

Mississippi University for Women

## ATHENA COMMONS

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Student Government Association Minutes

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11-9-2015

### November 9, 2015

Student Government Association

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#### Recommended Citation

Student Government Association, "November 9, 2015" (2015). *Student Government Association Minutes*. 8.

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Student Government Association

Senate Minutes

11/9/15

- I. Call to Order- 8:03 p.m.
- II. Roll call
  1. Executive Board: Aisha Ghimire, Ashmita Bhandari, Diana Diaz, Desarea Guyton, Quincy Hughes, Lamon Stapleton\*
  2. Senate: Devin Bingham\*\*, Amartize Bowen, Maiya Cobb, Phebe Davis, Chris Powers, Malik Seals, Urusha Silwal\*, Nikita Subba, Kris Sullivan, William Thompson, George Vaquero, Brandon Woods\*, Gabriella Yray\*\*  
**\*late/\*\*absent**

III. New Business

a. Mississippi State Flag

i. Referendum-IHL Schools

Review agenda items and meeting documents (resolution 7 & 15)

Diana spoke to the exclusivity of the documents being sensitive information, not for immediate public release.

Discussion begins on state flag

William spoke to flag remaining but favored a change in design

Phebe spoke to university receiving state funds and should not shun state flag

Malik commented that his respective college agreed to a change in the flag

which should reflect the student body accurately at the W

Maiya commented that her respective college were either unaware of the flag(s) on campus or were indifferent

Christopher suggested if we take the flag down another should not be flown in order to preserve the history

Discussion continues about keeping the flag up until a new flag is selected or taking it down altogether

Kris speaks to flag coming down as not an active source of racism, so suggestions of keeping the flag up came from his respective college

Quincy spoke to the previous voting of the state flag in 2001 whereas citizens chose to keep the current flag

Amartize then questions how will this ultimately affect MUW; students, faculty, and alum

Discussion begins concerning the interest of the students

Diana spoke of carefully speaking opinions, representative of SGA, until a consensus is decided. Explains that discussion is being had between other schools and MUW has to approach in its own manner. The steps being taken are to ensure the Student Body is not turning its back to the state

Discussion continues regarding the offence of the flag, how racism will still exist, and that the flag represents our history, not our present, or future

Quincy speaks to the inclusiveness of History and Future of the MS State Flag whereas it is designed specifically to educate and for the voice of the student body of MUW. Charges Senate to reach out to all students, starting with their respective colleges

Kimone comments that reaching out to the student body is the goal when creating a ballot in the future

Senate reviews state-wide initiatives, Resolution 7 & 15-13 which reflects surrounding universities specific language and needs to adopt a new, or preexisting flag. Concluding review and discussion of resolutions, senate express adopting language of Resolution 7 which focuses more on the need to examine the state flag and reflect the demographics of the university and to have a flag that unifies

Senate then votes to adopt format of Resolution 7 with the consideration and addition of language that suits the needs of the MUW students. Further, discussion led to a decision to collaborate with other IHL schools to approve and finalize universal language of Resolution 7

Quincy discusses details of History & Future of MS State Flag forum. Explains Rufus Ward would give historical account of current and previous state flags in which the floor would be open to questions pertaining to. Explains the role SGA would have at the forum, whereas senate would usher in guests and once at tables, initiate or promote discussion amongst peers. Explained importance of punctuality, to arrive 30 mins early, in professional attire, to reflect and represent SGA appropriately. Also explains that media coverage will be present

b. Composite Pictures

Diana explained the significance and placement of composite photos. Encourage all to participate and wear professional attire; white dress shirts

c. Presidents Council

Quincy spoke to the president councils agenda. Explained that information gathered from tonight, regarding state flag, would be

IV. Old Business (feedback)

a. Thanksgiving Basket

Diana recapped that items were gathered and collected and any items not yet collected should be submitted by Friday, before the baskets were packed for distribution to the community

b. The W Smokeout

Diana begins discussion with continuation from tabled item regarding incentives from SGA participation. Chris opened conversation to have option of incentive available for all who participated at SGA booth. Motion was made and seconded. After discussion, item was held to a vote causing the motion to be lost. New motion was made and second and discussion followed. Senate concluded for fair exchange of incentive to all participants in W smokeout

c. It's On Us: Week of Action

Diana discussed role of senate during week of action. Explained which senate and exec would visit which residence hall for Tuesday night to encourage students to take the It On Us pledges

Monday- Explained set up in café at lunch to inform students of the It's On Us week of action. Recap of turnout with suggestions for improvements and increased involvement

Tuesday-Explained the goal of traveling to residence halls for continued support for taking pledge. Assigned exec and senate to residence halls

Thursday- Aisha explained format of quiz bowl which was centered on educating student body about Title IX, SGA, It's On Us movement, and the W general knowledge

V. Committee reports

**Dining-** William spoke to a suggestion box specifically for SGA, Ashmita commented that Mr. Allen would be willing to meet and read comments collectively. Also commented to efforts of extending cafeteria hours

**Campus Enhancement-**

**Grievances and Policy-**

**Programming-**

VI. Executive Officer Reports

**Quincy-** Finalizing details of State Flag discussion with aide of University Relations and other campus admin and offices.

**Aisha-** Working towards Quizbowl competition which will be collaborated with Housing and Resident Associations Parliament Cup. Attended the Academic Standards Committee last Friday, which provided no immediate updates

**Diana-** Agendas for Senate meetings.

**Desarea-** Trendy Topic flyers and other promotional items regarding It's On Us week of action

**Lamon-** Working towards finishing the minutes for approval and distribution

VII. Announcements

NSA Night Wednesday at 7 p. m.

Mission Improvable Tuesday at 7 p.m.

Promote state flag discussion and forum

VIII. Adjourn- 10:25 p.m.

## Senate Comments and Suggestions:

To whom it may concern,

Concerning a decision for MUW and the Mississippi state flag, to adopt a referendum to Resolution 7 from MSU. I would first suggest changing the language so as to fit MUW instead of State. For example changing the acronyms, and removing any sentences that exclusively fit state. Secondly, that we put a major emphasis on MUW's continual support for diversity, equality, and acceptance on campus. Third, that we portray this change as a reflection on moving forward not as demonizing our state history. Fourth that we avoid confrontational language. Finally I believe that a majority of students want SGA not to ignore our history but choose to honor it in some way, and that the entire SGA try and become as familiar with the Mississippi State flag history so as to inform the student body, and represent their opinions to the best of our abilities.

Concerning other notes taken from the last SGA meeting, there was some debate over participation prizes or a grand prize for the smoke out. There was some confusion over the vote due to some senators not participating or making their votes clear. Ultimately SGA decided to have participation prizes for the booth. I would suggest rethinking the game in this case because the game really does depend on having a prize. Unless, there is an exact figure for the amount of chemical build up in lungs and the lungs we are making are supposed to be an ACCURATE visual representation of the damaged human lungs. Finally senators were asked to sign up for future scheduled events, and the deadline for the thanksgiving baskets was extended to Wednesday at 5 pm.

Sincerely,

Phebe Davis