I. Attendance

Members Present: Senator Finkelstein, Senator Vargas, President Sohn, Senator Salas, Senator Gosselin, Senator Pandey, Senator Pustojevsky, Senator Goldfield, Senator Mahboob, Speaker Aaron, Senator Vijayakumar, Co-Chair Brook, Senator Schurer, Senator Andrews, Senator McCormick, Senator Low-Beinart

Members Absent: Senator Koontz

II. Acceptance of the Minutes from 4/8/18

Speaker Aaron: All in favor of accepting the minutes from 4/8/18? All opposed? All abstaining? The minutes are accepted.

14-0-1 [Senator Mahboob abstains.]

III. Announcements

President Sohn: Election season is officially upon us. There will be an email sent to the student body about the finalized candidates. If you have an email you want to send to your constituents, you must first send it to Diego Garcia and Jacob Freeman. This is to prevent special privilege or endorsement. If you accidentally send out an email, please let us know as soon as possible. The SGA debate for the Co-Chair position will be from 7 – 7:45 while the presidential debate will be from 8 – 8:45 on Wednesday the 18th. Both will be held in Crossroads Café. Voting starts from noon on the 19th to the 20th at noon. Results will be out on the 21st. If you have any good debate questions, give them to Chief Alam.

The divestment referendum will also be conducted in this upcoming election. Membership found someone for the argument against divestment.

This week’s student in person polling topic was about the gun violence resolutions. We’ll talk about that during the resolution discussion rather than during Senate Check-ins.

10 o’clock Ross is back starting this Monday. There are hesitations about moving forward with it next year. There are funding concerns, so that will be up to next year’s SGA.

This semester I’ve been writing a weekly column in The Campus about the bills we are working on. If you write a bill, please send me what we talk about during meetings regarding your bill.

[Senator Low-Beinart enters.]

Senator Mahboob: Is there an essential source of information about the candidates?

President Sohn: There will be email tonight sent out from the SGA Elections. It will include information about each candidate.

Budget Presentations for $10,000+ are coming up on May 6th. There is one week for presentations and the following Sunday they need for any appeals. If no one has been involved with budgeting before, there will be a training session the week before from Peter and Doug. I highly recommend not to doing anything besides these budget presentations on May 6th. If you
have a bill idea, don’t plan it around that time. May 6th is our second to last meeting, so do what you want to do now.

Restorative Practices Circle Training is being held April 17th, 19th, and the 24th.

Preview Days is this week. We traditionally hold an SGA dinner for prospective students. It would be great to have some SGA members there. It will be held in Redfield Proctor Lounge this Tuesday from 6:00 — 7:00.

How Middworks is happening. Signups haven’t been high. It would be good to get some SGA representation since this is partially an SGA initiative. The first one is tomorrow from 11:30 — 1:00 with President Patton and Facilities. There is another one this Thursday the 19th at noon with Dining Services and David Provost. Is anyone interested in going? A one-and-a-half hour commitment would also be ok.

Senator Low-Beinart: I’m free after 12 tomorrow. I’m free on Thursday so I can go to that one.

Senator Vargas: It’s at 13:30?

President Sohn: Tomorrow is from 11:30 to 1:30. The Thursday one is from 12:00 to 2:00.

Senator Vargas: I can do tomorrow.

Senator Schurer: I’ll let you know in Slack.

President Sohn: I’m going to reach out to President Patton and Baishakhi Taylor tonight to see where people are meeting. Because this is an SGA initiative, it would be really poor if we didn’t show up.

Senator Low-Beinart: Where on Thursday?

President Sohn: I will let you know. If you change mind your mind and find out you are free, I will put information in Slack. Please also try to get the word out.

IV. Senate Check-ins
Senator Andrews: Nothing new.

Senator McCormick: One of my constituents brought a concern about the To-go boxes. There is no consistent system on exchanging them. I was wondering if anyone had more information or how it will work moving forward. Everyone knows we’re supposed to use them, but not how to get a new one.

President Aaron: I’m going to ask Dan to go over that with Dining Hall Staff.
President Sohn: That was not the case with me, so I think it depends for each person. [Addressing Senator McCormick] If you are really invested in this issue, you could consider reaching out to Dan and Lief to work on this.

Speaker Aaron: If other people have container issues, email them to me and Lief and we will reach out to Dan.

Senator Pustejovsky: I think the Ross system is working much better than the one in Proctor. I have also heard similar concerns.

President Sohn: For Proctor, they’re toward the back.

Senator Salas: I attended the first Advisory Council for the Commons Debut a couple weeks ago. I volunteered to be part of a committee and subcommittees to gather information on what gaps and movements commons need to have.

