I. Attendance


Members Absent: Senator Salas, Co-Chair Brook

II. Acceptance of the Minutes from 3/18/18

Speaker Aaron: All in favor of accepting the minutes from 3/18/18 and 3/11/18? All opposed? All abstaining? The minutes have been accepted.

12-0-1 [Senator Mahboob abstains.]

III. Announcements

President Sohn: We have NESGov this weekend, April 13th to the 15th. If you haven’t yet had a chance to help, there are two ways to go about doing that. So far, we know that twenty people will be attending and 16 out of those 20 need hosts. Other colleges have allowed guests to stay with their students and we would like to do that as well. Since you are senators and representatives, we think it would be great for them to stay with you. Is anyone interested in being a host this upcoming Friday and Saturday night?

Senator Gosselin: Do we have to tell you now?

President Sohn: I will send out a survey, so you don’t have to tell me now. If you have any interest, that would be help us figure out how many people we need to find.

Senator Low-Beinart: I’m not sure if I can, but there’s a pullout bed in my common room.

[Senators McCormick & Andrews arrive.]

Chief Alam: [Records interested senators.]

Senator Mahboob: Do we have to provide bedding?

President Sohn: No, they just need a floor to sleep on.

Doug Adams: They must hosted be in a bedroom, if they are found in common spaces they’ll be kicked out.

President Sohn: What does bedrooms mean? What if we have a private suite?

Doug: They cannot sleep on a couch or in the living room. It’s been a policy for 20 years.
Chief Alam: Only assumed you get found out.

President Sohn: If you host, you’ll be invited to brunch with President Patton on Sunday morning as a thank you.

Senator Pustejovsky: [Addressing Speaker Aaron.] The link in the email just goes to the agenda…

President Sohn: Check slack. The second way to get involved is by supplementing the work of the organizers. Since the people organizing this won’t be able to be completely involved, we thought it would be helpful if there was a set of people just there for conversation to represent Middlebury. Is anyone available for that Saturday?

Speaker Aaron: I highly recommend going. It’s extremely useful to talk with students from other schools about their experiences.

President Sohn: The job would last from 9:00 to 4:45 or 6:00. It sounds long, I understand. We’re trying not to have many people filtering in and out because it doesn’t come off well. If there’s any reason you have to be out for an hour, that’s fine. If you have to miss most of the conference, then it’s not worth coming. Is there anyone interested? If you’re thinking of being on SGA in the future, this is extremely important to go to. You’ll be working with these people in the future. We’re looking for around 5 people. This is just initial interest, there will be a survey going out later.

Chief Alam: [Records interested senators.]

President Sohn: We are currently in elections period. Many commons seats are currently uncontested, so we need our current commons senators to help by sending out emails to their constituents. Brainerd, Cook, Ross, and possibly Wonnacot are all uncontested.

We will decide topic of week at the end of today’s meeting.

There is an ACTR Student Ridership Survey being sent around by students. Please include a brief blurb and link to the survey in your constituent emails that’d be great.

SGA Week is coming up. Monday is for you all. I won’t be there, but Chief Alam will be there as the organizer. Try to come prepared with what you’ve been recently working on and be honest. The second day will be for Cabinet Directors, the third day will be for me and Co-Chair Brook, the fourth day will be about bill writing workshop led by Doug Adams with Deputy Cowan as the organizer.

Senator Pustejovsky: What time is this happening?
President Sohn: 5:00-6:30 Monday through Thurs. You all are only obligated to come tomorrow (Monday). If you already told me that you couldn’t go that Monday, then you can go another day. If you did not reply back to that survey, then that’s on you.

Deputy Cowan: Monday, April 30th, is Staff Appreciation Day. I broke down this sign-up sheet so that everyone can work at least 1 hour on this. We are paying $4,000 for Waybury Inn to cater at Atwater, and we need student support to keep that cost down. I told them we would definitely get enough people to commit as servers.

The sign-up sheet is in Slack, please put your last name in here. [Explains the breakdown.] We will probably be done by 8:00. If someone with a car could sign up for the 8:00-9:00 shift so that we can take care of left-over food.

We will be offering babysitting which is a 2-hour shift. I don’t think a lot of people will take us up on this option, so it might not be necessary.

Publicity Committee is working with me to do invitations that will be going out to staff members this upcoming week. If you can’t make it that Monday, please sign up for 1 of the 3 columns towards the right. These jobs can be done on your own time, so if you’re busy this is the column for you. [Explains the 3 right most columns.]

Don’t worry about your face being displayed all over campus on the thank you video, this will only be shown at the dinner.

President Sohn: This might go on Facebook.

Deputy Cowan: I don’t think this is a huge invasion of privacy and I think this is worth it. I would like all senators to send out an email asking their constituents to complete this link.

[Explains “Additional Gifts” column.] Please sign up for at least one, if not multiple, sections. If we can’t get enough people, then we’re going to send it out to the student body. I would rather people just sign up, because the student body could get messy.

