

Senate Meeting

Friday, October 25, 2024

Presiding Officer: Vice President Mauro

Minute Taker: Chief Justice Zabaleta

1. **Call to Order:** Call to Order at 12:57 pm
2. **Roll Call:** Roll Call Complete at 12:59 pm
3. **Adoption of the Agenda:** Motion by Representative Sivakumaran to Adopt the Agenda, Seconded by Senator Rodriguez
4. **Approval of Minutes from October 18:** Motion by Senator Leaser to Approve the Minutes from October 18, Seconded by Senator Halember
5. **Public Comment:**
* Jodyanna Gallegos: I want to bring attention to the Trick or Treat event happening on Halloween from 5–7 PM with Ronald McDonald House Charity. I invite all of you to volunteer your time. You can register on MyLynx. We have two options: meet us at the Ronald McDonald House in Aurora or carpool to coordinate transportation. I highly encourage everyone to join.
1. **New Business**
	1. Swearing in of New Members (5 Minutes)
* **Completed at 1:05 pm**
* Motion by Senator Halember to add Senator Anson to the Roll Call, Seconded by Senator Rodriguez
	1. Mental Health and Wellness Fee (60 Minutes)
* **Presented by AVC Meloni Rudolph Crawford (Presentation available on Teams)**
* President Brooks: Do you feel this adequately supports you as a professional in directing the counseling center and providing mental health services for students? Are you comfortable with how this plan is going?
* Director Heermann: We are currently facing significant understaffing, especially considering the student-to-staff ratio recommended by our accrediting body. Right now, we're at approximately 5.5 counselors, while we should be closer to 9 to effectively meet student needs. This increase in staffing would not only help align us with field standards but also address the pressing demand for crisis services, which we’ve had to scale back due to staffing shortages. Although we're implementing short-term solutions, these additional resources would enable walk-in crisis support, allowing students to access help immediately rather than waiting weeks. Drawing from my 14 years at CU Boulder, where the counseling center had a staff of 72, I can confidently say this adjustment would bring us in line with best practices in our field.
* Chief of Staff Gough: Would this increase or add to the 10-session limit currently allocated per academic year for students at the Mental Health Center, or would it remain the same under this policy?
* Director Heermann: The number of sessions would remain the same. This change is focused on increasing our capacity to accommodate more students, allowing a larger portion of the student body to access the 10 sessions currently offered, like what other counseling centers provide.
* Representative Craig: I wanted clarification on the student services fee and this additional fee. The student services fee is currently $185 per semester, though I’m not sure if that’s the same for everyone. Do you have a specific number for how much would be allocated from the student services fee?
* Representative Cohen: Is the staffing issue primarily budget-related, and if so, are there any grants available that students could apply for to help increase that budget?
* AVC Crawford: Possibly. In the past, we applied for a large grant from the Department of Homeland Security when we were making improvements. We're considering reapplying next year, but competition has increased significantly in Colorado. As for grants specifically available to students to support this budget, I’m not aware of any at this time, though it would certainly be helpful.
* Senator Rodriguez: For professional staff funded through temporary funds, how long will these positions last? Will they be gone next year, or is there a set timeframe for their funding?
* AVC Crawford: Currently, most temporary funding supports case managers. Two positions are set to end on September 30, 2025, and two more on June 30, 2026—leaving us down by four by that time. We also have one housing-funded position, which we aim to transition to our budget without a set end date. Our case managers handle mental health, university navigation, and safety concerns, including crisis intervention for students at risk of suicide. Losing these roles would mean focusing only on crisis cases, which is more challenging than intervening early.
* Representative Sivakumaran: Will this fee change how counselors are allocated to us? Currently, many of us are seeing practicum students who change each term, so how will this fee affect that situation? The fee is labeled "mental health and well-being." What other well-being services will be provided, such as workshops or classes? What are your plans in that regard?