   Senator Low-Beinart and I are continuing to work on our breaking social bubbles project. There will be a trial run this week with 1 to 2 groups.
   We will also be talking about the Terms of Commons Senators Bill.

Senator Gosselin: I helped with NESGov this weekend. I think it went well.
   The SOOC approved Mock Trial and Food Club.

Senator Schurer: Wednesday I met with Social Affairs to talk about a Middlebury nightlife website. When I showed them some other resources that they could help make more robust, we decided it wasn’t the most effective thing to put their time into.
   I met with the Publicity Committee on Wednesday and the First-Year Committee on Thursday. We are planning a Sunset Soiree that we hope to make a class tradition. For the last event of every year, we would watch the sunset at the Organic Farm, enjoy live music, and food. We are planning for May 4th, but if that doesn’t work then May 6th.
   I also attended NESGov.

Senator Vargas: I couldn’t go to First-Year Committee meeting or meet with the Sexual Relationship and Respect Committee.
   I attended NESGov.
   On a quick note, I think we should try to follow Robert’s rules of waiting to be called on. There’s a reason these rules exist, and I think it’s important we try to stick with them. I’m still working with Sexual Relationships and Respect on seeing how we can change the Sexual Assault Policy.

Senator Vijayakumar: It’s cold in here which makes it hard for me to focus. We need to figure something out.
   The Midd Masti show is this Saturday at 8:00.
I spoke with some constituents about our topic of week. Most didn’t give any suggestions but wanted to know what organizations we were thinking about supporting. If we’re going to fundraise, someone suggested selling something instead. Most people just want to know we’re going to do in terms of organizations. Generally, they were in support of the bills.

Senator Goldfield: I’ll try to make this announcement without my teeth chattering. I have my phone call with Hannah Ross tomorrow morning, so if you have any questions let me know. Later this evening we will be discussing meal plans and dining.

Senator Finkelstein: I met with another student in the CCI to talk about the First-Year Explore Program and ways to increase accessibility for new Febs. They were extremely receptive and talked about trying a pilot to extend the timeline for when new Febs can use it.

Senator Pandey: I sent out a survey about student wellness last week. We have a good sample size of about 100+ responses. It’s interesting that throughout my time in the SGA, there was not much focus on the importance of sample size and making sure they aren’t biased.

Senator Low-Beinart: I mostly focused on the Common Agenda and spoke with more people about CAP. I attended the NESGov brunch. I will be working on setting up several focus groups to get more data. I’m trying to create a ten-year plan for more student and outside artwork on campus. This weekend I’m going to try to set up those focus groups and set up a survey.

Senator Mahboob: I met with the Student Educational Affairs Committee (SEAC) about the meaning of curricular flexibility. Some ideas were walking classrooms, standing desks, and outdoor classes. The team met with the Administrator of Planning and they talked about why requiring 2 less credits to graduate would be a problem. Accreditation issues and potential problems with federal requirements.

One idea could be that classes are weighted differently, so labs could be worth more credits than a writing course. The team feels we need to move past the idea of one class one credit. Another idea was meeting at different class times.

We still need to talk to a few more people about open hours in Axinn, it will likely happen, but we still need to talk about safety after the incident in the library.

We had a few questions about library 24/7. Is it possible to make it less expensive to use the library?

Co-Chair Brook: Because of the requirements for security guards, we can’t decrease the cost. It’s about occupancy rather than the actual number of people in the building.

Senator Mahboob: Are students using the library past midnight using the resources available? Are there any statistics on that?

President Sohn: I’m about to send out a student body email about the whole situation. I also made a survey to get student sentiments.
Co-Chair Brook: [Addressing President Sohn] Are you going to include the numbers that were already recorded?

President Sohn: Yes, I was going to send out a graph with those. I was also going to include in the survey the question of what the hours were used for? Another question would be that if we didn’t have library 24/7, what would people need to supplement that? I’m planning on sending that out tonight.

Senator Mahboob: One of the team members wanted a breakdown of expenses or details on staffing the library?

President Sohn: I don’t think that’s available to me.

Senator Pustejovsky: [Addressing Senator Low-Beinart] Many people wanted to talk with me about future of mural projects, so we could connect on that.

   We’re presenting a bill later tonight.

   In light of Staff Appreciation Day and some issues with people being disrespectful to the dining hall staff, should we write a resolution to recommend us re-evaluating how we act in dining halls. It’s really privileged to walk in and leave the place a mess and make it difficult for other people to be there. I’d just like sentiments on that.

