be implemented if we put our brains together and put forward something that is strong. He ends of by expressing admiration for all those who spoke.

**Senator Paulson** promises to vote yes to bring Bill 002 back to the floor. She reminds everyone to share their legislation before it comes to the floor.

**Senator Bert** thanks everyone for passing his resolution and welcomes the new senators.

**Senator Gehrig** says that she has a meeting with dining services coming up and asks senators to reach out to her with any dining adjacent questions. She encourages senators to remember why they are here and who they are here for.

**Senator Morris** thanks everyone for agreeing to bring his bill back to the floor, and apologizes for not having sent his bill to VP Harvey ahead of time.

## **9. Adjournment 10:39 PM**

Motion to adjourn by **Senator Suarez** and seconded by **Senator Paulson**.

Vote on meeting adjournment → Passes

Meeting adjourned.