SGA Meeting – February 28th Minutes

I. Attendance


Senator Grandas five minutes late.

Absent:

II. Acceptance of Minutes

Senator Gogineni: Welcome Senator Aaron and Senator Grandas. Congratulations on your win and welcome to the Senate! Motion to accept last week’s minutes?

Senator Toy: Motion to accept.

Senator Gogineni: All those in favor of accepting last week’s minutes. You normally want to abstain if you haven’t received the minutes yet. Minutes have been passed. Let’s move onto announcements.

III. Announcements

President Gratch: Welcome everyone! I hope everyone had a good weekend and a happy winter carnival! I want to welcome our two new senators. We’re excited to have you here. On the note of elections, we don’t have a Wonnacott Senator because no one ran. After sending out another email still no one ran. That being said I need to appoint someone. I have three recommendations so hopefully by next week we will have someone. This weekend is a College Board of Overseers meeting. This includes the Language schools, Monterey and one of the things on the agenda is the commons. It’s not a discussion to overhaul the Commons but rather a general conversation about the commons system. I want to have a quick conversation about your experiences with the commons system. Whether their positive or negative etc. So I just wanted to open up the floor for discussion. The college board of overseers is a subunit of the trustees. I would like to report back on experiences everyone has had.

Senator Schulman: I have a mixed review. I love my commons whereas a lot of people don’t like the commons system. They don’t like the people in their commons. But I have to say I’ve enjoyed it.

Senator Toy: I think it’s a good system. I’m not particularly close with my commons (Cook). It’s a good system as a freshman however.
Senator Raber: I think that the commons system has two takeaways. In terms of where you live on campus. It makes sense that you live with the same group of 100 or so students. That system works well and makes it easier to have a base for two years. The commons Deans as you point person for needs or help by the administration works really well.

Senator Edwards: The Commons System was successful in providing me with instant friends but the Dean and counseling aspects are great too. As someone who hasn’t connected with my first year seminar teacher, it’s good to have another contact in the administration.

Senator Rainey: I like the system in terms of living with a large group of people you know - a friend network. My issues lie in the counseling the FYC and CRA have a lack of racial bias training and other problems. To my knowledge there is no training for these people in this regard. It’s been a huge point of contention when I’ve come for counseling. When you come to your CRAs and FYCs and they have no way of helping you.

Senator Gogineni: As a senior I really don’t feel association with commons but I agree it’s a nice system to go into as a freshman. I think that my main issue is there is no consistency in how each commons is run. I heard Brainerd commons is amazing and some of the other ones are not as well loved. There are no strict regulations as to how a commons office has to be run.

Senator Chen: I completely agree with you. And to go back to what Senator Rainey said, the people make the Commons. The way it’s run between coordinators and staff, changing FYC and CRAs each year leads to a lot of leadership turnover. It could be evolving a lot - getting more in touch with the needs of the students.

Senator Singh: Coordination among commons is important. When commons heads come to intercommons council they try to make things happen but there’s no success.

Senator Boyle: The commons system works really well for people that are into it. Brainerd people love Brainerd really strongly and the rest don’t really have any concern over it. That’s how it plays out right now. It’s not so amazing that everyone loves their Commons.

Senator Grandas: I felt the same way coming in. There’s been optional activities to sign up for but at least half of my commons comes. If you don’t sign up for those commons activities you’re not really part of the commons dialogue.

Senator Parikh: I think it’s a good system for first years. But I wonder about the extent to which it makes people not want to make friends outside of their commons. I can’t invite him to be my roommate next year because he’s in a different Commons. I wonder about that.

Senator Gogineni: President Gratch, do you want any specific suggestions?
President Gratch: If anyone has any that would be great!

Senator Edwards: I wanted to address senator Rainey’s point about there not being enough training. They’re putting in a whole new training program for diversity and race relations for next year.

Senator Parikh: Just a small idea with that. If there was someway of pulling in one person from another Commons for sophomore housing would be great. Say you have one open spot and we want to pull in one person from Wonnacott etc.

