

STUDENT SENATE MINUTES

November 1, 2022

Senate President Green called the Senate meeting to order at 7:36pm and announced that the meeting may be filmed or audio recorded and may be available to the public. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ROLL CALL:

Roll was called and quorum was established with a total of 72 senators present.

Not there for roll call:

- **Antoszewski**
- **Cable**
- **Cox**
- **Ghozali**
- **Giordano**
- **Hautamaki**
- **Howard**
- **Imbrigiotta**
- **Kanfer**
- **Partridge**
- **Patel**
- **Troncoso**
- **Virani**
- **Wolcott**

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- **Senator Bush:**
 - Good evening, senators.
 - I did not think that I would have to be so vulnerable and so transparent so fast in front of so many strangers.
 - I feel it is necessary to address what was said when my character and capability for this role was questioned.
 - I would first like to thank everyone that defended me, as I was unable to defend myself.
 - Sitting in a room when your character is being questioned and you are unable to do anything is literally the worst.
 - This was an objective process that was completely turned into subjective and personal attacks.
 - Unfortunately, to make you all aware of the full context of the story, I am about to get very personal, very quickly.

- Last year, during my time with the aforementioned organization, I was sexually assaulted.
- This is nothing that I wanted to share today, but after being publicly humiliated, I feel it is important to provide you with the full context of this experience.
- As one can imagine, this left a very negative impact on my mental and physical health.
- Since then, I have promised myself that I will not let any person hold that power over me again.
- Being sexually assaulted should not be a learning experience, but it has taught me that I should not be quiet.
- In every other area I stepped up to the plate and gave it my all.
- I implore each and every one of you who took this information at face value to consider that every story has two sides.
- Finally, I would like to say that I deserve to be here.
- I will not let anyone say that I am any less than deserving.
- My story and experience will not be belittled by anybody trying to bully and belittle me.
- I hope that my transparency and vulnerability here today will encourage everybody to move forward with kindness and consider the full impact of your words.
- Thank you, senators.
- Chairman Harkins:
 - These past few weeks, I have been disheartened by the antisemitic comments made by Kanye West and others on social media
 - Personally, I have been a fan of his for as long as I can remember.
 - As a member of the Jewish faith, however, I find it difficult to separate the art from the artist.
 - Even more frightening are the words of validation from people everywhere.
 - Two weeks ago, neonazis held a sign over a Los Angeles Freeway that read “Kanye was right about the Jews”.
 - This past weekend, after the Florida-Georgia football game, this same message was projected onto a screen in Jacksonville, Florida at TIAA Bank Field.
 - Similar twitter posts and instagram comments have appeared on social media.
 - As a Jewish person, this makes me saddened, angry, and frightened to express my religious beliefs.
 - My goal of addressing this today is to make everyone aware of this issue and how it affects people of the Jewish faith.
 - I have been working on a resolution with Senators Kligerman and Rubin.
 - If you would like to sponsor or contribute in any way, please reach out to me.
 - I would love for us to work together on this issue.

- Andrew Taramykin:
 - Hi y'all. Thank you so much for your time.
 - I am here with regards to the approval of president-elect Ben Sasse who was elected unanimously today.
 - We fought against it, but it was not successful.
 - I know that this body passed legislation condemning the Student Body President for her support of Ben Sasse.
 - The Student Body President voted to approve Ben Sasse.
 - I work down at Pugh Hall
 - I am the student who coordinates the Gators Vote Initiative.
 - I would encourage all students to work with us.
 - There was no civil discourse in Sasse's nomination.
 - The public was locked out every step of the way.
 - This meeting was probably the most difficult state meeting I ever had to access.
 - The Florida Senate does not even have that level of control.
 - The Florida Cabinet is more accessible than what happened today.
 - It is a patterned behavior from the legislature, university administration, and the board of trustees.
 - This body is uniquely positioned to be the only entity to host student rights to speak, voice opposition, and participate in the policymaking of our community.
 - The University of Florida has atrocious voter turnout when it comes to student government elections.
 - I would like to encourage everyone in this room to look for ways to empower student voices.
 - Make it easier to vote; make it easier to access your senators, make it easier to know who your senators are.
 - I am not partisan and I am not super ideological, but I believe in fairness.
 - The student body needs someone to speak for them, listen to them, and empower and enable them to participate.
 - I have great faith in this institution.
 - Stop by the Bob Graham Center if you would like to talk to me more about this.
 - Thank you so much for your time.
- Senator Bonilla:
 - Good evening, senators.
 - I come to speak on the behalf of my constituents.
 - Not only did the Student Body President vote in approval of Ben Sasse, but she failed the main purpose of her role to stand for the entire student body.
 - The lack of leadership is far too common in the Student Body President's administration.
 - Senators, our constituents are looking at this.