* AVC Crawford: We have allocated programming in this budget, including workshops. For example, we cover the costs of mental health workshops, which typically range from $250 to $300 per person, for students, staff, and faculty. Additionally, our case manager focuses on violence prevention and conducts workshops for students and staff. Regarding your first question, we partner with the School of Education and Human Development, where their students use our counseling center for practicum experience. While the current setup isn’t ideal, we are discussing ways to improve it. When a practicum student conducts an intake, high-level crisis cases are referred to full-time staff quickly, while practicum students handle lower acuity cases like mild depression or anxiety. We’re actively working to enhance this process.
* Representative Sivakumaran: How will this fee resolve the situation? Currently, we are often assigned to a practicum student after intake, even though many of us prefer to work with a professional counselor. Since we are paying this fee, I expected it would lead to changes in the services provided.
* AVC Crawford: Yes, this fee will help us increase our capacity. Currently, professional staff supervise practicum students, which takes up some of their time. We aim to free up that time, so it's not just about adding positions but also enhancing capacity within existing roles. However, these discussions will be challenging, as the School of Education values the experience these students gain at the counseling center. We need to address whether the current setup benefits all students or primarily those in the practicum. You’re right; since you’re paying this fee, you deserve the care you're seeking. These conversations will take place in the coming weeks and months.
* Director Heermann: I’d like to add that this fall, we changed our process to allow students to select a licensed clinician for their intake if they prefer, rather than being automatically assigned to a practicum student. Since I became director four months ago, I emphasized the importance of giving students this choice. As Mel mentioned, much of our energy has been focused on practicum students, and this fee would enable us to hire more staff, allowing us to serve students more directly. This change directly addresses your concerns about access to professional counseling.
* Senator Leaser: Are there any initiatives in place to raise awareness on campus about the services provided, to ensure more students are informed?
* AVC Crawford: Yes, part of our programming efforts will focus on raising awareness about our services. We plan to table at various events, including Fall Fest and lunchtime in the residence halls. Additionally, we’re considering having one of our counselors engage with students in public spaces to answer questions and inform them about our services. Our prevention coordinator is actively involved in spreading awareness during programs, and our multidisciplinary care team—which includes representatives from DRS, case management, the counseling center, the Health Center of Auraria, and campus police—addresses students in crisis. This team collaborates to find the best next steps for students, whether that involves scheduling counseling appointments or conducting threat assessments.
* Senator Halember: Given your staffing issues and collaborations with other colleges, have you considered partnering with them regarding the fee?
* AVC Crawford: Before COVID, these programs were common, but we haven’t been able to implement them since. I believe in their value, as they benefit all students on campus. I’m excited to see those programs return to future programming. We did something similar for Veterans Day.
* Representative Valdez: Just to clarify, when you mention the main campus classes, does that include online students as well?
* AVC Crawford: Yes
* Senator Leaser: I appreciate how it's worded with a focus on mental health, bringing it to the forefront, and destigmatizing it, which is important.
	1. ATP Presentation (60 Minutes)
* **Presented by AVC Beth Myers (Presentation available on Teams)**
* AVC Myers: Our academic leadership team, with feedback from students, staff, and faculty, recognized that some aspects of academic operations could be transformed to better serve student needs. Over the last year, we have engaged faculty, staff, and students in various projects focusing on reimagining the core curriculum, academic program viability, curricular innovation, faculty workload practices, policies and parity, as well as time use and course schedule review.
* President Brooks: I really appreciated the data regarding the emphasis on flexibility. How does this priority reflect the demographics of the students we serve? How is this need for flexibility integrated into the ongoing policy work? Is it truly at the forefront, alongside the need for a sequential and structured approach to academics? I wanted to know if this work is guiding policy across the university in terms of academics or if it's focused solely on coursework.
* AVC Myers: In our survey, we gathered feedback from both faculty and students, and it was clear that students strongly prefer flexibility—whether in core scheduling or the core curriculum. These preferences are being considered by the groups making recommendations. In fact, just today, I met with the co-facilitators of the fourth group to discuss how we can incorporate students' desire for flexible quality in their courses into a proposed structure. I believe this initiative has the potential to influence policy. I strongly encourage everyone to provide feedback on any policies you're reviewing where flexibility isn't reflected. If we receive comments from the SGA, we will take that into account.