Senator Rainey: I think that maybe there are a lot of people that have great experience with the Commons but others that have reasons, whether it be their FYC or the building they’re in, the dean is hard to deal with etc. Having to force them to have those resources set for two years (or the people that occupy them) can be problematic. What if someone has a well put reason, they can switch commons? It would be impossible to have the reason be the physical dorm building (Battell) but there are other reasons: maybe you have a close friend network in another Commons, or don’t like the people occupying and facilitating what goes on in your Commons. I would be interested in that.

Senator: Advisor Adams - I think you can go to a different Dean if you choose to right?

Advisor Adams: Primarily no. It is possible to switch though. It takes a lot of effort but it is possible.

Co-Chair Chang: The racial bias thing is huge. I know my Commons is thinking about doing something addressing that. I once visited a Dean and they used a certain word that was really offensive. Another experience was a first year who had a rough time with people passing away at home. She was trying to get a room change and it took way longer than it should have. She ended up renting a hotel outside of Battell because it was taking so long. It wasn’t handled well with the Dean or the Commons Coordinator. The CRA felt like they had no power in that situation. Another student felt they had been lied to about how some aspects of their financial status after taking time off. There was a huge miscommunication and they ended up not being able to continue at Middlebury. Personally I’ve had academic things take a long time to go through the system. I thought it had been handed but in reality it had not. Generally, if you know that something has gone on that hasn’t been done well by your Dean, it’s complicated that the Dean is the only person you can get an excuse form. That can be really weird. You’re telling them all of your life’s problems but if they don’t take it well that’s your only resource. Having the option – really publicizing being able to switch out of the Commons would be an improvement. Or being able to report something outside of your Commons system.

Senator Rainey: I just wanted to say in lieu of personal experience. I don’t use my CRA. Thankfully Katie Linder is a CRA in cook and I go to her. I find my CRA counter effective to when I share things. But what if I didn’t live in Battell - where I could walk a hallway down and speak to someone. What would I do if I lived in Brainerd or Allen
etc.? I’ve had moments where I really needed to talk to someone and luckily had that resource. It’s scary to have to go talk to someone else in a different building. Today I wanted to file options in terms of harassment. I talked to my FYC about it and he had no idea what to do. He directed me to my CRA and Katie who both didn’t know what to do. Directing people to resources, I’m very dissatisfied with my options and I had to go out and find those resources on my own. But the fact that I went to CRAs and FYCs and they didn’t know what to do is concerning. I think better training or a way for students to anonymously send in experiences would be good. Whether it’s about racial bias or in a more general sense – showing students what options are available to them. And where they can go for resources.

Senator Schulman: I think that they have phenomenal training in terms of health issues. I had a horrible instance freshman year and they were really great. I can be more specific if you like.

Senator Chen: I think that it’s important to remember that people you are talking about are still students. Not that that is excusable. They do have training but it would just make training longer. We have a lot of health training. I think it’s just making it longer, maybe restructuring it. If that’s something that can be raised with the Deans, I think it would be a step forward. How the Commons – how people get chosen to be placed in each Commons. It’s based on academics and a class – a common topic to talk about. That is unique to Middlebury and a great idea.

President Gratch: Great, thanks so much everyone! I wanted to follow-up with what we talked about last week. I met with the board of DMC and had a really good conversation with them about the statement and the way it was sent out. I think one major take away I found was that it would be helpful for us to slow things down a little bit. They said it would have been helpful to have a conversation about what was happening in this room and among the organizations that we reached out to. Having a meeting all together could have had a stronger impact. And I totally agree. Moving forward, we spoke about how we can be better allies and representatives etc. The president of DMC, Mario, thought it would be good to have a meeting with the rest of the senators and cultural organization members that we can get together. Mario told me there’s a meeting next Thursday night with an alum whose back. He suggested we reach out to the cluster and get SGA there before that. I told him that would be great. I will let you all know via email when that meeting will be and where. Something to think about - I want to make sure that everyone comes prepared and does some thinking about questions we want to ask or thoughts we have etc. And your experience around campus. If anyone has questions, please let me know. And I’ll be in touch with more information about the meeting.

Senator Gogineni: Aaron, do you want to present the mid-year report?