President Sohn: In light of the guests here and Senators Salas and Vijayakumar’s bill, I will motion to change the agenda. We would pull up Senator Pandey’s and Senator Salas’ bills to follow Deputy Cowan’s bill. Then I moved the final topic to the end.

Senator Pustejovsky: I would also like to motion to table my bill until next week. Co-Chair Brook is not here, and she would like us to wait.

Seconded.

Speaker Aaron: All in favor of adjusting the agenda accordingly? All opposed? All abstaining? The agenda has been rearranged.

13-0-2 [Senators Schurer & Gosselin abstain.]

IV. Senate Check-ins
Senator Pustejovsky: I’m still working on this bill. We’ve reached out to all possibly restructured club sports to make sure that’s okay. I am curious about what happened to the bylaws amendment with Senator Schurer.

President Sohn: This week I am planning on sending an email to everyone who has expressed interest. I plan to meet with everybody in person to patch it out, then present it to the senate and pass it. Does that sound good?

Senator Gosselin: That’s good.

Senator Pustejovsky: Sounds good.

Senator Pustejovsky: I went to the mural committee meeting today. The mural will be started tomorrow in McCullough, painting taking place every day from 4:00 to midnight. Friday at 4:30 is the unveiling. It’s right outside of MiddExpress.

Senator Mahboob: Today I met with the Student Educational Affairs Committee. The Faculty Educational Affairs Committee is working with students to figure out what curricular flexibility means. Some preliminary ideas are using a variety of skills that aren’t traditionally used in the classroom. We’re still figuring out what that means.

    We think we should have fewer requirements with flexibility. There was a meeting with the IP&E Chair about Student Advisory Committees (SAC). We have some ideas as to what the IPESAC does. They help plan social functions and increase the sense of community within the department. This week there is also a meeting with professors from the political science and religion departments to discuss SAC roles in their departments. SACs are supposed to be the student liaison to faculty and advise on how departments can better design their programs.

    Keeping Axinn open after hours is moving forward. Students will be able to access Axinn after 10:00 with their key cards.

    There is no news about open text books. There will be a meeting with the Associate Provost for Planning. The aim is to see if there is a way to change credits for graduation. This is an attempt to equalize the playing ground for people who don’t have AP or IB credits. We want to know the plausibility of requiring two less credits to graduate. There may be issues with accreditation, but we’ll find out.

Senator Low-Beinart: I met with Dave Donahue and we had a productive conversation about the Common Agenda and increasing public art. I also met with some students to collect more info. I plan to Present to the Board in May, when they next convene.

Senator Pandey: I’m presenting a bill tonight on asking the faculty for academic credits for internships. I had a chance to talk about this with many different administrators and many students as well.

    Next week I will be proposing a bill to increase community well-being. This has been part of my platform. I spoke with President Patton and many others related to this project. We
sent out a survey today and I would appreciate it if you could send it out to your constituents. The survey is seeing if the bill we plan to propose is what people want. This way we can amend the bill before we present it.

Senator Finkelstein: I spoke to someone from CCI this week about the First Year Explore Credit to see if there was a way to make accessible to new Febs.

Senator Goldfield: I finally got a hold of Hannah Ross and scheduled to talk with her in two weeks. If there is anything you want me to bring up while we discuss the legality of posting online, please tell me.

I sat in on the Finance Committee selection.

A week before spring break, I met with Dan Detora regarding dining on the Common Agenda. One conclusion we came to was that a meal plan may not be the worst thing. That’s something I’d like to talk about next week.

Senator Vijayakumar: I met with the Publicity Committee co-directors for a debrief session. I talked about my meeting with Bill Burger and our discussion of the creation of a SAC for the Office of Communications & Marketing. I’m trying to make a list of students we’d like to recommend serving on this committee. We want to focus more on first year and sophomores for the sake of continuity, but if you know any juniors and seniors that would be interested, please let me know. Try to refrain from recommending anyone from the SGA. We want people that they wouldn’t normally be in contact with.

Aside from that, later tonight I’m also going to talk about this bill.

Senator Vargas: I met with Gus Jordan about the Plan B vending machine. He told me there were no distributors for emergency contraceptives in Vermont, so it would be up to us to stock the machine. Essentially, I’m back to square one.

Senator Schurer: I retrieved several archives, ranging from 2007 to 2012, over break. They were on abandoned SGA websites. The archives are now linked on our new website. The co-directors of the Publicity Committee are working on taking down the old sites. I also transferred all of the data from the SGA Finance Committee website to ours and will probably do same with SLOC.

I attended the divestment forum, met with the Publicity Committee, met with the First Year Committee, and met with SUCC.

I have been working on some electronic resources for the senate to enhance communication and effectiveness.

Senator Gosselin: Community Council went to the wage discussion instead of Community Council. This week, I also approved three clubs: a Vietnamese Students organization, a literature organization, and—

Senator Pustejovsky: [Addressing Senator Gosselin] The next time you email Student Activities about new clubs, can you include the full name? I don’t know what the acronyms stand for.
Senator Gosselin: Yes, we can do that.

Senator Schurer: The third was Active Minds.