* Representative Sivakumaran: In one of your core curriculum models, you mentioned advocacy. Have you considered any models from top schools, like Purdue, known for their intense and proactive programs? It would be great to see if we can incorporate those practices into our existing syllabus.
* AVC Myers: Several faculty members in the reimagining the core group strongly advocate for high-impact practices, which align with the models you mentioned. We're considering how to incorporate these practices into our core curriculum recommendations. If you have any suggestions on how these could be integrated into our core model, we'd love to hear them, and we welcome more student engagement in the conversation.
* Senator Halember: Many people have expressed concerns about paying the same amount for online courses when attendance can be low, leading to various issues. Do you believe the current fee structure truly reflects the financial viability of these courses?
* AVC Myers: This group is less focused on financial viability at the moment. However, there are ongoing efforts to redefine course modalities, which may eventually allow for changes in course fees for certain classes. We're waiting for input from our colleagues at Anschutz. Currently, the percentage of online versus in-person classes varies widely among colleges, with some having up to 60% online courses and others less than 3%. Generally, online classes are cheaper to teach, but this isn't always the case; for example, one school limits online class sizes to 30 students, making those classes more expensive. In short, the financial viability of courses is influenced by various factors, and we have data available on this through our Decision Support Toolkit.
* Representative Sivakumaran: Will you be revamping the courses, or will the focus be on improving the efficiency of existing courses?
* AVC Myers: With reimagining the core, it could involve both improving existing courses and creating new ones based on the proposed recommendations. Some current courses are valuable and provide essential skills, while others may need to be updated or replaced to better meet learning outcomes. This approach focuses specifically on the core curriculum, not individual disciplines.
* Senator Rodriguez: Regarding planning the core curriculum, what is your decision-making process when considering the different colleges? I feel that the goals of CLAS students differ significantly from those of CAM students. How do you plan to navigate those differences in terms of initiatives and goals?
* AVC Myers: We included members from every school and college. This way, we have representatives with various disciplinary backgrounds who understand the requirements for students in each area. Academic advisors are also part of this group to consider the current curriculum and its impact on transfer students.
* Senator Rodriguez: Could we explore having different core curricula for each college instead of a uniform core curriculum for the entire institution?
* AVC Myers: Our accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission, requires some framework for general education or core curriculum across the campus. However, we could create a model that addresses student learning outcomes in different ways within each college and school. This flexibility has been a topic of discussion within the team. In Colorado, all four-year institutions must accept 31 credits of Guaranteed Transfer Pathway (GT) courses from community colleges. While our core doesn't have to align directly with these courses, we must acknowledge that students who complete them at a community college do not have to retake them here for lower division requirements.
* Senator Rodriguez: Regarding the end process, what does the outcome look like, and when will this planning process conclude? I know you’re submitting your final reports in April, but what happens after that?
* AVC Myers: We expect to submit recommendations to the Provost in December. The next steps for approval, operationalization, and implementation will vary by group. For example, the reimagining the core curriculum group will need their recommendations approved by the curriculum committees in each school and college before going to the University Curriculum Committee. This process is anticipated to take about three years. In contrast, the program viability group is already working on ideas for piloting implementation in the spring. The timeline depends on the specific recommendations and the consensus among our shared governance and leadership, as we are still finalizing those recommendations.
* Senator Leaser: Regarding flexibility, are you suggesting efforts to bridge the gap between colleges by offering shared classes? Or are you considering hiring more lecturers and advisors? How will this impact budget allocation moving forward?
* AVC Myers: The idea of flexibility in our recommendations could lead to various outcomes. It may require hiring more faculty and advisors, or it might simply provide students with more choices in their core curriculum. As for scheduling flexibility, we haven't determined the budget implications yet, but once recommendations are made to the provost, we will evaluate the budget impact with a dedicated team, including Jen St. Peter. Although the academic transformation work and budget model are separate, the budget model will be influenced by the recommendations made.