- With this said, I want to completely denounce the actions of President Lemasters.
- Thank you.
- Senator Bowman:
 - Hello, fellow senators.
 - First, I would like to voice my disappointment in Student Body President Lauren Lemasters in her approval of Ben Sasse.
 - She commented that he has a hill of trust to climb, yet still voted to approve his appointment.
 - I refuse to put my trust in a man who has never held a position at nor attended a public university and fought against the expansion of gay rights.
 - Last week, we had majority party senators bring up that they must be objective and not take into account the opinions brought forth by constituents when reviewing applicants.
 - This is extremely worrying to me as it represents a senate selection process that does not care about how applicants have contributed to the community.
 - I am not claiming that we should make what the committee members say be the end all be all, but we need to take them into account, as well as how the applicant responds to these accusations.
 - I have not even been here a semester, but I am already tired of the objectivity that always ends up in the majority party's favor.
 - Please stop feigning objectivity.
 - If we choose committee appointments like the US Senate does, with parties given seats in each committee based on the makeup of a legislator, and parties deciding who to put up for appointment, we can avoid all of the back and forth that we have become accustomed to in this chamber.
 - Thank you.
- Senator Rosenkranz:
 - Good evening, senators.
 - I am newly elected for District A.
 - I am up here to echo the same sentiments as Senator Harkins.
 - What's been happening the past few weeks has been very concerning for me, since I am also Jewish.
 - I have necklaces that I would like to wear proudly, but I keep them hidden because I am afraid.
 - Once there is a resolution out, I hope we can all support it together.
 - Thank you.
- Senator Urbenz:
 - Good evening, senators.
 - I am here to present a resolution I authored over these past few weeks.
 - I am disheartened to see President Lemasters fail to listen to the student body.

- Why would the board of trustees gamble with the protection of LGBTQ+ students?
- For those who are not aware, today is the first day of Native Heritage Month.
- I ask that we reflect on how our actions affect Native American Individuals.
- To honor the beginning of this month, I have decided to wear my great-grandmother's vest, pants handed down to me from my aunt, a Newfoundland pin, and earrings from a local native artist.
- I am of Mi'kmaq descent, and I have been marginally disconnected from the culture due to my parents' immigration to the United States, and the nature of the Canadian government.
- Something legally referred to as "Indian status" is rewarded on a point-system, most of them requiring long-time residency in Newfoundland.
- Next week, I'll be pointing out the importance of some of the clauses within the bill.
- I encourage us all to think very carefully about how we can honor, support, and uplift Native Communities.
- Thank you.
- Jessica Weber:
 - Good evening, senators.
 - As all of you should know, it is the job of the Student Body President to represent their constituents.
 - Lauren Lemasters accepted the responsibility of representing the student body.
 - It seems she has failed at this task today.
 - Simply put, Ben Sasse is underqualified.
 - I honestly expected more from the University of Florida.
 - We are a top five university. This action does not express that.
 - Additionally, I would like to speak on the antisemitic speech that has been occurring over the past few weeks.
 - This is the type of language that started the Holocaust, and that is terrifying.
 - I am Jewish, and I am about to be very honest.
 - Growing up, I had swastikas written in my yearbook, and was mocked and bullied for looking Jewish.
 - I encourage all of you to sponsor and support Senator Harkins' legislation.
 - Thank you.
- Senator Holmes:
 - Good evening, senators.
 - The UF Board of Trustees voted unanimously to elect Ben Sasse as president of the University of Florida.
 - That means, by extension, Lauren Lemasters was a part of that decision.
 - The criticisms of Ben Sasse have not been quiet.