President Sohn: [Addressing Senator Pustejovsky] I think a good idea would be to write an op-ed. I think it would get people talking and would be a good initial step.

Senator Pustejovsky: Maybe more like a statement. I don’t think it’s our place to ban something like that, but I think it would be good to have a community conversation.

President Sohn: [Addressing Senator Vijayakumar] About the temperature in the room, I have emailed about it multiple times, but nothing has really been done. I will also look into having meetings somewhere else.

Co-Chair Brook: I couldn’t attend the Community Council meetings because I was in Miami.

   Community Council is planning on finalizing the Financial Aid Bill that will create mentorship for applying to financial aid. I am hoping to present that next week. If anyone has anything they want included in this bill, please Slack me.

   Baishakhi Taylor and I have been talking about the role of the Community Council and restructuring it to make more efficient. I have also mentioned it to the candidates about restructuring. One idea mentioned by Senator Gosselin was the restructuring of the SGA’s cabinet since there is a lot of overlap between them and Community Council. The only difference is the cabinet requires reaching out to administrators. If we already have those administrators and staff on our council, then why don’t we fuse them? If anyone has any comments on that it would be greatly appreciated.
Speaker Aaron: When are we planning on doing the Bylaw Updates Bill?

President Sohn: I’m going to Slack everyone tonight. There has been a lot on my plate this last week. Who would be interested in working on the bylaws?

For the people that are interested, please take a look at the full bylaws to see what you’re interested in working on before coming to the meeting.

V. Campus Pulse

Chief Alam: There’s a new mural in McCullough.

Co-Chair Brook: Is it possible to have something there to tell the story behind it? Just to tell that there was student input and the way that input occurred.

Senator Pustejovsky: The mural says Middlebury students on it, but maybe an artist label would be nice.

President Sohn: I didn’t go to the concert, I was wondering if there were any instances at the concert regarding student behavior?

Senator Vijayakumar: I didn’t go, but a lot of people that I asked said it was unruly and they had terrible time. I mostly spoke to women. It was very drunken with lots of shoving and grabbing.

Senator Low-Beinart: I was there but in the front. I thought it was pretty behaved for concert. The artist did try to encourage a mosh pit twice, so it might partially be the artist’s fault.

Co-Chair Brook: I attended and worked the event. From what I saw, there was a huge number of non-Middlebury students and they were the people that were aggressive.

Senator Pandey: I was also thinking about how we’re raising awareness to respect people in our community, but then non-Middlebury people haven’t gone to these trainings. For these concerts, could we have separate place for non-Middlebury people since this is still a problem?

Co-Chair Brook: That’s not a reason why we sell to non-Middlebury students, since they’ll just buy Middlebury student tickets anyways. If we at least hold another section open, then Middlebury students can access it a different way.

Senator McCormick: I’ve been to a fair number of concerts. Compared to bigger concerts and festivals, they’re generally very tame and last night was no exception.

Senator Pandey: There’s also the fact that we’re men. Maybe we have different experiences based on who we are. Have you talked to any women or other people on their experiences?

Senator Andrews: I was there and didn’t want to go into middle, so I stayed in the back was fine.
Senator Mahboob: I think Senator Pandey is speaking not just to the rowdiness, which can differ from person to person, but to the fact that this community holds itself to certain standards. If we’re going to allow people who don’t have the same standards, that is something to consider. If even one person had a bad sexual experience, I think that’s reason enough to take into consideration.

Senator Pustejovsky: From an MCAB standpoint, it’s damn near impossible to keep townspeople out of the concert. We do have different community standards and it would be great to figure out how to fix this problem. Last year, with Uzi, there were a lot of people below the age of 16 coming. This is something that MCAB is constantly struggling with, and it is really unsettling to have not great community values that we can’t control.

President Sohn: Senator Pandey had an interesting idea. Have we ever thought about how at actual concerts there are different places to sit or stand? What if there was one section for Middlebury students and another for outsiders? I don’t know if that’s too much segregation, but it might help.

Senator Gosselin: The college is having their concert on Tuesday at 8:00.

VI. Old Business
   a. Co-Chair Brook, Senator Pustejovsky: An Act to Correct the Club Sports Bill 2.0 – Bill

Senator Pustejovsky: This is what we presented the first time, but with slightly different language. We just combined the two bills, but nothing has changed.

   I reached out to all the sports that were going to be recategorized, and none of them were against. I also reached out to a fair amount of the competitive sports, and they were also very in favor of this structure.

   [Reviews what the bill does. Available on past minutes.]

Co-Chair Brook: Senator Goldfield, did you have anything to say about the funding cap?