Senator Koontz: I met with my Commons Council and we’re continuing moving forward with one final traditional style event.

Senator McCormick: Nothing new.

Senator Andrews: Nothing new.

Speaker Aaron: I went to the divestment forum. About 20 students attended which was kind of disappointing. The students who attended were the ones very passionate about it.

V. Community Council Check-in
[Co-Chair Brook is absent.]

VI. Campus Pulse
Chief Alam: [Addressing Senator Pustejovsky] Is there any update on the Co-Curricular Transcript Bill?

Senator Pustejovsky: The IT department cannot shift over to a new platform before January 2019.

Senator Finkelstein: I’ve gotten a lot of questions about 10 o’clock Ross.

President Sohn: We got about 125 survey results back. We are currently organizing a meeting to decide what’s going to happen next. It would probably be best to let the students know that a meeting is taking place and that it is, for the moment, suspended.

Senator Vijayakumar: Are we sending it from the SGA email or should we send it in our constituent emails?

President Sohn: You can let students know it will be suspended until further notice and that there are efforts to try and bring it back. Maybe don’t advertise the meeting.

Speaker Aaron: It would be nice if they could post whether it’s open or not on the dining website.

Senator Schurer: Or within the Middlebury app.
Chief Alam: I just wanted to draw everyone’s attention to the white supremacy email. I’m going to be writing a message about this, so if you have any comments or ideas let me know. I think it’s important we all know about this.

VII. Old Business
   a. Chief Alam & President Sohn: Students-Trustees Representation and Engagement Bill (1)

President Sohn: Chief Alam and I met with Dave Donahue about this bill. We will be sending an email out to all students with the agenda for the upcoming Trustee Board meeting in May. Hopefully this will increase transparency and get students talking about what Trustees will be talking about.

We are trying to organize lunches in the dining halls with the Trustee members. Instead of being selective on what students can attend, it will be open to everyone. There might be a level of anxiety for anyone in this situation, so we will be acting as hosts to the Trustees.

Every fall the Board of Trustees has a retreat. The topic of this upcoming retreat will be about the full experience for students around campus. They are hoping to work with the SGA and other students. Those were some things that came out of our conversation and that we’d like feedback on. Chief Alam and I switched up the language to make it more palatable for trustees and incorporated other resources. We want to pass this bill tonight since Dave is meeting with the Trusteeship and Governance Group on the 12th of April. Changing anything in the Board’s bylaws must be finished by the end of April, so we want to give them enough time to discuss. Dave is a huge supporter of this, but he doesn’t really support having student constituents be voting members.

Senator Goldfield: Are student constituents, if they were to get voting power, would the senate tell them how they’re supposed to vote?

President Sohn: Typically, the student constituent is the SGA president. If we switch to the bill’s model, we will have to think of a different way to incorporate the larger student body in who will be the constituents. The only appointments will be the replication of the SLGSA to the different committees. Maybe it will be an appointment.

Senator Goldfield: Why, under the second point, is there only an “A?” Why is there no “B?”

President Sohn: Do you have any recommendation for the switching of formatting? Just get rid of the “A?”

Senator Gosselin: I like this bill and it looks like you put a lot of work into it. Is there anything preventing us from voting on it tonight? I want to vote as well.

President Sohn: No.
Speaker Aaron: I really like the bill, but the only thing I don’t like is the voting. I think we should find out the implications of having a student representative voting. I don’t know if we need to have a say in the decisions made by people who were chosen for their knowledge of the larger Middlebury picture.

Senator Pustejovsky: It’s difficult to decide whether we need a voting member since we don’t truly know what the Board does. I think we should either ask for voting now or not ask for it at all since we can’t do it retroactively. They’ll probably strike it anyways. It might be ideal to students want transparency and more of a say, and then state that through voting.

President Sohn: That was part of the reason we included that in the language. From my experience, not being able to have final say while sitting in the room is a bit delegitimizing.

Motion to vote.

Seconded.

Speaker Aaron: All in favor of voting on this bill? All opposed? All abstaining? Voting will commence.

15-0-0

Speaker Aaron: All in favor of this bill? All opposed? All abstaining? The bill is passed.

14-1-0 [Senator McCormick opposed.]

b. **Deputy Chief Cowan & President Sohn: Resolution in Support of Middlebury Students Against Gun Violence Bill & Resolution in Support of Action Against Systematic, Institutional Racism Resulting in Gun Violence Bill**

Deputy Cowan: The first resolution is in support of Middlebury students against gun violence. This is in direct response with the creation of the group “Middlebury Students Against Gun Violence,” and with the walkout. I’ve been communicating with several people on campus to create the second resolution against systematic and institutional racism resulting in gun violence. This is due to a lot of pushback on what the March 14th walkout means and how minorities don’t feel involved in process.

Both bills are politically motivated, I’m only looking for a discussion tonight and don’t plan to vote on them. I have not spoken with any cultural organizations about the second resolution yet. I knew there was a good chance this was going to get edited and wanted to do that before showing it to cultural organizations. I would have loved to receive more feedback before this meeting but thank you Senator Vijayakumar.

