I. Attendance:
Absent: Senator Boyle

II. Acceptance of Minutes
Speaker Gogineni: Motion to accept minutes
Senator Rizal: Seconded
Minutes have been passed.

III. Announcements
President Gratch: I hope everyone is having a good week. Last week, we sent out an all-student survey. We did this in conjunction with the president of EatReal. They are trying to provide fair trade coffee to the dining halls. The survey helped to gauge student interests. One of the goals is to have one of the dining halls be opened later. Instead of opening at 7 am, one should open at 10 am. According to Dining services, if this decision is okay with the students, then they can easily make the switch to fair trade coffee. They would be able to pay for other things also, because they save around $24,000. Approximately 800 people participated in the survey and 92% were for it.

President Gratch: For 10 o'clock Ross, someone has stolen large bags of cereal from the dining hall. It would not be opened at night if this continues.

Co-chair Chang: With the email about Paris, many people have voiced that the only reason why we're talking about violence attack is because it's Paris—it's white centric.

Senator Rainey: There were concerns that France is being spoken about but other Muslim and African countries aren't. Many CRAs put out emails about France and they encouraged students to come out for support. However, no emails were sent out about Mizzou.

Senator Allis: I have been hearing many conversations about mindfulness and wellness. Professors have been talking about making sure we take care of ourselves, but it doesn’t seem to be the case. For example, a student had three exams in two days, but had no relief. One even felt somewhat offended because their class was seen as less important.
Another case was when an international student already booked a flight home but was rejected when he asked to take the exam a day earlier. Now he has to buy another plane ticket home. Do we know a policy behind this?

Senator Chen: A lot of professors recognize that there is stress on campus, but they don't think it’s a responsibility to relieve it. There’s a disconnect there.

Senator Raber: I have had people reach out to me about passing the bait onto someone else. In actuality, there is no “reduced” course load. Some professors aren’t even taking it seriously.

Senator Fisher: We need people to sign up for 10 o’clock Ross. Also, no one besides President Gratch has written a bill yet. Last year, there were about 10-15 bills that were written and reviewed by this time of the year. This year is an anomaly. If you care about why your constituents voted for you, then you should really think about this.

Senator Rainey: Also, I was wondering when the senators who ran in fall would get reimbursed?

Treasurer de Toledo: It’s a long bureaucratic process. We can’t expedite the process, but hopefully you’ll get the money as soon as possible.

President Gratch: I’ll see if I can talk to them to see if that’s possible.

Senator Allis: There will be a meeting about student parking this Thursday at 1:00pm. The date might change, but let me know if you are interested so I can forward you any updates.

Chief of Staff Brady: You should also talk about Middrides when you’re at the meeting and hopefully be able to get an update about it.

Senator Rizal: I had a meeting with Dining and we talked about 51 Main. It looks like they’re open to any suggestions, but it has to be supported by the general student body and will meet their standards. We were talking about having some type of bar in 51 Main, but I'll be meeting with my ad hoc committee soon.

Co-chair Chang: People are also talking about improving McCullough. The point person is Roman Christiaens, the assistant director of student organizations.
IV. Old Business

Senator Gogineni: For the pass/fail legislation, people have talked about changing the dates. In comparison to other NESCAC schools, they don't have the same drop deadline. Any thoughts?

Senator Singh: Pass/Fail legislation was a huge topic at the Ross Commons Meeting. Many students are in support of increasing it by 1-2 weeks.

Co-chair Chang: I discussed this with Natasha Chang and we're talking about extending the drop deadline to even the 8th week of the semester and grades near the end of the semester. With other schools like Princeton, Pomona, and Williams, they have drop deadlines much later than ours. I have drafted a bill and I think it's something we should act upon soon. We have the support from CC and at least one of the deans. It's relatively doable.

Speaker Gogineni: I was looking at other schools, but focusing on the NESCAC schools, and they're more comparable to our system. While other schools may have easier deadlines, there are other schools with more stringent deadlines.

Gratch: We should have this before Dec 7th.

Co-chair Chang: The main concern is that if we move the drop deadline from 2nd week to the 8th week, people would take all these classes and then drop it just because they're doing poorly in them.

Speaker Gogineni: I was at the EAC Meeting with Dana Silver. He was talking about adding more features to Middcourses. It would be more interactive for faculty members and they would be able to look at Middcourses and add in specific questions and have a place where they can add in their own input.

Senator Rizal: I think Middcourses is working now, because it's disconnected from the professors, but if we allow professors to be included, then students would be more cautious of what they write.