Senator Goldfield: No. Can a team still apply to become a competitive club sport and receive full funding?

Senator Pustejovsky: Any sport that applies will follow all normal procedures at the discretion of the SOOC and the Finance Committee.

Speaker Aaron: It looks good. We wanted to make it easier for Franklin to manage club spaces by limiting how many times a non-competitive club competes. Last time, we talk about how it depends on a case to case basis and how sometimes it might not make sense to prevent them. I would recommend that instead of limiting the number of times they can compete to twice, to limiting the times they compete off-campus twice. Then make the on-campus a case by case basis.
Senator Pustejovsky: We originally had the bill written that way but were specifically asked to limit it the other way. Facilities is very tight on reservation space and said that it would be more manageable if we do it this way. If it doesn’t work, then we can reevaluate it.

Speaker Aaron: I know someone that went to compete for fencing this weekend, is that not an official…?

Senator Pustejovsky: Fencing is inactive.

Speaker Aaron: Strange, not relevant then.

Senator Gosselin: I’d like to pass it tonight if you’re comfortable doing that.

Co-Chair Brook: We need to pass it tonight.

Speaker Aaron: Just one more question. Are the previously existing requirements no longer existent, regarding coaches and such?

Co-Chair Brook: No, sports that needed were afforded coaches. That was based on the guidelines of being a contact sport. The requirements are still the same.

Senator Pustejovsky: I believe we also have a section about if a club sport with a varsity component applies and requires a contact sport coach, then we cannot afford to take that on. I don’t think there will be any new coaches unless it’s required and SOOC decides to fund it.

Senator Mahboob: This section sounds weird. [Reads aloud from the bill.] To say that non-competitive sports have limited competitions seems contradictory.

Speaker Aaron: Club tennis just recently competed and are planning another competition. It makes sense to have these categories, but it seems funny to classify sports as competitive or non-competitive when they still compete.

Co-Chair Brook: That’s the reason we’re putting this in place, is because they shouldn’t be. If we’re going to start doing this for all sports with varsity counterparts, we don’t want to pay for that many.

Speaker Aaron: That makes sense. They applied to the Finance Committee and were told to ask for more money. I thought that was strange and think we might want to look into the way we’re trying to keep clubs in control.

Senator Pustejovsky: Regarding that definition, I am happy to change it. Can I make an amendment before we pass it to replace “non-competitive sports” and replace it with “sports with a limited travel season?”
Senator Mahboob: This only applies to duplicates of varsity sports, right?

Senator Pustejovsky: This only applies to these five sports.

President Sohn: Speaker Aaron brought up the point about having this reviewed next year. Was this something you wanted in the bill or was just inherently recognized?

Co-Chair Brook: I feel like it goes without saying, you can do whenever you want. I don’t think it needs to be declared.

Senator Mahboob: Crew, Cycling, Equestrian, Quidditch, and Rugby, are these club sports that will have limited travel seasons?

President Sohn: No, these are competitive.

Senator Pustejovsky: Nothing will change for those sports since they are in a different category. The other five [motions to the board] that will operate in a different way.

Speaker Aaron: This is also turning Skiiga and MiddRuns from regular organizations into a club sports category.

Senator Finkelstein: This is just back end organization versus a complete rebranding. I don’t want to offend anyone.

Senator Pustejovsky: All the club sports in the second category were pre-existing and aren’t really affected. It is different for tennis, but tennis is also new. Hopefully this will be understood not as penalizing but just as reorganization.

Speaker Aaron: Since we passed the other bill, there haven’t been other sports that have applied to become club sports, so that’s a positive for our future.

Senator Vargas: Have we considered having Athletics chip in with funding? If we can afford to send the football team everywhere, I think we could chip in a tiny bit for clubs.

Speaker Aaron: It’s a great point, but athletics and club sports are under separate departments. It could be investigated in the future, but it’s not an avenue we can take right now.

Senator Vargas: Do you know why they don’t do club sports?

Speaker Aaron: They don’t have extra funding, they’re only responsible for varsity athletics. When they had to drop club sports because of budget cuts, we agreed to take them on as the student government.
Co-Chair Brook: When I was on club rugby, we were always asking for the right to be under varsity athletics. It’s not necessarily college funding that’s funding the sport. It might be funding from alumni that is directly funding that sport.

Motion to vote.

Seconded.

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

16-0-0

Speaker Aaron: All in favor of the bill? All opposed? All abstaining? The bill has passed.

14-1-1 [Senator McCormick opposes; Speaker Aaron abstains.]


