



# The Student Forum

*Union College's undergraduate voice since 1929*



Date: February 26th, 2019

**Attendance:** Michael Stalteri, Devlin Daley, Raya Petrova, Sarah Gottlieb, Sarah Taha, Ruchi Raval, Matthew Toy, Andrew Wojtowicz, Emily Carrabba, Raphael Sebastian, Zaid Al-Moghrabi, Madeleine Miller, Sam Varsano, Simon Bohn, Matthew Dulchinos, Brian Huang, Nimra Shabbir, Cameron Dreher, Madison Holley, Lawson Wheatley, Meghan McVaigh

**Non-voting:** Matthew Milless, Devlin Daley, Michael Secchiaroli, Anthony Boone

**Excused:** Lauren Dougherty, Sapan Shah, Cameron Bechtold (Abroad), Imogene Welles,

**President (Stalteri):**

Thank You: Founder's Day

Upcoming Strategic Plan Meetings

- Added the meetings to Student Forum calendar; Thursday 2/28 4:00PM in O'Brien Center
- The other two days will be in the google calendar.
- First meeting was about Student Experience in general; into four different categories:
  - (MH) Integrating Union into the Schenectady community and vice versa. Looking at residents of Schenectady as scary individuals and how we break that stereotype. Without Schenectady Union would not exist, more long lasting programs in Schenectady with the money and resources that Union has to have an impact on the community.
  - (LS) One of the ideas would be making it a part of the curriculum to require some kind of volunteer experience or education to make students less scared of Schenectady.
  - (SG) Housing and talking about better facilities and better options for seniors to get released. Focus on Greek Life and issues on and off campus. Space utilization is a huge issue, perhaps making a Greek Village and
  - (SB) Being up to par with our peer schools and having the same quality if not better than the other schools.
  - (RR) making it a whole experience so that you aren't just going to your dorm to live there but there are additional experiences that you can have there. We are all paying
  - (MT) If you want to share why you chose Union if it has anything to do with residential life or if you want to build Union in your own way with unlimited money resources, email to [strategicplan@union.edu](mailto:strategicplan@union.edu)

- (EC) Minerva focus: tried to figure out what needs to be changed in Minervas to make people want to stay in them. Related a lot to Greek Life. Make it a better experience for the upperclassmen as well.
- (MS) A lot of the faculty, administration, and staff of the college were asking students the questions in our session. We also talked about faculty buy-in and we discuss how faculty can be the conduit in the service component of their jobs and expectations.
- Nobody went to the foundations focus group.
- (MSecc) Was there an expansion on the party conversation or weekend events at Union?
  - (CD) Parties limited to Fraternities because of the expensive insurance policies.
  - (EC) We talked about Minervas late night and talked about each Minerva hosting one late night event per term so that it takes an additional aspect of late night programming in addition to U-Program.

- Please attend the break out groups if you can go!

Minerva Commencement Series: Tomorrow!

February 27, 6:30pm - 8:00pm in Beuth House

[Please RSVP](#)

**Secretary (Daley):** Nothing to report.

**VP Administration (Petrova):** Nothing to report.

**VP Finance (Gottlieb):**

Vote \$5000 to Outing Club

- We granted them \$2000 early in the term. They have been a lot more active this year and they have absorbed rock climbing club. They do have rock climbing and outing trips, the school requires a specific person to go with them for safety and risk management concerns.
- (RP) What was the initial number we granted them?
  - (SG) \$2000 and the original request for was \$7000 which was a miscommunication with the
- (EC) Do you know what some of the events that they are planning to do?
  - (SG) Ice climbing, overnight in the spring, and other hiking trips.
- (EC) Motion to approve finance committees suggestion of \$5000 to the outing club
  - (RP) Seconded
- VOTE:
  - Approve: 19
  - Against:0
  - Abstain:0
  - MOTION PASSES

