Student Government Association

General Meeting

Tuesday, November 18, 2025

Meeting Minutes

Peter T. Mazza Student Government Association Room

Ely Campus Center

A livestream of the meeting for public viewing took place on YouTube.

Members Present: Justin Wald, Travis Mcloughlin, Zeke Tamarkin, Tyler King, Jacob Constant, Barney Garcia, Jakob Traynor, Luke Stehley, Matthew Crusha, Christopher Lannan, Zara Rivett, Megan Fran, Grant Wenhart, Alyssa Hanafin, Ethan Haynes, Maria Renta-Marrero, Angelina Cassella, Celia Rocino, Raymond Croteau, Adian Gomez, Karlie Beamenderfer, Will Onorato, Cole Dos Santos, Brenna Guliani, Kayliegh Afonso, Ali Sutherland, Dianyeliz Ozuna Sandoval, Lorraine Fernández, Melissa Kuzmeski

Members Excused: Aviannah-Leigh Saulters, Sofia Rudenko

Members Absent: Raul Rosario, Fabian Morales

Call to Order: President Justin Wald called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. It was announced that the meeting was being live streamed and recorded. Members were asked to review the meeting agenda, and a roll call was taken of members present (listed above).

Approval of the Minutes: The minutes from the November 4th, 2025, meeting was approved.

President's Report: Justin Wald began his report by noting that the scheduled guest speaker, Dr. Sackett-Taylor, had to cancel, but he proceeded with several significant updates. He announced that the BRIGHT Act has advanced from the Ways and Means Committee to the full House with amendments that include an additional $775 million in funding and a specific $140 million allocation for the demolition of Bates Hall and the construction of the first phase of the Human Health hub. Addressing concerns about liberal arts majors currently housed in Bates, Wald conveyed President Thompson's assurance that space will remain available for them and that new simulation labs will be open to all disciplines, despite the university's shifting focus toward health sciences. He also encouraged senators to become more active by presenting their own position or committee reports to diversify the speakers at meetings. Wald concluded by soliciting topics for his upcoming meeting with Dr. Hearn and thanking the senate for their hard work on the Turkey Drive.

Student Trustee Report: Melissa Kuzmeski delivered the report on behalf of Student Trustee Barney Garcia, who was unable to attend due to the International Students reception. Garcia reported significant progress regarding the BRIGHT Act, noting that President Thompson testified before the Committee on Bonding on November 13th to advocate for the bill's urgency in addressing deferred maintenance and outdated technology. He confirmed that the bill received a favorable vote from the committee and was subsequently advanced by the House Ways & Means Committee to the House floor. Garcia also outlined a plan, developed in consultation with President Justin Wald and Dr. Thompson, to convene a meeting with student leaders from the eight sister state universities. The goal of this

initiative is to establish a collaborative network similar to the community college system for sharing best practices, such as the recent exchange Garcia had with the Worcester State Student Trustee regarding student-athlete representation.

Dining Services Report: Jacob Constant reported on the recent Dining Services Committee meeting, highlighting several operational updates including the return of the waffle machine, a schedule adjustment for electronic food labels to show the dinner menu by 4:00 PM, and efforts to clarify meal swipe rules for Pepsi products at the Owl Cafe. He announced that the "Weigh the Waste" event will take place tomorrow, November 19th, to raise awareness about food waste without shaming students, offering incentives like raffles and Owl Bucks. Constant also addressed student feedback regarding allergen awareness, hash brown crispiness, and bread quality, while noting potential future additions like sushi and new ice cream flavors. He concluded by promoting the Thanksgiving Buffet scheduled for this Thursday, November 20th, and the upcoming root vegetable display.

- Angelina Cassella asked for the times of the event tomorrow.
    - Jacob Constant responded that he wasn't completely sure about the times, however he believes it is 11-2 because that is how long the event is running for.

Parking Appeals Board Report: Ethan Haynes reported on the Parking Appeals Board's first meeting of the semester, which took place on November 10th. He noted that the committee focused on introductions and establishing a clear process for handling appeals. While exact statistics were not available at the time, Haynes confirmed that decisions were made to both appeal and uphold various tickets. He acknowledged that a large number of appeals are still pending review and asked for patience from students waiting for a decision. Haynes concluded by stating that although the next meeting has not yet been officially scheduled, Chair Josh Hetrick intends to reconvene immediately after the upcoming break.