President Sohn: Deputy Cowan is not able to attend today, but she did make some edits to both bills. We got good feedback from Community Council. Now is good time to talk about constituent concerns. The Institutional Diversity Committee Cabinet looked at these bills and wanted to let you know that they were fully in support and want to endorse it. I spoke to the directors about committee members who are also members of cultural organizations potentially bringing up these resolutions in those meetings.

Senator Mahboob: One great way to get involved is to get constituents going to cultural organization events. UMOJA has a conference this week. It’s nice to know what’s happening on campus with groups that we consider marginalized.

Co-Chair Brook: [Reading section of the resolution.] What is a respectful protest regarding Middlebury’s guidelines? A lot of the world outside might consider respectful might not fall under those guidelines. I’m considered this wording won’t help a lot in terms of Middlebury’s considerations. It would be difficult for us to say not to consider it along the guidelines Middlebury already has, but I want us to be able to include those protests.

President Sohn: I think that was wording Deputy Cowan worked on. I’m not sure what she meant by that.

Speaker Aaron: I was on the committee with Hannah Ross and other students to look at the protest policies for the college. They’re pretty supportive of lots of different types. I think they would encompass anything within the realms of not burning things. I don’t think we should sit here and try to come up with a definition, it wouldn’t be the best use of our time.
Co-Chair Brook: I agree and think they do encompass a little bit. I think there’s always room for understanding nuance. I don’t know if there’ll be student committee to address that or something else.

Senator McCormick: I don’t find this very productive if Deputy Cowan isn’t going to be here to talk about her own bill. I think we should move on.

President Sohn: That’s a valid point, but I want to hear the collective constituent feedback.

Senator Finkelstein: Regarding the hiring of a black psychologist at Parton, is it legal to hire someone based on their race?

Co-Chair Brook: The Chief Diversity Officer job description has a certain wording that tilts it a certain way. Maybe a friendly amendment would be to word it differently in the bill as someone with a strong connection to a diverse community.

Senator Finkelstein: Yeah, I don’t think it’s technically legal.

Co-Chair Brook: I echo Senator McCormick’s thoughts to limit this to student feedback.

Senator Low-Beinart: In our Wellness Survey, we received two individual and unprompted requests asking for the hiring of a person of color in Parton.

Senator Gosselin: Parton is hiring two new counselors now. The last time we hired new counselors there were no applicants of color. Even though there is awareness of the issue, we’ve never been able to find someone before.

Senator Pustejovsky: [Addressing Senator Gosselin] At the town forum, Miguel discussed how hiring practices can be made more diverse. I think it’s important to discuss ways to make those practices more diverse. I’m not sure if those trainings or discussions are aimed at anything beyond faculty.

    I spoke with a couple of my constituents and they echoed this without me mentioning it. I want to echo Senator Vijayakumar that many students were interested about which organizations would be supported, and how they would be supported.

Senator Gosselin: Maybe, instead of saying that we should hire someone, put that we should train the people hiring to hire in a particular way.

Senator Low-Beinart: There’s a program President Patton mentioned that’s specifically geared towards hiring professors.

President Sohn: The C3.
Senator Low-Beinart: Yes, so if that’s legal, perhaps looking into that would be an alternative.

President Sohn: It’s through an organization so we would have to find an organization that specifically looks at hiring psychologists of color. However, that’s a good point.

Senator Pustejovsky: [Addressing Senator Gosselin] I think that just the statement is important, even if we can’t do anything. I motion to limit this to 2 more minutes.

Seconded.

Speaker Aaron: All in favor of limiting the discussion to two more minutes? All opposed? All abstaining? The time has been limited.

16-0-0

President Sohn: Were there any students against this bill or have other concerns?

Senator Low-Beinart: There was a concern about other students how may be more pro-gun rights and how they might react. They were worried that it would represent whole student body.

Speaker Aaron: There were constituents who surprised we were talking about this since it’s not like previous conversations we’ve had. The conversation regarding the role of the SGA, since we don’t generally impose our political sentiments on students, and this is a political bill. I’ve gotten lots of different feedback.

Senator Mahboob: Deputy Cowan said that this bill was not so much about gun rights but rather gun violence. Instead of saying that we’re against guns, the SGA can say that we are against violence.

President Sohn: Maybe that could be a whereas statement to include.

Senator Vargas: Maybe we could ditch the whereas statement about the Australian Buy Back Law.

Speaker Aaron: Is there a motion to table this?

Motion to table.

Seconded.