- Since the protests of Sasse in Emerson Hall, students, faculty, and staff have continued to express their concerns relating to Ben Sasse.
- Beyond this, when same-sex marriage became legal, Sasse, then a senator, called it a disappointment to Nebraska.
- This openly homophobic sentiment does not belong at the University of Florida.
- This vote to admit Ben Sasse does not represent the student body's needs.
- Thank you.
- Senator Shoemaker:
 - Good evening, senators.
 - I wanted to talk not just about political affiliations, but also university status.
 - I went through the past Presidents of UF, and I learned a little bit more about each of them.
 - President Fuchs was the University Provost of Cornell University.
 - Bernie Machen was President of the University of Utah.
 - Charles Young was the UCLA Chancellor for 29 years.
 - John Lombardi was the Provost and VP for academic affairs at Johns Hopkins.
 - Students' concerns have a wide range right now, and it is disappointing to see that Student Body President Lemasters has voted yes overall.
 - Have a good night.
- Senator Marcelino:
 - Good evening, senators.
 - I am a newly-elected senator for District D.
 - Ben Sasse has been unanimously appointed as President of the University of Florida.
 - Our words and actions fell on deaf ears.
 - Our education should be free from the limitations of politics.
 - Moreover, the lack of pluralism in this process is disappointing.
 - However, in spite of this, I hope that we can uphold our democracy.
 - Thank you.
- Minority Party Leader Corbett:
 - Good evening, senators.
 - Today's decision to confirm Ben Sasse as our next university president is a dishonorable one.
 - What is more dishonorable is that a member of our student government contributed to the appointment of Ben Sasse.
 - Students went to President Lemasters' office hours to ask her if she would represent their sentiments, and in her answer, she said she was still listening to students and figuring it out.
 - I questioned exactly what this meant.
 - I questioned this for the longest time since these students felt unheard.

- The lack of civil discourse especially from another student is appalling.
- This isn't the first time that we've seen the lack of appreciation for civil discourse.
- Change party thinks that the phrase "student experience" is an ignorant one.
- Students don't care about a TikToker coming to talk about the Hype House or shakers in the stadium.
- Students do care about political encroachment.
- Decisions are made by officials behind closed doors on behalf of students, but students respond harshly when they do not agree with decisions.
- We saw this with the 800 code revisions restricting organization funding.
- We saw this when Josh Richards came to campus.
- We saw this with the decision to back down on library funding.
- And we see it now with Lemasters approving Ben Sasse.
- At this point, I'm surprised that the officials who voted those ways are still shocked when students do not support the decisions they made on their behalf.
- Within the context of the presidential search committee, Florida law no longer requires that this committee release their list of finalists and are shielded from public record requests.
- They are operating outside of the sunshine.
- Lauren Lemasters is actively choosing not to communicate.
- The position of Student Body President is a privileged one where you are granted access to a decision making opportunity.
- But what does privilege do if you abuse it ?
- There is no law binding Lemasters to silence.
- Lemasters' decision is more appalling knowing that she recognized the lack of trust the student body had in regards to Ben Sasse.
- Although she claims she has been listening, I believe she has been mistaken.
- Listening is to take notice of and act on what someone says, to respond to advice or a request.
- Lemasters heard students, but she did not listen.
- Students deserve a student body president who is open to communicating with students and acting in their best interest.
- Thank you.
- Senator Faisal:
 - Good evening, senators.
 - I am not in a suit today because today I am not representing District D; I am speaking to you all as a student.
 - I am speaking to you about how we, as student government, affect the students.
 - 70,000 people love this university and chose to be here.
 - The representatives of all 70,000 made it very clear how we felt about the presidential nominee.