University Curriulum Committee Report: Karlie Beamenderfer reported on the November 7th University Curriculum Committee meeting, where numerous course changes were approved across multiple departments. In the Computer Science and Healthcare fields, the committee passed prerequisite removals for Data Management and "Quality Improvement and Interprofessional Collaboration in Healthcare," approved a new "Advanced Database Management" course, and updated "Computers in Society" for WISE qualification. Significant changes were made within the Psychology department, including the deletion of four obsolete capstone courses and the modernization of titles, descriptions, and prerequisites for Psychopathy, Forensic Psychology, and Psychometrics. Beamenderfer also noted that American Public Policy received approval for various revisions and WISE inclusivity, and that WISE forms were adapted for English-based classes; she concluded by announcing the next meeting is scheduled for Friday, November 21st.

- Angelina Cassella congratulated Karlie on her first report!

Vice President of Finance Report: Ezekiel Tamarkin reported on the Finance Committee's November 7th meeting, explaining that the Executive Board acted on behalf of the Senate to vote on two time-sensitive proposals since there was no meeting the previous week. The Board approved a $50 request from "Diversity in Healthcare" for t-shirt decoration supplies and a $250 request from "All Out!" for event materials including electric candles and trans flags. Tamarkin noted that although the Finance Committee initially recommended rejecting the "All Out!" proposal, the Executive Board approved the full amount after receiving further clarification on the request.

Vice President of Student Belonging Report: Lorraine Fernández reported on the recent volunteer trip to the Westfield Soup Kitchen on November 7th, organized in collaboration with the Interfaith Center and the Veterans and Military Services office. She shared that the group served a Thanksgiving-themed meal, prepared by Dining Services, to approximately 70 to 80 guests who were very grateful for the food. Fernández expressed her thanks to the student representatives, the Veterans and Military Services office, Chef Dawn, and Colleen from the Interfaith Center for their contributions. She concluded by describing the event as an amazing experience and confirmed her intention to plan another volunteer opportunity for the spring semester.

Committee on Belonging Report: Lorraine Fernández reported on the Belonging Committee's recent progress, highlighting their ongoing dialogue with Dining Services to implement Halal signage at all campus dining locations. She celebrated the success of the recent Campus Climate Survey, which received 619 responses, and announced that the committee plans to support the next survey in March by creating a promotional video. Fernández also noted that planning for Unity Week will be a primary focus at their final meeting of the semester on Monday, December 1st, which will be held in a hybrid format to ensure better attendance for the discussion.

Vice President of Community Engagement Report: Tyler King reported that the annual SGA Turkey Drive concluded on November 17th, and although final numbers are still pending, the Executive Board has voted to match the total donations to better support those facing food insecurity this season. He announced that the Owl Ball committee is currently forming to ensure ample planning time, with its first meeting scheduled for this Friday at 1:40 PM. King concluded his report by presenting the November Senator of the Month award to co-winners Celia Rocino and Alyssa Hanafin, praising their enthusiastic participation in tabling events, the Coffee Crawl, and the Community Engagement and Outreach committee.

Campus Activities Board Report: Matthew Crusha reported on recent CAB activities, including BINGO held on November 7th and Food Truck Friday on November 14th. He highlighted a busy schedule of upcoming events, featuring Casino Night on November 18th, Inspiration Grids on November 21st, Open Mic Night on November 25th, and a bus trip to New York City scheduled for December 6th. Crusha also provided committee updates, noting that the Signature committee is planning Winter Wonderland and "Amore Galore," while the Marketing committee is preparing content for winter break, and the General committee is reviewing event feedback and brainstorming future ideas.

- Angelina Cassella gave more information about Inspiration Grids.

Announcements: The following announcements were made:

- Lorraine Fernández asked for her team huddle to see her after the meeting.
- Christpher Lannan shared information about the tree of belonging outside of the SGA room which is a project by the SAIL Social Squad.
- Chief of Police Tony Cassino gave information regarding the stuff a cruiser event that is coming up.
- Melissa Kuzmeski shared information regarding her event on December 4th.
- Barney Garcia explained that that they are hosting Trans Day of remember at the Interfaith Center at 6:30 PM.
- Travis McLoughlin explained that there is still more time for the Skyfactor Survey.
- Zeke Tamarkin asked where the remembrance event will be held.
    - Barney Garcia responded with the Interfaith Center.
- Dianyeliz Ozuna Sandoval reminded everyone that there is 178 days till commencement!

Adjournment: There being no further business, Justin Wald adjourned the meeting at 6:01 pm.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the approved minutes of the Student Government Association (SGA) general meeting held on November 18, 2025.