Vote \$1732 AMWHO

- In addition to their regular budget, this is their conference to attend. In the handbook, we can fund up to two members of a club as long as they bring back info to the campus. Cost includes tickets to the conference, taxi fare, and housing for two night.
- (RS) What is the club's purpose?
  - (SG) American Mock World Health Organization
- (ZM) Did they provide any information on what info they are bringing back to the club?
  - (SG)
- (BH) Is there a record of how many students we send to conferences?
  - (SG) I don't think there are many students that we send to conferences. There is a lot that people bring to us that we won't fund.
- (RR) Are they using all of the money or is it a cap?
  - (SG) The ticket prices are \$65 each, they calculate the taxi fares, round trip tickets to Albany to Georgia, hotel was \$300/night.
- (ZM) I think that we should have someone who will oversee the people spending the money because it seems extreme for two people.
  - (SG) I know it seems very novel but we want to offer club to expand their knowledge.
- (RP) Motion to approve finance committee's recommendation for 1732 dollars to AMWHO.
  - (MH) Seconded.
- (RS) I think they could do a lot better for their hotel prices.
- (RR) I think we need to create a system so that people aren't using the money just for their personal sake.
  - (SG) I think it might be the hotel where the conference is actually happening and I think we should want to fund things like this.
- (RP) People want to know what the purpose or filter for choosing the hotel through the Office of Student Activities so I trust that this choice is being made in sound reason.
- (BH) I was just going to say that if there is an informal process for submitting information about the hotels with additional research.
- (ST) They should give multiple times and options for selecting flights.
- (EC) How does it work if a club sport was booking a hotel?
  - (SG) It is in their budget packets where we know they are spending x amount of money at hotels. With their budget, they can do what they want and they have to budget accordingly in order to get through the season.
- (MattM) If there something weird that came up, the student activities staff will always vet and bring up those concerns. If the hotel has rooms where the conference is happening, then we are more likely to choose that due to safety concerns.
- (SG) I can promise you that this \$200 is not going to make a big difference.
- (RR) I was on the Bhangra trip you previously alluded to and to be able to find the cheapest hotel, we booked one that was 20 mins out of Philly. We had to find

our own transportation. I think that this is going to be a good learning experience for those to learn about budgeting.

- VOTE:
  - Approve: 18
  - Against: 0
  - Abstain: 1
  - MOTION PASSES
- Notification of \$650 to UMarketing

**Trustees (Taha, Raval):**

Brief Comments about Board Meeting  
Town Hall Meetings

- Going to these meetings will help give the student perspective for the Strategic Plan.

**VP Campus Life (Toy):**

Strategic Plan  
#UnionCollegeChallenge Update

- I missed Emily's from last week so we are going to post that tonight. There are a lot of events this week at night so be sure to keep an eye out.

**VP Academics (Wojtowicz):** Nothing to report.

**VP Sustainability (Carrabba):** Nothing to report.

**VP Multicultural Affairs (Sebastian):** Nothing to report.

**IFC (Secchiaroli):** Nothing to report.

**Panhel (Welles):** Absent.

**MGC (Boone):** Absent.

**Minerva (Shah):** Absent

**Class of 2019 (Al-Moghrabi):** Nothing to report.

**Class of 2020 (Bohn):** Nothing to report.

**Class of 2021 (Huang):** Nothing to report.

**Class of 2022 (Holley):** Nothing to report.

**Committee Report (SAC):**

Planning and Priorities Committee

- The executive committee for the strategic plan is taking a lot of steps but I was asked how Student Forum could play a role in connecting the thoughts with the student body?

- How can Student Forum act as a Liaison with getting this information to the committee?
  - (MSecc) I think a survey that organizations could develop to their own groups and then compile the information. I don't think everyone is available at the times.
    - (SB) Our campus is super over surveyed. But maybe open-ended questions would be good.
  - (RS) Do you think that you could email clubs and ask people to participate in this?
    - (MS) I think that this is definitely something that Raya and I can discuss.
  - (RP) Maybe get first-year opinion from the RA programs. The good thing is that all the first years are in one place.
  - (SB) Do you think it is feasible for Student Forum act as a Liaison with getting this information to the committee?
  - (MT) Seeing if you could post notes or other information on Nexus because students check their Nexus quite often for classes and then such. It could just send a reminder with a link and an email.
  - (SG) Do we have a student forum email? Because we could post a banner in Reamer and offer for people to send emails with questions, comments, and concerns, and then we could give more feedback to the committee as well.
  - (CD) I think it is important that we go beyond student clubs and organizations so maybe reaching out to advisors and having them
  - (MegM) I feel like a lot of it is more about people who might not feel comfortable going to these town halls. Perhaps we can reach out to each friend and offer to bring them with.
  - (EC) Have President Harris take over the Instagram again and have him mention about the plan and how to give feedback.

**Advisor's Report** (Milless, Dougherty):

**Old Business:**

Restaurant Discount Update (Stalteri)

- Redrafted the contract and we are looking that over.

Update on Meeting with Campus Safety (Taha)

- I show up and Chris is only there and Rich only had 20 minutes to spare. We talked about the Trolley which is called GPS Insight which is a link which is connected to the campus safety page and you can track the trolley. By spring it will be up and running.
- We got the a license to hire a driver for big busses that will help in adding additional drivers. He is thinking about getting new campus safety cars because they are getting old and
- The communication has been significantly better for the Walmart and the mall shuttles.

- (RR) I like the text messages that they are sending as well which are informative.

**New Business:** N/A

**Announcements:**N/A

Motion to adjourn: MD

Seconded: EC