- Almost everyone voiced it, and almost everyone was in the same agreement.
- All but one.
- It is important to understand that Lauren Lemasters was elected by this Student Body with 5,893 votes. Which is 9.6 % of the student body.
- To put that into perspective, Senate President Green, who could only receive votes in District A, received 3.7% of the votes by the student body.
- Even though 9.6% of the student body voted her in, she represents 100% of the student body.
- Voting “no” is not hard.
- Lauren Lemasters failed the student body today.
- Week in and week out we see senators from both Change and Gator party object.
- We object when we see something that is wrong.
- We may not agree on many things, but we do agree that it is easy to sit in your chair and object.
- We also agreed when we urged Lauren Lemasters to vote “no.”
- We also agreed when we said Ben Sasse is not qualified to be president.
- The quote “A hill of trust to climb” has been overused.
- Florida is the flattest of all 50 states.
- Hills do not belong in Florida; go back to Nebraska.
- In the beginning of my time at UF, we were ranked eighth.
- Now we are ranked fifth.
- It is saddening to know that our rank will probably fall before I leave.
- Many of us in this chamber want to see the University of Florida succeed.
- That being said, where we have helped it, we have hurt this university a lot more.
- And because of Student Body President Lauren Lemasters, I do not think that the University of Florida will maintain its “Top 5” ranking, nor do I think we deserve it.
- I will end it by saying thank you for serving as student body president, but objecting is not hard.
- You have failed us, your students, and all faculty and future students at the University of Florida.
- Thank you.
- Senator Stephens:
 - Good evening, senators.
 - I want to talk about the power of abstention.
 - Abstention is pretty powerful.
 - In a lot of ways, abstentions are one of the most powerful ways for someone to speak.
 - It allows us to answer one question: Is the answer yes or no?
 - Sometimes that answer is complicated.

- That abstention could have been used today in many different regards.
- I think that when I sit in this chamber and fight so hard for many of my constituents, sometimes, I have to use that abstention because my personal beliefs will conflict with that of my constituents.
- It is frustrating to see Student Body President Lauren Lemasters ignore all of the concerns and records regarding to Ben Sasse.
- Specifically, he promoted the Keystone Pipeline which endangered native communities in the Nebraska area.
- He spoke of the importance of a man and women in the life of a child.
- He voted in favor of a resolution nullifying the rule where the provider has access to the Title X Family Planning Program.
- H wasn't present for the Student Non-Discrimination Act, which would have helped non-LGBTQ+ students in our classrooms.
- So many different things that Ben Sasse did were adverse and inconsistent with the beliefs of the students and faculty on this campus.
- I get it, Ben Sasse is a republican.
- I am in support of you just as I am in support of the democrats.
- Do I vote with what I believe in, or do I vote for those sitting in that spot?
- I implore everyone within this chamber to consider all of our actions.
- Even if our personal beliefs do not connect with what our constituents believe, use that power of abstention.
- Senator Spata:
 - Good evening, senators.
 - I would like to apologize for my informal attire.
 - I am going to try to wrap up everything in a nice little bow.
 - The condemnation of Lauren Lemasters was passed in this body unanimously, which speaks volumes.
 - I would really like to know why Lauren Lemasters is not in this chamber right now.
 - She has not stepped in this chamber once to explain herself.
 - I know that, at the very least, her actions need an explanation.
 - Her silence has been deafening.
 - The students who voted for her regret their choice.
 - The students who didn't vote for her wondered why.
 - The protests at Emerson hall were protests from students, and yet she still was in her office saying that she was waiting to hear more from students.
 - I do not know what more she needed to hear.
 - National news heard about this.
 - The fact that she seemed to gloss over it makes me wonder whether or not she has the capability to perform the duties of her office.