Aaron: Just a quick aside: Battell, it’s one of the best social buildings on campus. Living there for three years, I’ve seen a lot and had some great experiences. Ok – for the mid-year report. As you will soon notice there are a lot of numbers here. I’m sure we could get this sent out to everyone if you want to look at it on your own. I’m going to cover
who’s in finance committee, the 2015-2016 budget, our progress report and looking forward into 2017. Who we are – here you go. These are our committee members. What is left of budget. We started out with 1.13 million and we got nearly 1.38 million requests so far and have more on the horizon. It’s been a tight year in terms of the amount of money we have. We have a maximum of 35K left to spend. Projecting that 25 thousand will go to liabilities we know about. We don’t have to spend this remaining money, in many ways it’s a bad thing if we spend all of it. We have a total of 64K into the reserves. That’s money not in our budget that we are spending. This means that next year we can’t spend this much money over reserves. We like to keep around 100-150 in reserves. Sometimes things happen, like the WRMC tower that fell, that we need a little bit of a safety net for.

Moving forward from that – as you can see there are lots of figures. I can give an overview - I think this is more for your purposes - what clusters are getting a lot of money etc. General themes – there have been a lot of great ideas we’ve had to fund at the bare minimum because we don’t have enough money for them. We have reduced some costs and are working to reduce others. This will allow more flexibility to fund things at higher levels. Budget allocation – big expenditures, MCAB, club sports, miscellaneous (Middview, those kind of things). This is the third year of Middview funding. Next year we won’t have to fund Middview. In terms of ongoing incomplete initiatives. We’re reducing the cost of the yearbook. This year we went from 42000 to a max of now 15000. The sound system policy – organizations were blowing through sound systems left and right. We’ve established a new policy for that. We’re working on pairing cluster managers with a finance committee member. For club sports – we have a new guideline proposal. We’ve met with all club sports and will bring our proposal next week to the Senate to be approved. Our spring budgeting for 2016-2017 begins in April so we need those guidelines done by March. The theme of guideline changes will be cutting out big per person expenditures to spread the money out. We won’t fund a hotel room because that hotel room is very expensive and takes a lot of money from on-campus things. Or flights etc. One of the themes for club sports funding – capping expenditures. This would mean keeping the per person spending at a manageable level. A sport will have higher costs than a group that meets once a week. Cluster boards – we’ve been moving with some orgs towards this model, the first big one being the SCB. Cultural orgs are doing a proposal for cluster boards as well. The idea behind that is the cluster board comes in together with a proposal. The cluster board begins making the tough budgetary decisions for each org and we’re essentially rubber stamping their budgetary decisions. It’s like mini finance committee. As it is we’re still seeing 169-150 orgs and we have to make all of these micro decisions. For some orgs clusters work but for others they don’t. You will be updated as that process goes on.

In terms of 2016-2017 budget: We’re freeing up 98,000 because we’re not funding Middview, 5,000 from yearbooks, 40,000 because were not paying for another Cabin. The reserves are just down to 75,000. There is 64K we can’t spend. The other thing is we had to fund most organizations at the lowest possible level for them to operate at. We had to cut nearly 300K out of budgets so far. We’re never going to be able to fund 100% of proposals – there’s too much going on – but hopefully we will be able to fund things at a higher level. We’re working to reform club sports which could help free up more money
to be allocated to other orgs. Moving to cluster board models – each cluster board would have a flex fund. A flex fund is generally around 5K which allows them to create add-hoc events around themselves. Of course adding a few 5K flex funds takes away from money to be spent but it’s going to orgs where it will be used. That’s how we’re looking at moving forward right now. We have a lot to do from now going into the end March and April. The theme of this year was not going through the same budgeting process as always but really changing things around to make the budgeting process more fair. Do you guys have any questions?

Senator Toy: Do you know what MCAB has been spending money on this year. There was no fall concert, we’ve had what feels like much fewer events. Felly wasn’t using MCAB’s main budget – it was from the small concerts budget.

Aaron: MCAB does work as their own org. At the end of each year they will give us their new proposal for the coming year. Any budget above 10K needs to be approved by the Senate – so their budget is approved by the Senate each year. So we will have a discussion regarding the MCAB budget. I believe the reps were at a meeting.

Senator Rainey: But in the mean time there’s nothing we can do to review what is going on in MCAB now?

Aaron: I think we should look at the whole scope of what they’re doing. If you look at the amount of concerts, speakers, Atwater dinners, winter carnival. These are all things that cost a lot of money. If someone wants to put the time into what exactly they are spending the money on, you are welcome to.