I think it makes sense to discuss my two resolutions in tandem.

Senator Pustejovsky: The first resolution has an empty “that” at the bottom.
Deputy Cowan: I think this is the wrong draft.

Senator Pustejovsky: Thank you. On the second resolution, the section about the Parton Health Center is amazing. I’m wondering a little bit about language, saying “including students who have experienced severe trauma.” I think it’s unfortunate that we don’t currently have a counselor that identifies as black. It’s a valuable resource that is probably lacking for many people, and I want to make sure that resource is open to everyone. If they haven’t experienced this form of trauma, I don’t want them to feel limited.

Deputy Cowan: I agree and would love to have that as an edit. Change the second “that” statement to say, “including students who’ve experience severe trauma.”

Senator Goldfield: Regarding the first resolution, I agree with a lot of it on a personal level, but I don’t think it’s the job of the SGA to issue polarizing unactionable political statements. Particularly the first “that” clause.

The last “that” clause, I’m not a huge fan of telling people they did something wrong without offering a way to change it. I would encourage you to say what you want them to do.

Senator Gosselin: I want to repeat a point I heard from Peter about the second to last “that” clause in the second resolution. I want to add that I don’t object to supporting these specific organizations, but I do object to supporting external organizations in general. The money in our budget is for the use of students, not for organizations. I wouldn’t be comfortable with this because we paid the Student Activities Fee for on campus events, not external causes.

Deputy Cowan: I agree with everything you said. The first way we worded this was that at the end of the fiscal year, any unspent money would be a donation. The goal is not to take things away from students.

Senator Gosselin: I’m not sure how finances work, so correct me if I’m wrong, but doesn’t it just roll back into the general reserves? So even after the fiscal year, it’s still usable.

Deputy Cowan: I would argue that the roll back doesn’t get divided any differently.

Senator Pustejovsky: I believe what happens is the reserves are used to balance out clubs that go over budget or any underbudgeting. I echo Senator Gosselin in the fact that the Student Activities Fee is paid by every student. Some people won’t support this cause, and they’d be upset if we spent their money on causes they didn’t support. It’s different if it was a small club decision than if we make decisions for students.

Doug Adams: Direct donations from Student Activities Fees cannot be allocated to external organizations. Fundraising is okay, but fees cannot be given.
Deputy Cowan: I completely understand. The fourth “that” clause would be to invite speakers to provide two different avenues of education. This might be another way to financially support this cause without actually financially supporting them.

The only reason I kept this clause in here was because minorities didn’t feel that the SGA responded in an actionable way to the Charles Murray incident. I wanted something more than just words in the air, something more permanent.

Chief Alam: Thank you so much for all of your hard work. An alternative offered by Peter, would be to put together a list of organizations that are doing similar work. Then give students easy access to those organizations to donate personally. That way we can raise awareness and provide access to those organizations if they choose.

Senator Vijayakumar: I’m frustrated that Deputy Cowan worked so hard and it’s so disrespectful how she got such few responses. People always talk shit about how the SGA is slow to move on initiative, and part of the reason is that sometimes we don’t pull our weight. This would be so much more productive if all this had been said in advance to get the ball rolling faster. Why aren’t we doing this? I don’t mean to sound rude, but this I’m tired of not treating people with respect and not doing the jobs we were elected to do.

Senator Gosselin: You said the fourth clause was to have a practical effect on the operations of these organizations. I’m thinking about how much money we had. I like Chief Alam’s suggestion. If we gave students the option to personally fundraise, it would raise more money than the amount we could give as an institution.

Deputy Cowan: I totally agree and have no problem doing that. Something that came up was that people who care are already doing things. I was hoping if we could donate, which we can’t, it would send a different message.

Charles: We really support the SGA directly giving funds to these groups. It’s a really important move to show that this body supports them enough. Actions speak louder than words, and I think that was our thinking process when we made that suggestion. That’s not an assumption that the SGA hasn’t taken any action, but in the eyes of a lot of minority students, there hasn’t been visibility of the actions the SGA has taken.

Senator Pustejovsky: Since we aren’t allowed to give funds, what do you think would be a tangible way to show our support?

Charles: Oh, I wasn’t aware of that. I’ll think about that.

Senator Vijayakumar: When fundraising, SGA would have to go out and actively ask for donations. I think this would amplify the fact that these organizations exist and show that the SGA cares enough to take time out of our day to do it. I’m not sure if that’s a good compromise, but it would show that we care about certain demographics on this campus.
Senator Gosselin: Could we give more money to MLK and Spearmarket? This way the money would go to students and still be in line with this resolution’s goals.

Speaker Aaron: There’s also a club called Students Fighting Gun Violence.

Deputy Cowan: I don’t think it’s an official club yet.

Charles: Would any senators be comfortable asking the institution to give funds? I also loved Senator Vijayakumar’s idea of fundraising.

Senator Pustejovsky: I think Senator Vijayakumar’s idea is probably the best solution. I appreciate what Senator Gosselin has said about giving more money to clubs, this would be a visible action from us to raise awareness. It makes a very different statement. If we could combine that with what Charles said, I think that would be a great idea.