* Representative Sivakumaran: What happens if we receive a list of course choices but lack the expertise to teach them? If we’re presented with a core curriculum that requires classes we can't staff or fund, what’s the plan?
* AVC Myers: No, we wouldn't proceed with the recommendations unless we have a funding model in place. We won’t propose changes to the core curriculum without ensuring we can hire the necessary faculty. The provost and interim Chancellor have acknowledged that these recommendations will have budget implications, and we need to address those before approval.
* Senator Rodriguez: There's staff and administration involved in this project. How will you ensure that students are also included throughout the process?
* AVC Myers: We invited students to participate, and at the beginning, a few attended our working group meetings regularly. We even offered stipends to incentivize participation, but those students are no longer attending. We have an open forum for input and a meeting on November 6th, but I’m open to other ideas to keep students engaged.
* President Brooks: We can help with getting student involvement in this process, whether that’s finding someone outside of student government or assigning a representative from within. What parallels did you notice between the Boulder and the UCCS core, and how have those influenced the core work of this project?
* AVC Myers: All campuses must accept the GT Pathways courses, but the formats of the cores differ. At CU Denver, we have a distributed core where students pick from a list of courses in various topic areas, while Boulder has a more flexible approach that allows different colleges to develop their own courses based on larger themes. However, Boulder struggled with compliance with HLC standards regarding their core curriculum until recently, whereas CU Denver has always been compliant. UCCS uses both approaches, with a distribution of courses along with overarching themes. We’ve also consulted an outside expert from a small, innovative university focused on experiential learning and durable skills.
* President Brooks: For many first-generation students or those returning to school, having a structured sequence can be crucial for helping them succeed without feeling overwhelmed. At the same time, we need to offer flexibility for students who have outside commitments, like full-time jobs or caretaking responsibilities.
* AVC Myers: That’s something the group has discussed extensively. Balancing flexibility with clearly defined paths makes sense. We also have a significant proportion of transfer students at CU Denver, and that’s an ongoing topic for us. We have a meeting next week with transfer experts to gather feedback on proposed models, to ensure they work for transfer students and help them make significant progress.
* Senator Halember: What is the tentative timeline for implementing these changes in the curriculum? Will it be next spring or the year after? How will the feedback be incorporated into that process?
* AVC Myers: For the core curriculum group, we anticipate a three-year process for approvals. If recommendations come forward in December, we expect the entire next academic year to be dedicated to the curriculum approval process across all colleges and schools. We might allow current students to choose which catalog year they follow if it benefits them. So, it could take two to three years before these changes are reflected in the core curriculum for students.
* Representative Delarosa: I appreciate that you're specifically considering transfer students, especially since this will likely involve reevaluating syllabi. It's also important to think about students who might transfer out of CU Denver, as discrepancies in syllabi could affect their ability to transition to other schools.
* AVC Myers: Any changes we make to our core do impact students who transfer out, so aligning with the GT Pathways guarantee transfer pathways helps ease that transition. However, there’s a consensus that our current model might not be as flexible as some would prefer. While sticking to the 31 credits of GT Pathways benefits transfer students, it doesn’t fully align with our principles and student learning outcomes. Fortunately, in Colorado, there are agreements in place, ensuring that every public four-year institution and community college has articulation agreements for core courses.
* Representative Cohen: Will these core classes or ideas also affect graduate schools and graduate students?
* AVC Myers: No, the reimagined core curriculum is specifically for undergraduates and will not impact graduate programs. We are still seeking feedback from graduate students to understand how their undergraduate experiences can inform our current discussions. We value your input, as graduate students may appreciate aspects of the undergraduate curriculum differently.