Senator Rainey: Are they funded by the activity fee that everyone pays?

Aaron: MCAB is funded by the Student Government.

Senator Rainey: My concern is that student’s thoughts are not put into the choices of activities. Students should be presented with the three individuals that are being thought about for a concert, or activities that are being considered for winter carnival.

Aaron: MCAB has their own exec board. So suggestions would go to that.

Carolyn: I’m on the MCAB concerts committee and there’s a lot of student input into our decisions. We sent out a survey in the fall regarding what type of music you want to hear: do you want an indie band or something more popular etc. Personally, for the speakers, we’re working to make the avenues more visible for how to apply for a speaker. We review 2 or 3 applications a week. All of the cultural orgs come to us. In the past weeks we’ve given multiple thousands of dollars to orgs. We’re also sending out applications to join our committee.

Aaron: Senator Gogineni has on the agenda a conversation about the philosophy of budgeting – maybe we could transition there.
Senator Gogineni: Yes Aaron but since the Feb senators weren’t at the retreat. Could you quickly explain the role of the Finance Committee.

Aaron: FC is a committee of SGA. There are currently 11 members who are chosen by a combo of current members, Senators of SGA and president Gratch. You sit on the committee for four years. The committee makes recommendations for the budget. The student orgs come to the Finance Committee and we recommend how to allocate the student activity fee. It’s about four million dollars. Any of the bigger budgets come through the Senate and we make our decision in that manner. The way our process works: we do the majority of budgeting for the 2015-2016 year. Obviously our funding window is open all year. New orgs, existing orgs make budget requests throughout the year. You can also make a new money request. Say you want to have an event you can make a request for that. I think that’s the basics of the process.

Senator Gogineni: Great, thanks so much! We can move onto the conversation now. To preface, one of the Senate’s major roles is approving the budget. But before that’s done it’s important that we come up with our own philosophy. What are our priorities? Do we want to fund the most number of students? It’s important to hash that out. I also don’t want to have the convo go too long. I’m going to cap my own discussion at 10-15 minutes. Anyone want to start off?

Co-Chair Chang: Could we go back to the list of people on the committee? What does the diversity for those people look like – is there an initiative to actively bring on more diverse students?

Aaron: We’re in our new process right not. We’re reaching out to each of the cluster managers. All eligible students include Freshman and Sophomores because we want students on it for 3-4 years. It’s hard if you don’t know the clubs. We’re reaching out to all of the cluster managers and to identify students they think have the experience with a budget or would be interested. We’re trying to find a more diverse applicant pool with a diverse set of interests. We want to reach out to as many students as possible. And open that application pool up.

Co-Chair Chang: Would you mind speaking out to the first question. Regarding diversity of the committee: POC, women, gender non-conforming, people on financial aid, from outside of the US, people part of different programs like Posse or UWC.

Aaron: I’m not sure this is a question that is appropriate to answer. I don’t want to speak to any of these questions like things I know regarding their financial backgrounds. If you want to reach out to these students, you can do that but I don’t want to speak on their behalf.

Senator Gogineni: To get the conversation going: should we take on another construction project Bergen lodge. Should we be funding things like that?
Senator Bhakta: As long as it’s student based it shouldn’t matter what we’re funding. Bergen lodge is a little off but as long as it’s student based it shouldn’t be an issue.

Senator Boyle: I think construction projects are unique in that it doesn’t require students to go to their own meetings. Personally I’m not going to trek out to Bergen lodge but for example the tree house is on campus and its appeal could go to a lot of groups of student’s. I think they are interesting projects.

Aaron: I think there’s a unique aspect of construction projects. Especially in how expensive they are. The average student org gets 2K. So imagine the Bergen lodge as 20 student orgs or 100 student activities fees. I find it hard to justify big projects like that. I find it hard to not let students go that overnight for a conference or buy flight tickets to a conference because we’ve invested 100 student activities fees in this project.

Senator Raber: I wasn’t here when the cabin was passed but I agree with Aaron. My impression was that there was a miscommunication there. It was meant to cost one thing and then cost another. The information we’re getting shouldn’t keep changing. It should be on a case by case basis. That might be more accessible to everyone.