Senator Low-Beinart: I favor Senator Vijayakumar’s idea. While the administration idea is good and I would want that to happen, it would probably be more efficient if senators went out and people chose to donate.

Deputy Cowan: Fundraising is a great idea, but I can’t do it alone. If people can’t even respond to me about a resolution, then I can’t fundraise. This has to be a group effort.

I’m not sure how I feel about asking the administration for funds. I don’t want to put pressure on students who can’t afford to fundraise. If we go that route, we need to make sure that doesn’t happen.

Charles: That was my main point, I don’t see a downside in doing both. There are students that won’t be able to donate, so I think also having a petition for the administration putting aside funds would supplement that feeling. I don’t see why we can’t do both.

Chief Alam: I agree with Charles. I would feel comfortable asking the administration to donate funds to organizations. I think we can do show student action and then ask administration, “what will you do?” It’s a valuable message from the SGA even if they don’t do it.

President Sohn: I don’t think it’s fair to assume that the institution wouldn’t donate. It’s important to include people from the administration on this conversation. Baishakhi Taylor might be the best person to include since she is the Dean of Students. I want to ask for the creation of an ad hoc committee, we need more people to work on this. I think it should be the responsibility of other SGA senators to step up to the plate and work on this. Motion to create an ad hoc committee.

Seconded.
Speaker Aaron: All in favor of the creation of an ad hoc committee? All opposed? All abstaining? The committee has been created.

11-2-2 [Senators Gosselin & McCormick oppose; Senators Vargas & Koontz abstain.]

President Sohn: An ad hoc committee is only temporary. Is there anyone who wants to chair this?

Deputy Cowan: I’ll chair.

[Interested people include: Senator Pustejovsky, Mahboob, Finkelstein, Vijayakumar, Low-Beinart, Chief Alam, and President Sohn.]

Charles: I think it would also be great to work with Community Council on this.

Senator Mahboob: It’s great to determine action based on the funds we’re willing to put towards a cause. A better way to address this might be to increase the programming we have about gun violence and racism. Clubs need to host open forums about what it means to have clubs that are directly involved. It will take collaborative effort from many different parts of campus for people to understand what systematic and institutional racism, gun violence, and these matters mean. There are other ways to get students involved and I think having conversations is really effective.

President Sohn: I motion to table this discussion for next week.

Seconded.

Speaker Aaron: All in favor of tabling? All opposed? All abstaining? The discussion has been tabled.

13-2-0 [Senators McCormick & Gosselin opposed.]

VIII. New Business

a. Senator Pandey: Academic Credit for Internships Bill

Speaker Aaron: Senator Pandey shared an updated version in Google Drive. [Addressing Senator Pandey] Can you update us on the changes?

Senator Pandey: This bill is the result of listening to many people who have frustrations regarding internships. The premise of this bill is to understand the changing dynamics of the student body and the world around us. There has been increasing diversity on campus, whether it be socio-economically or racially. Many people in the school want to be able to apply what they’re learning in the real world, especially during summers.

Internships offer experiences to students that are related to what they’re studying. Part of Middlebury’s mission talks about curricular flexibility. Many other liberal arts institutions have
adopted the allowance of academic internships for credit. We conducted a survey where many students expressed how they were not able to partake in many opportunities because they couldn’t get credit.

From the perspective of international students, the disallowance of academic internships for credit makes every international student here apply for the Optional Practical Training Program (OPT), which costs $400 per application. Unless they get a work visa, every international student can stay in the US for up to 12 months after graduation. Applying for summer internships using OPT takes away from the 12 months after graduation which they can stay. A simple alternative would be to allow Curricular Practical Training (CPT), which bears no financial burden. There is also no long legal process that is spent waiting to receive the OPT.

This bill asks the SGA to discuss and to ask the administration to vote again, to allow internships for academic credit. Last time, the vote lost 52 to 48, which came very close. This vote was also 4 years ago. I’ve done my best so that faculty feels internships relate to academic experience and to what students are learning.

Senator Vijayakumar: The first point in first “that” clause is super limiting by restricting it to your major. If you want to truly do something beneficial, then you can’t do that because Middlebury doesn’t offer every field.

Jonie Taylor: I’m an advisor in International Student Scholar Services. The reason the bill was framed this way was because if you’re on a F1 visa, you aren’t eligible to work off campus unless you’re here for an entire academic year. Even then everything you do must be related to your field of study. If an international student wants to work off campus, there are only two options for a benefit. Work might even just be engaging in a training experience. Either way, an international student must apply for either CPT or OPT. CPT, the experience must be an integral part of the curriculum, so it must offer academic credit or is required by the major.

Any other experience must be turned down unless they can apply for OPT. Since international students can’t use CPT at Middlebury, which is free, they must apply to US Citizenship and Immigration Services every time they want to work off campus. They cannot apply earlier than 90 days before the start of their opportunity, but right now the process to adjudicate exceeds 100 days. Students pay $410 for the filing fee every time they apply. Every time they use time from their OPT, it deducts from their 12 months. This is a severe disadvantage to international students.