	1. Advisor JuJu Presentation (45 Minutes)
* President Brooks: Part of our operating and finance and funding was reallocated to move staff from temporary to permanent funding. In our efforts to communicate with higher administration about how we can recover this money and find more permanent solutions, we were given temporary solutions without clarity on where the funds were coming from or the impacts. We were informed that we could have at least two years of temporary funding for F&F to replenish what was lost while we continue discussions. We wanted Juju to present because we will be voting on whether to approve this solution next week.
* **Presentation by Advisor Spray available on Teams**
* Advisor Spray: The funding mentioned is coming from the Sentry operating budget ($66,000 over the next two years) which will be taken away from that budget. Administrators are asking the Sentry to take this money from the Cash Asset Fund and move it to the operating budget over two years to cover the amount going to SGA.
* Senator Rodriguez: Technically speaking, could you just say no? If it's the Sentry's budget, why is there an obligation to go to SGA?
* Ex officio Spray: I was not in the loop, nor were Addison or Jarrick. I had no opportunity to say no, as this involves student fee money from our operating budget, and they can’t touch anything in the asset funds. I suggested some alternative options. Since the transfer would take funds away from the Sentry, I proposed a three-way split. This way, everyone affected by deficits or transitions this year would benefit. I offered to divide the $3,000 among the three teams so that each could recover some funds, but the suggestion was rejected without discussion.
* Ex officio Lemmons: Just to clarify, if SGA accepts the money and the proposal is approved, the Sentry will return to its regular budget by drawing from the cash asset. However, after two years, the cash asset would be depleted.
* Advisor Dew: The current understanding at the institution is that funds aren’t assigned to a specific area—they’re fluid and can be allocated at discretion. There's been dissent around simply saying "no" since it all involves student fees.
* Director Mwambo: When funds were cut, was there any transparency about where they were reallocated, or were they just reduced without explanation?
* Ex Officio Spray: In the original email, there was no indication of the source of the funds or even an amount. Since we're part of Student Life, Kelsi looped in Savannah and Mitchell. Savannah, Mitchell, Tegan, and I then sat down to discuss it, which is why I'm presenting today—to ensure full transparency before any decisions are made.
* Representative Cohen: Would placing the Sentry under CAM help secure funding and provide a clear administrative process?
* Ex officio Spray: From a student organization perspective, I know that the College of Arts and Media (CAM) likely doesn’t have the budget to take on something as large as the Sentry, nor does the English department. This could be something to consider later, but for now, CAM struggles to support the filmmaking club, which has requested around $12,000 in SGA funding over the past two years due to limited CAM resources. While student media often falls under communications or arts departments elsewhere, that’s not the structure here, so CAM may not have the capacity to support it.
* Representative Cohen: Is the Sentry being denied funds from the Student Life budget due to its on-hand cash?
* Ex officio Spray: The Sentry is part of Student Life but operates under its own speed type and department code, similar to SGA and CAT. So, it’s not that Student Life directly funds us; we receive student fee money allocated specifically to the Sentry.
* Senator Rodriguez: You mentioned that it was higher administration that proposed this idea. Do you know who specifically suggested it?
* Ex officio Spray: Genia, Jen St. Peters and Katie Linder.
* Senator Rodriguez: If SGA decides to say no and not accept the money, is there a chance they might just give it anyway?
* President Brooks: If student government declines this funding, is there a chance the Sentry's operating budget could be drained anyway, with the university reallocating those funds elsewhere? It’s important to consider that if this money is already available, it could go to someone else if we don’t accept it.
* Advisor Dew: I have a direct quote from Director Brown: "If they say no, the money will stay with the Sentry." This is what I’ve been told.
* President Brooks: I’m not sure how reliable that is, I've had unfortunate experiences with the accuracy of information relayed to me by Director Brown. This isn’t a reflection of his character, but rather a concern that the information might not be as accurate as we’d like to perceive.
* Ex officio Spray: Could we have Genia, Jen, and Katie send an email with those exact words? This way, not only I, but the entire Senate body, will have them documented for reference.