Senator Aaron: If we chose not to fund it would it not have happened?

Senator Gogineni: This specific case, they had other sources of funding. They came to the SGA as additional funding. But I think they reached their goal without our funding. Should we be pushing these types of projects to raise money themselves? How much should we expect clubs to raise on their own?

President Gratch: In theory these projects are cool but they never go as smoothly as you think they should go. You-power for example which was funded in 2011 had a period of 2 years where it was de-funked and there was no leadership. I have similar concerns with the cabin. This is something to think about.

Senator Sohn: Historically, besides the lodge. Construction wise has there been big construction ideas or is this a recent trend?

Aaron: Just a side note - we’re missing one of our members. Tavic Francis is on the committee as well. I apologize for that mistake. In terms of building projects. The cabin was the first big one. It became the next phenomenon that the SGA then fund the tree house. Then we gave 1000 to the tree house that was not something that was a great idea. The tree house was also going to cost an exorbitant amount of money. If we had a 7-million-dollar budget that would be a great thing to fund but we’re really having to short change everything to make sure that things on campus happen and are possible.

Senator Sohn: Is there an organization specifically for students considering construction besides midd entrepreneurs?

Senator Boyle: There’s an architectural daily
Senator Sohn: But don’t they just eat and talk?

Senator Boyle: They’re developing a tea house now.

Senator Sohn: Maybe we could give that as a suggestion for students. If it’s going to encourage them to suggest for construction projects then, then never mind.

Aaron: The last couple years Solar decathlon was a big thing. But as with most of campus there are years where certain things are very popular. When I came to Midd I heard quiddich was the most important thing but now it’s not really as big as it was then. That was a big outlet for people interested in construction projects. We don’t want to be formulaic because it doesn’t allow impactful things to be funded. But when you talk about a huge funding project.

Senator Chen: I think one other thing to consider in large capital projects is the idea of risk. You take on a large amount of risk at the cost of some well defined events on campus. I don’t think it’s necessarily the role of the SGA to fund this. I think it’s concerning to build a structure on campus but you’re not getting funding from the campus itself. The cost of upkeep will be more continuous than just the cost of building in itself. For construction sake there is something in the works for that and might come to the table later in the year. As far as the large end of things it’s not necessarily our job.

Co-Chair Chang: I think the idea of having a makers space on campus that Joey Button is doing. He’s trying to use the Bunker for that and see if the SGA will approve that. So we’ll see that down the line. I had four topics to talk about as someone whose been on the committee. It might be an interesting rule to implement that when we fund orgs that get a lot of money. If we’re funding the sailing team 500 per person and they’re only contributing 410 per person. This is weird to think about. Second thing. Implicit bias that everyone has. When I served on the finance committee there was some anti activist comments. Why would we fund things environmental etc. Men tend to appear more confident – how can we introduce an implicit bias training for people coming into the finance committee. Maybe we could have an audit of number of students. How much does each student have being spent on them in all the orgs their in and how does that vary across the students. You could calculate it and I think we’d find a huge discrepancy. The fourth thing: thinking about the diversity on the list but there are only two people that would be read as people of color which to me is a pretty low number and having been part of that election process- it’s changed but it is somewhat the same. Oftentimes people that have known people on the committee get in. There are certain people who over the course of the term took time off, that tends to be women. Which I think is not a coincidence. Neutral culture means more people will feel less included etc. So to me thinking about actively recruiting diversity for the finance committee is important and hearing their voice is important.

Senator Gogineni: We will think about all of these after the reforms come to the table.
Aaron: It’s a very different committee in terms of the way it operates now versus two years ago. The members have pretty much all turned over. We switch off who leads the meetings. Everyone has an opportunity to lead a meeting. We do check-ins to make sure everyone is feeling ok. There’s always room for improvement in every org but I want to remind people we are talking about a bunch of students who are spending 4-5 hours a week plus spring budgeting (10 hours a weekend day) on this job. We have two deputy chairs that take on extra meetings. While I think it’s important to have a strong system for allocating the budget I want to remind everyone we’re talking about a bunch of students and how much time people want to spend on that. I think it’s a very heavy job as it is.