Senator Pustejovsky: When first reading this bill, I had similar thoughts to Senator Vijayakumar. I was wondering if we were creating a new vision about expanding it. There are students in lower income brackets and the CCI only gives grants for certain amounts of unpaid internships. Could we make this more accessible by expanding the first part?

Senator Low-Beinart: In what Senator Pustejovsky was saying, maybe having two separate bills would be best. I agree with the international student part and think it was very much a long time coming. My understanding of internships is that they are usually unpaid. I worry that if you give academic credit, it could favor people who can afford to go unpaid. Even with the CCI grant, it
doesn’t cover a whole lot. I would recommend splitting the international part from the academic credit part. They go together, but it’s a lot to talk about together.

Jonie: I think the institution policy is you technically can’t get paid for an internship if you are approved for academic credit.

Senator Low-Beinart: Some people might have to be paid which might prevent them generating academic credit with an internship.

Jonie: I think for a lot of students, it’s just having access to that experience. At least if the opportunity was unpaid, then they were receiving credit. Sometimes students will come to me and I have to ask them if the unpaid internship passes certain criteria, otherwise it could be violating a labor law.

Motion to extend time.

Seconded.

Speaker Aaron: All in favor of extending time of discussion? All opposed? All abstaining? Discussion time has been expanded.

15-0-0

Senator Mahboob: This sounds like it’s in line with Middlebury’s new framework on curricular flexibility. There might be some pushback from the faculty, but this new framework could be a good bargaining chip.

Qian: I’m an international student with a film and English studies joint major. I wanted to look for a film internship this summer. The deadline for applying for a film internship makes applying for OPT impossible. There are not other options for me to apply for CPT, since it is not available at Middlebury. The faculty tries to help us, but they can’t go around institution policy.

Bethel: I’m a first-year international student from Ethiopia. This summer I was able to get a paid internship, which was complicated things since it was paid and I’m not legal to work off campus. I had to turn down the internship at Morgan Stanley, because I don’t have CPT.

I know someone else who got into this same program, he can do the program because he’s a domestic student and doesn’t need any paperwork to do it. It creates a separation between domestic and international students.

I came to Middlebury because this was liberal arts school and flexible. I don’t have to know what I want to major in and can try out different things. If we aren’t able to do that, it takes away the meaning of liberal arts.
Senator Pustejovsky: As we think about what we should work on to make sure this bill goes through, it may be good idea to make the language in number one more ambiguous. This way, if you change your major you can still have access to different internships.

Senator Pandey: It is in the best interest of students to have this policy be as flexible as possible. However, if we become too flexible, then we might not get to the goal of the faculty considering this. A lot of faculty is against this, I this as a bargaining chip on the faculty perspective.

Senator Pustejovsky: Maybe adding in “professional” would be enough in line with the winter internships section.

Speaker Aaron: Is there a motion to table?

Motion.

Seconded.

Speaker Aaron: All in favor of tabling? All opposed? All abstaining? The bill is tabled.

15-0-0

b. Senator Salas: Bylaws Amendment – Terms of Commons Senators Bill

Senator Vijayakumar: The purpose of this bill is to change the voting basis of commons senator to semester. When writing this bill, we realize continuity is essential, but we don’t think it should come at expense of certain dedicated students. We wanted to make a restriction to provide the opportunity to hold office if you’re going abroad. If you’re not going abroad then you’re required to run on a semester basis, but you won’t necessarily hold office for the entire year.

Speaker Aaron: If someone is deciding between running for a year-long position versus a semester-long position, people might decide based on who else is running. Have you thought about the possibility of having two people run together?

Senator Vijayakumar: If this body feels it’s feasible and it’s allowed, I’m down for that.

President Sohn: In the past, SGA has been against that because it creates a team dynamic and might prevent people from voting certain ways. I wish Co-Chair Brook, who has been in a semester-long position, was here to share her sentiments.

Senator Pustejovsky: I was Junior Senator for the full year last year and we had two people coming in and out, I think it worked well. We work on things and people explain what’s been happening well. There are constantly people coming in and out at different times at this school and I think it’s wrong to limit a particular position based on continuity. We will never function
on a typical year schedule. I don’t think it discourages people from running for the full year junior position. People run for what they can do.

Charles: I support this bill. As someone who’s been on Community Council, figuring out who’s going to serve during J-term is hard. Maybe allowing a stipulation that would depend on when their study abroad is cut. Just clarify J-term to make it less vague.

Senator Low-Beinart: I’m opposed to the sentiment of this bill. A lot of logistical negotiations would be required. While I don’t think studying abroad should limit anyone, it is a possible transition. Imagine if 75% of the SGA was new, that would be a logistical nightmare as everyone must catch up. Continuity is very important. Semester-long terms are possible, but they’re still very difficult. Why complicate the system?