* Senator Anson: As you all know, F&F took a significant hit from the budget cuts. After hearing this, I did some number-crunching. We’ve currently approved just over $12,000, and if we project this until May, we should have about $8,500 left. This is a conservative estimate, as we usually spend less or equal to our budget, but we don’t need the extra money for F&F. If we do receive it, I believe it would return to our budget, with the remainder likely going back to operating.
* Ex officio Spray: I want to add that last year, around $15,000 went to two groups. This year, those groups don’t need that funding, which is why we’re seeing a shift in the numbers. Now we’re focusing on smaller requests instead of larger ones that used to come up weekly.
* Representative Sivakumaran: Theoretically speaking, if we accept the money, could you request your needs from us?
* Ex officio Spray: No, because the Sentry is a university-sponsored student program (USSP), similar to CAT and the PAL program. We all operate under the same umbrella, so the Sentry cannot request money from F&F like the filmmaking club can. Programs like PAL or CAT also can't request money because we exist under different organizational structures.
* Advisor Dew: F&F cannot accommodate that type of request. While Finance and Funding may say no, our operating budget could potentially allow it.
* Senator Vegas: Do we have an exact date by which a decision needs to be made?
* Ex officio Spray: In one week, the Senate will be voting on whether to accept this money or not. I won’t be there in person, but I’ll join via Zoom since I’ll be at the conference. November 1st is the decision date, and then Mitchell and Savannah will relay the decision to the administrators who made the offer.
* Senator Vega: I want to thank the students joining us online for sharing their sentiments. I appreciate you preparing a document for us to review.
* President Brooks: I just wanted to clarify that the vote next Friday is more about advising how Mitchell and I should respond to the offer. It will be taken very seriously, but it's primarily to gauge the body's thoughts. Even if everyone agrees to accept it, there's still a chance that after discussions with Jen, Mitchell, and I might decide against it, or vice versa.
* Senator Gothwal: I'm curious about the cash asset fund. Why can’t we get a fixed number for what they are? Has there been any effort from the Sentry to seek better clarification on these funds from them?
* Ex officio Spray: Lance has been here for seven years and has continuously asked about this. I've been here for a year and a half and only learned about it in the spring semester. As I mentioned earlier, several of our emails went unanswered or were disregarded. Finally, in September of this year, we managed to sit down and ask those questions. The main issue seems to be the transitions, transparency, and communication struggles at the university.
* Representative Valdez: Could we get confirmation before we vote next week about what will happen to the funds if we decide not to accept them? Do we have any recourse to help protect funding for the Sentry and CAT in the future?
* Ex officio Spray: I wasn’t consulted, and I’ve been told it's due to my position within the university. My students are really upset about this situation, and I want to give them a chance to voice their concerns and advocate for themselves. I’m committed to ensuring this doesn’t happen again, which is why I’m being vocal.

I received an apology email from Genia on Tuesday, where she expressed her commitment to preventing these issues in the future and acknowledged my frustrations. I’ll share that email as public documentation for everyone. I'm hoping that there is that effort there to make sure that these things don't happen again, not just to student life, but this entire university

* Director Thomason: So Genia sent you an apology, but she's still holding this over the Sentry, right?
* Senator Rodriguez: This situation is yet another example of how the administration says sorry but fails to advocate for students regarding how our fee money is spent. Harriet's comment on the Sentry's staff state and budget shows how the university perceives this issue, and it's deplorable for the administration to even consider this approach. The SGA's role is to support students, and taking money from another advocacy group like ours is outrageous and unacceptable. My resolution from a few weeks ago still hasn't been addressed. They keep apologizing but don't take real action. It's just ridiculous.
* Advisor Dew: Apologies and actions are not mutually exclusive. You can apologize for how something was communicated without being sorry for the actual events or the current situation. I understand that "sorry" is often seen as a magic word to make things better, but at the end of the day, someone can express regret for the delivery while still supporting the proposal on the table. It's important to remember that this issue is nuanced.