Senator Gogineni: Thank you. Moving onto old business. The community council bill. Ok, Senator Rainey is not here so let’s move on to the election reform bill and come back to that.

IV. New Business

Senator Gratch: This is a new bill. I wanted to propose it as an amendment to the Election Reform Bill we passed. We can’t vote on it tonight because it’s a new bill but it would be helpful to talk about it tonight. Its very straightforward and based on my experience. Essentially it’s shifting the timeline of general elections to weeks 6, 7, and 8 in the semester. Switching the timeline from starting in week 8 and ending in 11 to starting in week 6 and ending in week 8. It’s really just to build in transition time. One of the things I found most frustrating in the system is that we heard of our elections results on May 1st and classes ended on May 11th. That meant that Taylor didn’t have time to meet with me. Luckily we could meet over the summer but that’s not always possible. The other thing SGA worked on is improving communication between SGA and the administration. We were able to work on that but it would have been good to have our administration meet with theirs before the year had ended. The meeting of last year’s Cabinet and the new year’s Cabinets etc. There’s desire and willingness there was no ability to schedule it. This amendment is trying to remedy that situation. It’s also just about convenience. It’s tricky to have everyone be as invested when it’s the week before finals. And yea I think similarly we could only meet once as a Senate and it was very last minute. I think it would be beneficial to the long term health of the organization. And to have that transition happen from SGA to SGA and from SGA to administration. So that is the recommendation. To give everyone a sense. If we keep it the way it was: week 8 where Zak communicates to all students is April 11th to 15th. April 18th -22nd there’s a meeting for people interested. Then statements of intent and petitions are due. And then May 2nd – May 6th is the election. Classes end may 16th. In this bill, the notification goes out March 21st – right before spring break. Meeting is in week 7th (April 4th - 8th). Then Week 9 April 8th to April 22nd the election would happen. We can’t vote on it but thoughts?

Senator Boyle: I just wanted to thank Co-chair Chang for sending the email from Nicolas Warren. I do have concerns that this system will fall in midterm season. I think that’s part of the reason I was able to do campaigning is that it falls in between midterms and finals.

Senator Raber: I think this makes a lot of sense. Could we could do a straw poll?
Senator Gogineni: All those in favor of new timeline: 11, opposed: 0, abstaining: 3

Senator Sohn: Besides midterms are there any disadvantages to pushing the timing forward? I’ve thought about it but I can’t think of anything.

President Gratch: The midterm point is there and I hear it.

Senator Gogineni: If there are no other comments we can table discussion and move onto Zak’s response.

Zak: I got an email a few hours ago. Last week this body passed an Election Reform Bill. We transitioned away from a confusing system to a simple system. Not a single senator was willing to explain the old system. This misunderstanding was my primary reason to push reform. From my own observations from last week I would argue that one student misunderstanding the voting process would warrant reform. To add insult to injury the old system is clunky and slow. Some races took almost 24 hours to count. This year’s results were calculated in less than 5 minutes. Everyone understand what their vote means, there are no mysterious quotas, and Febs across campus knew within 30 min. of the results. Each Feb is qualified to count the votes. This is what democracy looks like. Democracy is simple, it’s elegant and it’s accessible. For that rule to understand something they need to understand the tools. With the election that was passed last week we had further democracy. Nick Warren – sent a 2000-word memo in which he tries to warrant the previous system. He recommended that we create a new system altogether. I disagree with this conclusion but I feel obliged to respond. To reach his argument he uses sources. Of the 18 hyperlinks all but three come from Wikipedia. Three do not even link to a Wikipedia page. One has to wonder if no one would click on the links he posted. The question remains should we accept references that our own processors should scoff at? He still had good arguments. Examine substance of arguments: SGA history of voting reform. Only way to keep the old one is with a computer program. When I reached out to professor Swenton, he indicated that the last contact he had was not with Warren but with Danny Zhang. He said that the SGA wanted to move to a system where a site already exists. Although Mr. Warren claims to have had the conversation with Prof. Swenton, but what occurred to what had happened – there’s not a single email to or from Professor Swenton.

