

The Undergraduate Senate (UGS), led by chair Shanta Katipamula and deputy chair Mylan Gray, is comprised of 15 at-large members elected to serve one-year terms. One of the main functions of the Senate is to represent student voices and concerns to the administration and one of our main focuses this year has been on bridging communication gaps between students and administrators through a winter quarter pilot of weekly open office hours with administrators. Another initiative Senators are working on is evaluating resource and staffing support for cultural community centers changes based on a report from the University Committee on Minority Issues report issued 27 years ago on how the University should build inclusive community. Senators on this working group would like to collaborate with the faculty senate in evaluating these claims and ensuring the university at least meets the 1989 standards.

There are currently six UGS committees—Academic Affairs, Administration and Rules, Advocacy, Appropriations, Communications and Student Life, as well as a Joint Committee on Sexual Violence that includes representatives from the UGS, the Graduate Student Council and the Executive’s cabinet. Two of the main initiatives that the UGS is working on through this joint committee is building support for Stanford to pilot Callisto, an online sexual assault reporting system, and redesigning the notalone.stanford.edu site to be more survivor centric.

The Academic Affairs Committee, chaired by Gabriel Rosen, has been focused on identifying policy areas, pertaining to the academic well-being of students, where partnerships between the Undergraduate Senate, the Faculty Senate, and the Stanford administration may be forged. Towards this end, the committee has been coordinating with the Registrar's Office to create cognitive skill stamps on behalf of the undergraduate student body and ascertaining the Undergraduate Senate's proper role in helping shape the University's policies towards undocumented students.

This quarter, Communications Committee, chaired by Junwon Park, updated the UGS website and social media channel and improved the website to include useful features such as a sign up for the Senate mailing list and an embedded calendar of office hours. The committee also drafted and passed a bill to archive senate meetings in recording, thereby providing a transparent access for ASSU members (Stanford students) to Senate meetings. The committee began discussing ideas to help administration communicate with students in interactively and online, and we hope to present our ideas next quarter.

The Appropriations Committee, chaired by Cenobio Hernandez, which is the funding branch of the Undergraduate Senate, has been focused on creating more flexible structures to provide student group funding. We have increased communication with student groups by establishing open office hours where Financial Officers can meet with Committee members. We are also planning to remodel the large-scale grant system, so students are more informed and more involved in the decision making process for deciding on which projects receive funding.

This quarter the Student Life committee, chaired by Carson Smith, has specifically focused on mental health initiatives and now has Senators on both the CAPS Student Advisory Board and the Mental Health and Wellness Coalition. We will also be planning an open house event during Wellness Week in Winter Quarter so students can voice their concerns and ask questions about the Undergraduate Senate's initiatives regarding mental health.