Speaker Aaron: All in favor of tabling this until next meeting? All opposed? All abstaining? The resolutions are tabled.
c. **Senator Pandey: Academic Credit for Internships – Bill**

Senator Pandey: Most of the Administration seem supportive. Everyone seems to understand the importance of experience in learning. Many other institutions are adopting this as the world around us changes. As we embrace diversity on an institutional level, we should understand that other kinds of diversity have also increased resulting in different needs. Many people cannot afford to get a higher education that leads to economic mobility. Many people can’t get hired for an internship because they can’t accept academic credit. Employers don’t want to get in trouble because they can’t afford to pay, and now they can’t compensate them in any way.

Senator Pustejovsky: I’m super in favor of this bill. One friendly amendment regarding winter term internships. If you could include “professional interests” it could hopefully open more doors.

Senator Pandey: As long as we can frame it right, that’s fine. Can we directly compare it to winter internships, since those have already been passed?

Senator Pustejovsky: Yes, maybe put it in a whereas clause.

Senator Goldfield: I agree with that amendment and love this bill. Did you talk to Student Educational Affairs (SEA) about this?

Senator Pandey: I talked with him as a first source, because he had a lot of previous information about this.

Motion to go off the record.

Speaker Aaron: All in favor of going off the record? All opposed? All abstaining?

15-0-1 [Senator Mahboob abstains.]

Co-Chair Brook: Every international student feels so strongly about this. It hurts to know how many people could have had an internship that led to a job. It is obscenely difficult in this country to get a job and a sponsorship for a VISA. This is extremely helpful to not only provide work experience but provide an opportunity that could lead to a sustainable income after graduation.

Could you elaborate and maybe use different wording on number 3?

Senator Pandey: I’m very open to wording and framing changes since English is my second language. The idea of an internship supervisor… I did research on how other colleges went about doing this. The supervisor is just someone the faculty can talk to and make sure a proper academic experience is being provided to some extent.
Secondly, there are many professors of practice at Middlebury, but when they teach they have to spend time in their course explaining why it’s related to “liberal arts.” The school wants to relate everything to liberal arts. The idea of supervisor would make sure the internship understands what the liberal arts experience is.

Co-Chair Brook: I see what you’re saying, but I feel that might make it inflexible for some students without a direct supervisor.

Senator Pandey: There just has to be someone in the company to take responsibility to tell the faculty how the internship relates.

Speaker Aaron: I’m not sure about the implementation process. Is it necessary to have these specific changes or can we pass the bill and then have you follow up with the specific offices after?

Senator Pandey: I’m very flexible to change it right now.

Speaker Aaron: I just don’t want it to not get voted tonight because of specific words.

Senator Pustejovsky: As a friendly amendment, perhaps remove “on site” in part 3.

Co-Chair Brook: In the past, students who have tried to do CPT were under independent study. In this case, you would be getting a full credit for the internship. If we have strict wording, the faculty are more likely to be in favor. Would you be willing to change number one to “receive credit for the summer internship” as an independent study, or something along those lines?

Senator Pandey: I thought of that idea. [Explains the process at Harvard.] But I’m not entirely sure about independent study.

Co-Chair Brook: Then perhaps, I would retract it. Just wait for them to have questions.

Senator Pandey: They’re going to write this, how they are going to get credits.

Speaker Aaron: Is there a motion to vote?

Motion.

Seconded.

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

16-0-0
Speaker Aaron: All in favor of passing this bill? All opposed? All abstaining? The bill is passed.

16-0-0

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

Speaker Aaron: I want to apologize for not realizing last week that we were trying to vote on the bill. We can’t vote on a Bylaws change unless it’s discussed the week before it’s voted on. Last week we voted to pass it but it didn’t go into effect.

Senator Vijayakumar: I send a Slack message for any suggestions and got 1.

Speaker Aaron: Have you thought about changing from just people studying abroad to anyone who wants to run for a single semester?

Senator Vijayakumar: Last meeting there was a concern for continuity, which is good to have but not at the expense of opportunity. We don’t mind either way. I’d like to know what the Commons Senators have to say.

Senator Gosselin: I don’t really like it. We’ve had trouble filling spots this year with uncontested elections. This bill opens more spots to be filled.

Senator Pustejovsky: On the flip side, it creates more opportunity. If someone wants to run for half the year, then it allows them to do it. I’d rather have more committed people be here than not, so making it as open as possible. We also discussed medical leave aside from studying abroad.

Senator Vijayakumar: Senator Salas and I had trouble with wording about students on medical leave and trying not to exclude them. Right now, it’s worded as study abroad commitments. If there is a different way to sum it up.