Senator Raber: I disagree. Currently professors can see the reviews they get from Middcourses.

Senator Parikh: Instead of writing it directly into Middcourses, can't we have them write the information in the midd database where they pull the description? That way it'd be separate from Middcourses.
Speaker Gogineni: The main reason we want to change Middcourses is because it’s less confining. Bannerweb is a database we use.

Senator Singh: I think the honest reviews will change if students know professors can see it and can comment back.

Senator Han: Interesting point, but I worked with Middkid.com. The reviews from Middkid.com and middcourses.com aren’t that different. Our names are not attached to it and there are no dates. This ensures a safer space for us. If we want professors to improve then they should see these reviews.

Speaker Gogineni: They can offer personal input if they’re teaching the course directly into MiddCourses.

Senator Han: The main concern is that if we’re deciding between two professors, it will then be based off of the level of difficulty of the course taught by said professor.

President Gratch: These are all great ideas. We should start on this soon, because it may take a long time.

Speaker Gogineni: These things do take forever. Like changes to the senior project has taken 14 years.

Speaker Gogineni: Does anyone want to update the Senate about the recent CCI meeting?

Senator Edwards: At the meeting, it is evident how challenging for the CCI to connect with the student body. Maybe having the J-term workshops would make them seem less intimidating and even having alums help out.

Senator Rainey: The biggest topic proposed was how do we integrate the CCI with the existing Middlebury community? At a certain point, the people are just ignorant of what the CCI is about and how they are actually helping students. If you’re a senior and you have done nothing with the CCI, you don’t really know or have the tools without feeling apprehensive about it. We also talked about having an entry point with the freshmen. How do we integrate the CCI to maybe visit first year seminars?

Senator Sohn: There are different means as to how they can communicate with the students. They suggested doing a poll and maybe integrating the CCI peer career advisors the same way they do with CTLR peer writing students.
Senator Rainey: They are cognizant of the existence of these problems and they really are trying to fix it. They are thinking about rebranding because of how CCI is viewed outside of their own walls. They are very supportive nonetheless.

Co-chair Chang: How do we proceed?

Speaker Gogineni: Different departments can work with the CCI. Now we just need to figure out how these workshops can happen.

Senator Sohn: Our plan is to work with the administration—altogether teamwork effort.

President Gratch: There will be a student forum on wellness. It will be on December 7th in Wilson Hall. They will talk about their 3-year plan in terms of stress and wellness. Increasing diversity and fostering the mind, body, and connection with community wellness are some of the topics. I’m just sort of looking for advice as to how to structure the forum. It gets a little tricky and I don’t want to make it us vs. them. We shouldn’t attack the administration’s ideas. How do we have these conversations? Any thoughts? Miguel Fernandez, Andy Lloyd, and Katy Smith Abbott will be there.

Senator Allis: Can’t we have student representatives that will go along with the other presenters?

Senator Raber: Maybe the Directors of Health and Wellness from Cabinet? I think it’s very important to include students’ perspectives.

V. New Business


President Gratch: It’s 100% still part of my platform. You can talk to Dana Silver about maybe an app. It’s still on the radar but not the perfect time currently because he’s focusing on Middcourses. If you’re interested, you can work on it with us.

Senator Raber: I have a question about the speed-dating event. Is it still happening after Thanksgiving?

Senator Edwards: I recently had the meeting with Q&A. They don’t like the idea of having a separate event or having bracelets. They would rather not define anything. I think people will end up making a lot of friends rather than people you would be interested in. Right now I would like to start promotion on it.
President Gratch: You can reach out to Lily Wilson about it.

Co-chair Chang: If there is interest in the room, we can look at the bill about dropping and pass/fail.

Chief of Staff Brady: If anyone wants to give thoughts about events nationwide and internationally, now is a good time to talk about it.

Senator Rainey: When we sent out an email about cultural appropriation for costumes, it’s as if we took a stance on a matter. It’s like we’re creating a standard in our community and it’s as if “SGA had [our] back.”

Senator Allis: In light of some of the requests from Yale and Mizzou, I wonder what is the status of the AAL.

President Gratch: They are thinking of changing CMP to Critical Perspectives and breaking up AAL into different countries. It will be voted on in January. However, I think it will be active for students coming in Fall 2017.

Senator von Platen: Do we have some type of partnership with Divestment or SNG?

President Gratch: We passed a bill two years ago in support of divestment.

VI. Adjournment

Senator Allis: Motion to adjourn
Senator Edwards: Seconded

Meeting is adjourned: 8:12PM.