Senator Gosselin: I am also opposed to a semester-based position. Things have been very confusing on Community Council this year and we haven’t been as productive as we should have been. It hasn’t helped that Baishakhi Taylor is also new. There were a couple times when no one knew what was going on. That doesn’t have to do with this bill, I’m just talking about regarding the Co-Chair position. I like this bill.

Senator Pandey: Why can’t we make a threshold?

Senator Finkelstein: I agree that people can relate to senators better if they’re around longer.

Senator Pustejovsky: [Addressing Senator Low-Beinart] I would say that on our part, the issue was training. I think it’s unfair to say that Junior Senators can go abroad but Commons Senators can’t. Somehow, there is still preference for class senator over Commons Senators.

Senator Vijayakumar: I don’t understand why it seems we’re penalizing dedicated students just because it’s going to make SGA do logistical work. We accommodated for other positions. I think Co-Chair is a much bigger responsibility than class or Commons Senator. This is for a significantly lesser degree of work than Co-Chair.

President Sohn: [Addressing Senator Vijayakumar] Have you spoken to other students on their sentiments regarding this bill? I don’t feel comfortable passing this tonight without knowing their sentiments.

[Addressing Commons Senators] How would you have felt if your position had been on a semester basis?

Senator McCormick: I didn’t go abroad.

Senator Koontz: I feel like I would be fine if I could still run for the full year.

President Sohn: Could you have done your job if you were only here for a semester?
Senator Koontz: Yes.

Speaker Aaron: I did think it was difficult to come in halfway through the year. I’m not against this idea. The biggest difficulty I see is how we discuss legislation in the fall and pick up right away in J-term.

Senator Vijayakumar: If you’re not going abroad you’re required to run for both semesters, however whether you’re elected depends. I spoke to some first years in Senator Salas’ hall and most said they were fine with it. Last semester we talked a lot about the commons and how it brings people together and I think Common Senators inherently more in tune with their commons.

Speaker Aaron: It is now 9:00, if you want to leave you are allowed to leave. However, since we need quorum to vote, if you could wait until after this. Is there a motion to table?

Senator Pustejovsky: Would Senator Salas be prevented from running if not voted tonight?

Senator Vijayakumar: Yes.

Senator McCormick: This seems very personal.

Senator Vijayakumar: Even though he and I have a personal relationship, I would have done this for anyone. I just happened to be the one that picked up the work on this since many other senators are busy. Thought it may seem like there is a conflict of interest, I want to make it very clear this isn’t just for him. The fact that I’m doing this shows my support for future students that might be in this same position.

Senator McCormick: I just mean there are a lot of bills brought forward that are about themselves.

Senator Gosselin: Motion to extend the time by 5 minutes.

Seconded.

Speaker Aaron: All in favor of extending the time? All opposed? All abstaining? The discussion time has been extended by 5 minutes.

11-2-2 [No specific records 😞]

[Senators McCormick and Andrews exit.]

Senator Low-Beinart: Visibility is important so that people know who to talk to. People still don’t know I’m a junior senator.
Commons are different from class because there are more restrictions on class. Commons can be any year, so you don’t have to be junior to run. You can do run for Commons Senator when you’re not going abroad.

Senator Vijayakumar: What you’re saying about the difficulty of transitioning is completely valid. I think that’s an SGA problem, not a people problem. It shows that there are a lot of things we need to do better.

Charles: Juniors are still commons constituents, so they should have a voice. I do echo the concerns regarding the Co-Chair position and how it’s been a mess this year. Commons are the hardest seats to fill, there are many uncontested races. Splitting up the voting might encourage more people to run for the position.

Senator Gosselin: I don’t want to vote on this tonight because I think it’s very complicated. Something that is very difficult regarding these semester-based positions is filling J-term. There is no official way to do it and we need to find way to do it.

Speaker Aaron: Is there a motion to table?

Motion.

Seconded.

Speaker Aaron: All in favor of tabling? All opposed? All abstaining? The resolution is not tabled.

4-6-2 [Specifics unavailable ☹]

Speaker Aaron: Is there a motion to vote?

Motion.

Seconded.

Speaker Aaron: All in favor of voting? All opposed? All abstaining? Voting will commence.

6-5-2 [Specifics unavailable ☹]

Speaker Aaron: All in favor of passing this resolution? All opposed? All abstaining? The resolution is passed.

8-4-3 [Senators Low-Beinart, Finkelstein, and Gosselin opposed; Speaker Aaron and President Sohn abstain.]
c. Senator Schurer: SGA Senator E-Mail Accounts & Facebook Accounts & SGA Comments Google and Discussion Forums Discussion

Senator Schurer: This was created because we were hoping for more senator presence on social media. Class senators will have access to these Facebook accounts. New emails will be needed for these Facebook accounts, which have been created. [Explains how to access.]

[Senator Koontz exits.]

Speaker Aaron: Can you put it in Slack?

Senator Schurer: Yes, I’m almost done.

President Sohn: Make sure not to over use these accounts.

Senator Schurer: Everyone on the Publicity Committee and Derek Ducet wrote an agreement to that. All the Senators included.

I’m proposing that we have a single google form that anyone on the SGA can access to enhance collaboration and communication. [Explains the process.]