* Senator Halember: I hope that if this money isn’t used by SGA, it goes back to Sentry. While F&F’s budget is in good shape, if we do consider changing the budget cap or increasing allocations for other student organizations, it could be beneficial. If we can take a small portion of what the administrators want us to accept from the Sentry, that would be ideal. My main priority is to see the money returned to the Sentry first, but I want us to keep in mind potential adjustments to our budget for other students' needs as well.
* Advisor Dew: In general, we need to reflect on our student services review process and the power dynamics within it. We should consider what tables we are part of and how we are influencing policy creation and review. You can propose any initiatives, but we must think about the actionable power behind those proposals. Chair Valdez, you have a resolution that says we need to safeguard our funds. Now that it's documented, we need to consider what tables we need to be at to ensure those protections are implemented effectively.
* Representative Cohen: Is there a way to generate more press to highlight both the Sentry and the university's actions among the general student population? We could use this as a way to spark outrage and potentially pressure the administration to take action.
* Senator Pradhan: I just want to say that, as you mentioned, this is a historic event. You stopped printing in 2020, and now you've started again. I find the budget allocation emotional because many students express their feelings and share news through your platform. As Senator Rodriguez said, we're an advocacy platform, so how can we justify cutting the budget for something so significant?
* Ex officio Spray: I think their sentiments are very emotional because they're dedicating over 30 hours a week to this work. The amount of effort these students are putting in is immense, especially considering the resources we have here. While we may not have Boulder viewership yet, the strides they’ve made are remarkable, and I’m proud to support this team. It’s important to recognize that this isn't just happening here; students at many universities are facing similar challenges. Just as you all advocate for the student body, the Sentry does the same in a creative way and provides a voice for important matters. They also bring some fun with concerts and events while doing significant work.
* Senator Vega: I want to express my support for the Sentry team. As someone who often works closely with you, I truly appreciate each member of the team and am sorry for everything you're going through. I'm grateful that you’re advocating for your voices to be heard, as this issue impacts you directly. Please continue to stand up for yourselves because you matter, and I want that to be clear.
* Ex officio Spray: I'm here because I run the Sentry with the faculty advisor, and it's mostly just the two of us, along with support from Addison and the student life team. Regardless of the outcome, I’m committed to fighting for the Sentry because it deserves to thrive. They are resilient and incredible, but it’s unfair that they should have to constantly fight for their existence. At this point, it’s about the principle of the matter. I appreciate your support, and I’ll make sure to pass it on to the team, as they will be grateful for it too.
* Motion by Senator Rodriguez to extend the presentation until 4, Seconded by Senator Anson
* Senator Rodriguez: I think our current conversation is important, and it’s clear we’re all frustrated with how the administration is allocating student fee money. However, we can’t just stop discussing it in the Senate; we need to take action. It's our responsibility to inform our fellow students about what’s happening. There are people here who care about students and the university, but that doesn’t mean anything if we’re not communicating these issues to the student body. If we advocate for this and raise awareness among students, how do you think administrators would respond to a surge of angry students about the budget allocation? I can’t speak for everyone, but I will continue to fight and support you, regardless of what happens with the Sentry's budget, and I hope my peers feel the same way.
* Ex officio Spray: You all have incredible power—probably more than you realize. While I’m here advocating for the Sentry, I sometimes feel helpless, but I won’t give up. I’m truly grateful for the chance to share this with you because your collective strength is far greater than mine.
* Senator Anson: I want to emphasize the importance of the Sentry, especially since I don't trust modern media, it's challenging to find unbiased opinions these days. The Sentry feels more grounded and relatable to us as everyday people.
* Senator Leaser: I want to express my feelings about this situation. Journalism is crucial for any student group, historically speaking. As someone who isn’t online much, I believe having paper copies available is essential. I see the Sentry as an ally in this regard, and I would hate to take away your funding.
* Director Thomason: I started feeling really emotional about this whole thing because it's incredibly human and so important that it's cared for and sustained. With all the information on the table right now, I know how I'm voting next week.