We were never close to having a program for this type of voting to make sense. I consulted the websites Mr. Swenton proposes but all of them are cost prohibitive – hundreds of dollars per race. All for this confusing system. Mr. Warren – last weeks 2-hour meeting one of the points that warrants attention. STV gives more opportunity to minority groups. Maybe on a large national scale this could be true but I think this is important. Within a relatively small voting pool this argument is invalid. First: the results under STV and winner take all are the same. The complicated voting system didn’t do much to help out minority groups. The only current senator would be Senator Boyle. To further this in his attempt to find claims what he found was that it was not really significant. I have no idea how Mr. Warren was able to access the racial makeup of Middlebury’s electorate. I hope Middlebury does not keep this in public access. Final
point – majority groups are mathematically divided. These majority groups would split the ticket if you have 4 or 5 from group B. The unique characteristics of Middlebury College where Ireland could exist. It does not support the claim that we rob minority students of opportunity. Mr. Warren’s own analysis does not support the claim that our new system robs minority students. His main argument against the new system has no data to support the claim. Basically pull data about minority students - racial information. As the bylaws stimulate, all members of Senate were sent the bill. I worried about the precedent that the member sends. But I think it’s entirely inappropriate for graduates to actively reinsert themselves into this debate. I would hope that if anyone has something to say they say something in their own words. Mr. Custer had Mr. Warren taken off the electoral when he was here. I hope the Senate can continue with the business on it’s agenda.

Senator Gogineni: Thank you but I want to remind people that we already voted on this but before we try to have a conversation there is a Bill that we can vote on where there would be a direct repercussion.

Co-Chair Chang: So why did Zak get to speak?

Senator Gogineni: He wanted to defend the email.

Senator Sohn: Have we given any thought to the tie issue. I think that was one of the big contentions. We can talk about this at a different time but what are we thinking to resolve the tie issue?

Zak: Personally I think there are lots of ways to go about that.

Senator Boyle: I hope that my thanking of Co-Chair Chang for bringing in in another perspective wasn’t the reason for this. I hope I didn’t anger you.

Zak: No I’m not angered at all. I was upset by what I found to be bad scholarship or bad research.

Senator Parikh: I think we discussed in depth why we wanted to move away from the single transferrable vote. Something we didn’t talk about is the board of systems. I’m curious about that. We can talk after the meeting.

Senator Schulman: I’m debating what to say. I don’t want this to come off as harsh in any way. Everyone that ran for this these seats are people that ran for Middlebury. I’ve not been a great Senator and I’m the first to I admit that. But I don’t think we’ve been as productive as we can be. We’ve got to figure something out.

Senator Rainey: So that’s a point I would like to throw out. I’d like to know what range of productivity we calculate. I think in J-term we made a lot of progress but I think it’s important to see what we’re measuring productivity as. But I think since it’s out there it’s out there. But I think we need to measure what productivity is. In J-term I think we made
a lot of progress. Is it just because the majority of people in this room have not proposed bills? I don’t know but there have been a lot of Senators offering bills maybe it’s not applicable to the scope of things.

Senator Gogineni: Zak asked to speak about the email so technically that should have gone in announcements.

Senator Raber: All though that was partially entertaining. I don’t know how appropriate the 10-minute speech was. I don’t think it was intended to be an attack.

Senator Sohn: We have an unresolved issue regarding ties. I think we should come up with something. We used the new voting system but for the spring election I think we should have something in place.

V. Old Business

Senator Gogineni: Senator Rainey – do you have an update on the Community Council Bill?

Senator Rainey: I need more time on that. I will make sure I am ready by next week.

Senator Gogineni: That’s ok.

Senator Parikh: In regards to having the community council agenda forwarded to the Senate. Is that something that count happen even in the absence of the bill?

Co-Chair Chang: That is totally fine: This Tuesday I don’t recommend you come. We’re having a Justalks workshop session on Tuesday for our new members. It’s also a way for all of our members to improve on communication, empathetic listening and critical thinking/lenses that revolve around identity. To be able to talk about identities more. Go/pandpeach. Supporting Syrian refugees at Middlebury, staff living wages. Those are things you should be looking out for. And I will send you the agendas as they come out.

VI. Adjournment

Senator Gogineni: As long as no one has any more questions, motion to adjourn?

Senator Rainey: Motion to adjourn.

Senator Gogineni: Second. All those in favor of adjournment? Meeting adjourned.

Meeting Adjourned: Meeting end 8:35