- The office of the Student Body President holds more weight than I think she or any other person in this body will understand.
- Her term lasts a single year, but the weight of her decision will last decades.
- In the time it took her to vote “yes,” she has condemned decades of future gators.
- She has failed in her office, she has failed in her job, and she has failed the student body.
- This university will continue to suffer.
- Until that happens, we will have to suffer.
- Every year, I am going to have to come back here and know that this place is ruled by somebody who does not know a single thing about what it means to be a gator.
- I don’t think that he would last ten minutes in the swamp.
- If this were a class, she’d have an “E.”

AMENDMENTS TO THE MINUTES:

- There were none.

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA:

- Senator Stephens moves to approve the bloc of absences by unanimous consent. That motion passes.
- Senator Stephens moves to make a friendly amendment to Student Senate Bill 2022-1056 to amend the proviso to state “2023” where it previously said “2022” by unanimous consent. That motion passes.
- Senator Stephens moves to approve Student Senate Bill 2022-1056: The Campus Recycling Overhaul Act (CROA) – 800 Codes Revision by unanimous consent. That motion passes.
- Senator Stephens moves to approve Student Senate Bill 2022-1050: Senate Town Hall Explanation, Verification, and Implementation Act (STHEVIA) by unanimous consent. That motion passes.
- Senator Stephens moves to approve the bloc of SSB 2022-1051, SSB 2022-1052, SSB 2022-1053, SSB 2022-1054, SSB 2022-1055 by unanimous consent. That motion passes.

EXECUTIVE BRANCH:

- Action SG Agency Head Jadelyn Fleischer:
 - Good evening, senators.
 - I am a fourth-year grad student, and I am the Action SG Agency Head.
 - Action SG is the bridge that connects Student Government with the rest of the campus community as well as alumni.
 - I love that each agency and cabinet has its own specific brand.

- So it's my job to take all those different programs and bring them into one cohesive brand.
- I've been a bit busy.
- For a little overview, the bulk of my work had to do with creating graphics with the agencies and announcements.
- I've also taken pictures and taken videos for events and announcements, as well as head shots.
- We worked today to get some fall SG merchandise.
- I am also bringing a new element to my job.
- I am working on an SG alumni networking event.
- Some of my initiatives that I will be working on include pictures and testimonies outside of SG leaders.
- I am also trying to balance the amount of graphics with actual pictures.
- I also want to promote events that are outside of the main SG ones.
- I am always open to questions, feedback, and conversation.
- Please reach out to me action@sg.ufl.edu .

SENATE PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

- Senate President Green:
 - I want to go over the Ad-Hoc committee.
 - I think that it is important to include non-senators.
 - Committee Roster:
 - Chair: Myla Smith
 - Vice-Chair: Shelby Schultz
 - Max Durst
 - Matthew Goodman
 - Gianmarco Rodriguez
 - Sidney Ruedas
 - Katie Berger
 - The tabling housing event is November 17th.
 - There are students that want to see us, and we should connect with our constituents.
 - There is another tabling event on November 14th.
 - If you have any questions about that, please reach out to Chairwoman Clark or Chairwoman Funai.
 - Finally, I would be remiss if I did not speak about this.
 - On October 18th, 2022 our senate body unanimously approved Student Senate Bill 2022-1043: Resolution Condemning the Presidential Search Committee and Student Body President Lauren Lemasters for Nominating Ben Sasse as the Finalist in the UF's Presidential Search.