President Sohn: About wording, there is one part about medical leave that was not included in this year’s Bylaws. That language can be added to this bill since it’s already been done. You don’t need to spend time doing that.

Chief Alam: I was going to suggest that we change study abroad to “off campus” to accommodate that concern.

Speaker Aaron: It might be complicated for the Director of Membership to track people who are running and figure out their commitments.

President Sohn: [Addressing Doug Adams] Does a student on medical leave still receive SGA emails?
Doug: It depends on the medical leave. Bylaws don’t need to explain the reason why, they just need to stipulate the term. You don’t need as much explanation as you have in here.

Senator Low-Beinart: I’m pretty against this bill due to complications and lack of continuity. It’s a little different with the change to off campus, but there was an easy fix to just study abroad. It was brought up that this might bring in more committed people, but there is the potential this might bring on less committed people. I would be for it if we got more interested and committed people, but I’m not sure how to do that.

Senator Pustejovsky: [Addressing Speaker Aaron] I don’t think the difficulty of this from the perspective of the Membership & Elections Council should keep from us considering this. This is their job to deal with the logistics.

[Addressing Senator Low-Beinart] We don’t have a great onboarding process, but that should be different conversation. I wouldn’t assume that it’s just juniors going abroad. There are so many people that are not on a traditional time frame. Logistics is a valid concern but I think it’s a conversation for later that shouldn’t keep us voting on this bill.

Senator Gosselin: I was the one who sent in the one change. I wanted to put and amendment that changes the seat of Co-Chair back to the way it was, but I can see why people wouldn’t like that.

Senator Vijayakumar: I just felt the nature of those two positions were very different that starts a new conversation with more people. The reason we struggled with the wording was because we wanted people to run on full year basis unless they had a commitment that would make only be able to serve a single semester.

Co-Chair Brook: I think it’s strange of us to assume who is committed and not committed. I feel very committed, and I don’t think it’s our place to decide that and it shouldn’t stop us from voting on this. Just because I was only here for half a year doesn’t mean I could do less or more work than someone that was here for the full year.

Senator Gosselin: I think it depends on the kinds of projects. Crafting the Commons System Review took a lot of intense work over a short period of time, but the actual review takes 2 years. You kind of need to be here to work on the review committee. I don’t have a good way to put this so I’m going to retract it.

Senator Pustejovsky: It’s unfair to try and decide what project people should and shouldn’t be working on, whether they should be in senate, and what they should do. Motion to vote.

Seconded.

Speaker Aaron: All in favor of voting? All opposed? All abstaining? Voting will commence.
12-2-2 [Senator Gosselin & Speaker Aaron oppose; Senators Finkelstein and Low-Beinart abstain.]

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

10-4-2 [Senators Andrews, McCormick, Gosselin, and Finkelstein oppose; Senator Low-Beinart & Speaker Aaron abstain.]

VII. New Business
   a. Swipe System in Dining – Discussion

Senator Goldfield: I think this is a great way to work on the Common Agenda and review the work that we’ve been doing. A conclusion I came to is that swipe systems and meal plans have the potential to be a good thing. It would give more options of places to eat on campus, alleviate dining hall lines, and make different food options more accessible.

   There would be three different meal plans with everything costing same. Any money that was not spent on towards food in the dining hall would then be put towards your declining balance. Dan Detora mentioned to me that 40% of students don’t eat breakfast. Why should 40% of campus pay for breakfast when they could be using their money elsewhere? This could possibly alleviate the need for 10 o’clock Ross.

Senator Pustejovsky: A lot of that makes sense, but in the current way our campus is setup, we aren’t prepared for that. If we move to a system that emphasizes more cooking outside of dining halls, we don’t have enough dorms to provide kitchen access. Considering we have a terrible student center and not many gathering spaces to emphasize social connection other than dining halls. If we shift more money to declining balances, the food provided at other on-campus eateries are not particularly healthy. There may be more access to the Grille, but I don’t think we can handle that with our current set up.

Senator Vargas: I know at different schools, there is the issue of people choosing the cheaper option and the problem of hunger. There are schools trying to alleviate this hunger issue, one way is through donating a “guest swipe.”

   I want to echo Senator Pustjovsky’s point that dining halls are student spaces. There may be 40% of people who don’t eat breakfast, but how many people eat multiples lunches or dinners. Sometimes I use a swipe just for coffee.

Senator Pandey: [Addressing Senator Goldfield] Do you have any data on what people think of this.