Senate Check-ins are important, but we don’t always have time to discuss matters brought up during Check-ins. I’m proposing a Google Document with what you’re working on, which is essentially a Senator Check-in, that people can comment on and give feedback. This provides a written record.

President Sohn: [Addressing Senator Schurer] If you could you send a follow up email on everything you said, that would be great. The discussion forum is important to fill out before coming to senate meetings. This way others can read along as you speak, and if we’re crunched on time then we can skip check-ins and just read that on our own time.

Senator Schurer: It’s also less retroactive than Senate Check-ins. This is all in the senate folder. The survey is at go/tellsga.

IX. Ratify Bobbie Finkelstein ’21.5 to the SGA First-Year Committee Vote

Speaker Aaron: Is there a motion to ratify Bobbie Finkelstein to the First-Year Committee?

Motion.

Seconded.

Speaker Aaron: All in favor? All opposed? All abstaining? Bobbie Finkelstein has been ratified.

12-0-0
X. President Sohn: Spring Finals Week- Library 24/7 - Discussion & Creation of Ad-Hoc Committee

President Sohn: Mike Roy came to Community Council a while ago and told us that for spring finals week, there is a chance we might not have 24/7 hours in library. He gave us more data driven information from the fall semester. I spoke with Mike Roy and Baishakhi Taylor and them told what the SGA was going to do, but that we will still need help from other places on campus. I’m thinking about doing a similar survey to the 10 o’clock Ross one and sending students the data from fall semester. Afterwards I’ll present the information to Mike and Baishakhi. I want to have an ad hoc to be formed around this. I don’t think the SGA should be funding this since the budget comes from the Student Activities Fee. This is not a student activity, but something that should be a given. In the fall, they found a way to fund this last minute, and I’m thinking about getting Student Health and Wellness involved aside from the SGA committee.

Is anyone interested in helping?

XI. Topic of the Week Selection Discussion & Vote

President Sohn: I think the Topic of the Week should be figuring out if students want the library open for 24/7 hours and what the solution should be.

Senator Pustejovsky: I think the gun violence and institutional systemic racism is more important and timely. We can deal with finals week next month. I think it’s more in line with providing visible support.

President Sohn: I agree, the thing is we need an answer for Mike Roy in two weeks. Can we do both questions?

Senator Pustejovsky: I feel the SGA has a consensus on it, I don’t think we need to bring back up to students.

President Sohn: The thins is that in the fall the SGA said we said one thing then did another thing.

Senator Pustejovsky: We said we wouldn’t fund it and then administration funded it. Students were vocal that this shouldn’t be us paying for it.

Senator Vijayakumar: [Addressing President Sohn] They agree with what you said, this should be the school funding it, not us.

Senator Gosselin: I agree we should do the gun violence topic. Not many people use the library late during finals week.

Chief Alam: I agree with Senator Pustejovsky.
Speaker Aaron: Is anyone opposed?

President Sohn: I’m fine with the topic being gun violence, but there is a lot of pressure on the library issue. I can’t handle this alone.

Senator Mahboob: It’s not our responsibility…

President Sohn: Right, but they’re giving us so much pressure, if we don’t do our job to show that students care for this, then it won’t be funded.

Senator Mahboob: That’s what it is then. I think it’s more important to devote our efforts towards the topic of gun violence.

President Sohn: I agree, but I still think there’s a way to talk about both.

Senator Pustejovsky: We’ve been working on keeping Axinn open, 24/7. Perhaps the SGA should say we support them finding other ways to support students. I think we should have study spaces, but don’t think we should be paying for it. I also agree you shouldn’t be under all this pressure.

Speaker Aaron: Is anyone against this?

Senator Finkelstein: Can’t we do both?

Senator Pustejovsky: Oh I thought we could only have one, but yes, that sounds like a great idea.

Speaker Aaron: Does anyone disagree with have two topics? Ask your constituents about both topics.

Chief Alam: I don’t want both. I think one far more important than other and for clarity’s sake, we should only do one.

Senator Mahboob: I second that.

Senator Low-Beinart: What if we just have the gun violence be the official Topic of the Week, and then just ask around about libraries?

President Sohn: That’s fine. I just need help with this issue. I don’t like how administration keeps coming to us to do things we shouldn’t have to do.

Senator Pustejovsky: I think it’s been demonstrated that this is not a concern to students.
Senator Goldfield: The administration needs to stop trying to put their job on us. Whether this is something students want or not, since this pertains to academics it is the administration’s job to fund it. You should not feel any pressure because their doing this is entirely inappropriate. If you want the senators here to help stand up for you, I am happy to do that because it’s ridiculous.

Speaker Aaron: The Topic of the Week is Gun Violence and Institutional Racism.

   XII.  Adjournment
Speaker Aaron: Is there a motion to adjourn?

Motion.
Seconded.

Speaker Aaron: All in favor of adjourning? All opposed? All abstaining? We are adjourned.

11-0-1 [Senator Gosselin opposed.]

Meeting ends 9:23 p.m.