- This was a decision made on both sides of the aisle and one I do not take lightly.
- Today President Lemasters made the decision to vote yes on Ben Sasse.
- This was an action she made of her own accord and not one that is representative of the student body or of my own personal beliefs and opinions.
- I believe I have a duty as both Senate President and a student of University of Florida to represent the ideals of this senate body and I want to say tonight that I am extremely disappointed by the actions of Student Body President Lemasters.
- The students made their opinions on the nomination very clear, and these opinions were disregarded today.
- To the students we are charged with representing, I can say with certainty we see you, we hear you, and we will continue to amplify student voices as one united senate.
- I think that one thing student senate has done right under my term was to condemn Lauren Lemasters.
- I do not think it is right to ignore student voices, and we will not continue to do that.
- If you have any questions, please reach out to me at senatepresident@sg.ufl.edu.

REPLACEMENT AND AGENDA COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

- There were none.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

REPLACEMENT AND AGENDA:

- Vice-Chairwoman Vaknin welcomes the senators.
 - Good evening, senators.
 - I want to speak about subjectivity versus objectivity when considering candidates in R&A.
 - When each member ran to be in the committee, we prepared presentations and answered questions upon questions, ensuring that we would be fair and unbiased throughout our term.
 - Like I said during the last meeting, I am sure there are people who would love to write a negative statement about each and every person in this room, but that does not mean they're incapable of being strong, competent senators.
 - If there is a concern about a potential candidate, public humiliation is no way to bring something like this to our attention.
 - We consider each applicant based on their experience, ideas, and qualifications.
 - I respect every individual in this room, and as Member-at-Large, I will continue to evaluate each of you objectively.
 - R&A will be meeting this Sunday at a place and time to be determined.

- The applications for the permanent seats are due on Friday at noon.

Open Permanent Senate Seats

- Building Construction
 - Dentistry
 - Graduate (6)
 - Law
 - Medicine
 - Nursing
 - Pharmacy
 - Veterinary
 - District D
-
- If you have any questions, please reach out to me at senatepresidentprotempore@sg.ufl.edu .

JUDICIARY:

- Vice-Chairwoman Ruedas:
 - Good evening, senators.
 - Judiciary is meeting at a time and place to be determined.
 - Legislation is due on Friday at noon.
 - If you have any questions, please email me at judiciary@sg.ufl.edu.

BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS:

- Chairwoman Pecora:
 - Hello everyone.
 - I want to thank my committee and Jackie Phillips for all their hard work and long hours.
 - We allocated over \$330,000, and we still have about \$900,000 left.
 - We will be picking up hearings tomorrow.
 - If you have any questions, please email me at budget@sg.ufl.edu.

RULES & ETHICS:

- Chairwoman Clark:
 - Continue to submit your constituency.
 - I would like to congratulate Senator McGinnis for being the first senator to complete their constituency for this term.
 - Rules & Ethics is consistently meeting at 6:30pm every Tuesday in the SG Conference Room.
 - If you have any questions, please email me at rules@sg.ufl.edu.

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION:

- Chairwoman Funai:
 - Good evening, senators.
 - Today is the last day to order senate merch.
 - Last week I sent the link to the student senate t-shirt.
 - Keep tabling, since constituency is creeping up on us.
 - I'm going to send out the "Why Senate Wednesday" form.
 - If you have any questions, please email me at info@sg.ufl.edu.

FIRST READINGS:

- There were none.

SECOND READINGS:

- There were none.

BILLS PENDING SIGNATURES:

- There were none.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Senator Santiago Perez: On November 2nd, MASA will be presenting an event, so show up! The midterm election is this upcoming Tuesday, so make sure to encourage your constituents to vote.
- Chairman Harkins: Clarifies voter records.
- Minority Party Leader Corbett: WSA is meeting tomorrow. It counts as constituency.
- Senator Urbenz: Please reach out to me if you'd like to sponsor my legislation.
- Senator Marcelino: Tomorrow there will be an event for the Health Educated Asian Leaders (HEAL), so please come out!

ROLL CALL:

- Chairwoman Clark moves to use voter records as the final roll call by unanimous consent. That motion passes.

ADJOURNMENT:

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:44pm.