   I also think the declining balance idea is a big financial illusion. All the places where food is sold on Middlebury, it’s very marked up for its quality, all the money spent is going to companies like Pepsi, and increasing the declining balance is a huge illusion. It makes it seem like they’re giving you the money, but in reality, we’re putting it back into their revenue channels because we can only spend it on-campus.
Senator Gosselin: If I had to swipe in twice for one meal, would that count once or twice? Like if I had to use the bathroom?

Speaker Aaron: They can track who you are, so I think that’s more logistical.

Senator Low-Beinart: My main concern is about the social space aspect. Dining halls are one of the most inclusive social space on campus. In dining halls, you can run into people that you wouldn’t always see. After talking to people from other schools that are very decentralized, they talk about how there’s a huge segregation when it comes to friend groups. People tend to not make new friends or switch up friend groups. I think that since each plan is the same price, this only discourages people from meeting in dining halls.

About the double swipe, sometimes I’ll visit different dining halls during the same meal time for meetings and such. It’s nice to provide all of this fluidity that’s essential to the Middlebury experience.

Co-Chair Brook: About unhealthy food that is offered on-campus, the Middlebury Consulting Group is currently working on different ways of operation for offering new and healthier food choices. There is a long-term plan for the Grill to change the utilization of space and the menu to serve as dining hall competition. In that case, I would say it increases economic inclusivity. They are also increasing food outlets in the Athletic Center and other places.

This was brought up last year. The idea that the price would stay the same was best way to think about. The price would stay the same, but you would have the money to use somewhere else.

Also, rather than saying swipes we’re counting meal times. You can swipe as many times as you want within a single meal time and have it only count as one meal.

Speaker Aaron: Social houses create a great community for eating which is one reason I’m pro-meal plan. You can create community other places than the dining halls. Every day you spend $30 on food, whether you eat or not. Another possibility would be to have the full meal plane for just first years and sophomores.

Senator Goldfield: [Addressing Senator Pandey] I have not done a survey because I wanted to have a conversation here before it was brought to the student body. I don’t plan to write a bill or resolution any time soon.

b. Topic of the Week Selection – Discussion & Vote

Senator Goldfield: Meal plans.

Senator Vargas: I think, given Senator Pandey’s bill, we should also talk about how international students are often very marginalized and don’t have access to the full Middlebury experience. So I think integrating the international students and the International Committee would be a good topic.
Speaker Aaron: Did we create an ad hoc committee last week for something?

President Sohn: For the 24-hour library and gun violence.

Speaker Aaron: Was there any follow up with that?

President Sohn: I’ve been working a lot on the Library 24-hour Survey and I was hoping that after I sent out the survey, the rest of the committee could help with presenting it.

Senator Pustejovsky: Maybe asking constituents about public art since there is momentum from the mural.

Speaker Aaron: We also had a lot of new public art recommendations in the Traditions Meeting. We have meal plans, international student support, and art in public spaces.

c. **Senator Pandey: Proposal for Increase of Student Wellbeing – Bill**

Senator Pandey: The idea of this is to improve the wellbeing of all different aspects of the community. In the survey, I asked if people support the idea of custodial staff getting 2 meals a day since they get 1 right now. Almost 70% out of 100 responses said “definitely.”

A majority of people said they wanted more relaxation spaces with pillows or comfortable furniture.

Dining services saved about $300,000 so far and will save more on these To-go boxes. Most people said they felt the saved money should first go towards increasing food choices in the dining halls, then go towards the declining balance.

I also asked people about the idea of installing Fit-desk bikes. It’s very divided so there’s no conclusion.

I also asked about sentiments towards Public Safety and counseling.

Motion to table.

Seconded.

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

16-0-0

d. **NESGov Recap – Discussion**

Speaker Aaron: Before people leave, if you have bills please don’t forget to send them to me each week in their newer version, even if we’ve already discussed them.

[Senators McCormick & Andrews exit.]
Senator Vargas: Lots of schools are very similar to us. Some ideas that came up was international student inclusion, relationships with Administration, how the student body sees the SGA, and communication of the SGA with student body.

President Sohn: I think the best step would be for people that were at the conference to share a Google document with the people that couldn’t go.

Senator Gosselin: I think the most important I talked about was with someone from Colby. They wanted to do an intercollege Google Drive to share what bills get passed.

Speaker Aaron: We already have one from the fall, but we should add everyone to it.

President Sohn: Cabinet is working on transition documents. It’s a great idea to have for the future person coming into your position.

Senator Low-Beinart: Aside from Google documents, maybe really encouraging people to work with their replacements. There is so much advice to give that’s really helpful.

President Sohn: Even if it’s just letter, that could also help make things feel more personal.

**VIII. 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.

14-0-0

Meeting ends at 9:09