* Senator Moore: Thank you for sharing that. You mentioned this program has been running for 60 years, so I’m curious—do certain alumni know about the current situation? If so, what are their thoughts on it?
* Ex officio Spray: As part of our historical preservation project, we’re working on reconnecting with alumni. One effective approach could be utilizing our archives to reach out to specific individuals. However, I think it might be more beneficial to coordinate with our university's alumni team to send out a broader communication inviting alumni to reconnect with us. Our faculty advisor likely has valuable connections as well and can help engage those alumni in this effort.
* Senator Pradhan: As he mentioned regarding the alumni, I think it’s a great idea to reconnect with them. They might have a more emotional investment in the situation, particularly those who previously worked for the Sentry. Their insights and support could be incredibly valuable, more so than just any random alumni, as they have a deeper connection to what’s happening.
* Ex officio spray: Thank you for those suggestions! I'll definitely bring them back to our team. It would be great to reconnect with alumni from the Sentry and ask them where they are now and what impact they've had in the media world.
* Motion by Representative Cohen to Recess for 5 minutes, Seconded by Senator Peshimam
* At 4:03 pm
* Back at 4:08 pm
	1. Civic Engagement Committee Presentation (30 Minutes)
* **Presented by Senator Rodriguez and Senator Vega (Presentation available on Teams)**
* Senator Rodriguez: I wanted to take a moment to inform everyone about our upcoming week. We've mentioned AHA in our updates, but we haven't elaborated on our plans. The civics team has created a presentation to share more about AHA and highlight its benefits.
* President Brooks: I want to express my heartfelt thanks to the Civics committee. You've all done an incredible job being self-starters and taking the initiative. You represent our student body excellently, and I couldn't be prouder to have such dedicated members on our team. I'm here to support you in any way—whether it's through physical presence, funding, or anything else—to ensure this event meets your expectations.
* Director Mwambo: Will the Narcan training be open to all students who sign up, or is it intended for specific groups of students?
* Senator Rodriguez: The Narcan training will be open to anyone who wants to attend, including students and the public. Everyone is welcome.
* Senator Pradhan: This is a fantastic initiative, and it represents a significant change for the university. I'm proud that you all are implementing this on campus.
* Senator Vega: I also want to mention that in the spring, my plan with this partnership is to help train residents since I know some of you live on campus. If you can’t attend the training in November, I’ll work out the details to bring the training to housing as well.
* Senator Rodriguez: As an RA, I want to provide some context about the housing situation. During my first year as an RA two summers ago, we all received Narcan training and were provided with our Narcan boxes. However, this year, due to new leadership and challenges in securing Narcan, none of the new RAs were trained or given Narcan. Having trained RAs is crucial because quick accessibility and response can significantly impact survival during an overdose.
* Senator Halember: I just wanted to express my appreciation for the initiative you all are taking. This is a new effort that I haven't seen from the civics committee before, and I hope it continues in the coming years. Your work is making a significant impact on the student body and, ultimately, saving lives.
* Senator Rodriguez: I wanted to clarify that the date will be the week before fall break, from Monday the 19th to the 22nd.
	1. Policy 7030D Presentation (25 Minutes)
* President Brooks: We were presented with this policy by the university's higher administration, which is reviewing the attendance policy for students and seeking our feedback. This feedback is due Wednesday, so we’re here to collect verbal input. Some initial concerns we had were around the requirement for approved emergencies for validating absences, which feels a bit concerning. I mentioned this to Beth earlier regarding the need for flexibility in serving our students. We want to ensure that this flexibility is reflected in the policy. This is an open discussion to gather feedback and inform the policy before it goes into effect, as it will impact all students academically and in terms of student life and success.
* Motion by Senator Rodriguez to move into Committee of the Whole until the end of the discussion, Seconded by Senator Vega.
1. **General Business from the Floor:**
2. **Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn by Senator Rodriguez, Seconded by Senator Pradhan
* Vote of Affirmation: 18-0-0
* Adjourned at 5:02 pm