

Transcripts of the
STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION SENATE
OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

1. This meeting was called to order by Speaker Gonzalez at 4:32 pm in the HSC (Holmes Student Center) Sky Room.
2. We acknowledge that we are on the traditional land of the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Piankashaw, Wea, Miami, Mascoutin, Odawa, Sauk, Mesquaki, Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Ojibwe, and Chickasaw Nations
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. **Voting Members Present:** Senator Tinajero, Senator Robinson, Senator Uhrine, Senator Zimmer, Senator Salerno, Senator Galloway, Senator Obabko, Deputy Speaker Guerrero, Senator Asante, Senator Owusu, Senator Kushimo, Senator Lynch, Senato Adeoye, Senator Boniecki
5. **Voting members Absent:** Senator Moskal
6. **Voting members Excused:**

VERIFICATION OF QUORUM

1. Deputy Speaker Gurrero confirms quorum is met.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. There is none.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Speaker Gonzalez moves to approve the minutes from September 26th and October 17th.
2. Clerk Sawyer so moved.
3. Deputy Speaker Gurrero seconded.
4. Speaker Gonzalez asks if there is any discussion or debate.
5. There is none.

6. Speaker Gonzalez calls for a vote.
7. The motion passes and the minutes from September 26th and October 17th are passed.
8. Speaker Gonzalez moves to table October 24th Minutes.
9. Clerk Sawyer so moved.
10. Deputy Speaker Gurrero seconded.
11. Speaker Gonzalez asks if there is any discussion or debate.
12. There is none.
13. Speaker Gonzalez calls for a vote.
14. The motion passes and the minutes from October 24th are tabled.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. Speaker Gonzalez moves to approve the agenda.
2. Clerk Sawyer so moved.
3. Deputy Speaker Guerrero seconded.
4. Speaker Gonzalez asks if there is any discussion or debate.
5. There is none.
6. Speaker Gonzalez calls for a vote.
7. The motion is passed, and the agenda is approved.

SPEAKER REPORT

A. Speaker Gonzalez states

1. "Greetings 57th Session. It is good to be back here in the Senate chamber with you on this fine spooky Halloween day. As you're aware, I was judging a speech and debate collegiate tournament as it is also part of my position as a graduate teaching assistant coach for the NIU forensics program. And unless you saw the most recent Northern Stat headlines, they've done well at their first outing at a tournament and I'm very proud in the work they've done. Moving into student government business, next week I will send out an official request to Deputy Speaker Guerrero who serves as the Organization Oversight Committee Chairperson to begin checking for student organizations. This will see the OO Committee review student organization constitutions to ensure that they possess all requirements as mandated by SGA and that they remain eligible for funding with SGA funds and that information will be

communicated to them to the SGA Finance Committee and the SGA Treasurer before the next annual funding application opens. No action is needed from student organizations but if they have questions, they are more than free to reach out to either myself, Deputy Speaker Guerrero or to the SGA email address as a whole. New communication requirements between SGA and student organizations, current and prospective, will be unveiled next week as a bill to quickly and efficiently have student organizations communication with us. One provision I can preview is that emails from the chairperson of OO or anything regarding items in the Finance Committee has to cc the SGA email address in those communications in the emails. This is just one of many reforms to ensure transparency but also visibility between us and the student organization we aim to serve. And for my last message that I will share as well, I will turn it over to Deputy Speaker Guerrero as it pertains to important news to what he has to say”.

SPECIAL REPORT

A. There is none.

OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER REPORT

A. Deputy Speaker’s Report

- a. “Hello! For my Office of the Speaker report, I would like to notify Senate I will be stepping down from the Student Government Association at the end of the fall semester. For those who may not know, I am a history major with a focus on secondary education. When I first ran for the position of Deputy Speaker, I spoke about my passion for education and leadership, both of which I have been fortunate to develop through my time in SGA. Currently, I’m completing my final round of classroom observations before entering my student teaching semester next spring. I’ve been blessed with a place back home and with the opportunity to serve and assist as the assistant coach for the high school tennis team. However, with those responsibilities and demanding workload that comes with student teaching, I would not be able to give the position of Deputy Speaker the time and attention it deserves. Speaker Gonzalez deserves a Deputy Speaker who can fully commit to the duties and responsibilities of the role.

While it is difficult to step away from an organization that I enjoy and love, I believe it is the best decision. Moving forward, Speaker Gonzalez and I will be holding, from now to the end of the semester interviews for the next Deputy Speaker for the spring semester. If interested, please let me or Speaker Gonzalz know. Other than that, for the last few meetings, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns regarding your roles or responsibilities feel free to reach out to me via email, pass by the office during my office hours, or if you see me around campus, let me know and I'll will help you guys during this last few meetings."

A. Parliamentarian's Report

- a. There is none.

A. Clerk's Report

- a. There is none

COMMITTEE REPORT

A. Chairperson of Student Life and Greek Affairs' report

- a. There is none.

B. Chairperson of Campus Life and Environmental Affairs' report

- a. There is none.

C. Chairperson of Public Affairs' report

- a. There is none.

D. Chairperson of Organizational Oversight's report

- a. There is none.

E. Chairperson of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion's report

- a. There is none.

F. Chairperson of Board of Elections' report

- a. There is none.

EXECUTIVE REPORT

A. President's report

- a. There is none.

B. Vice-President's report

- a. There is none.
- C. Treasurer's report
 - a. There is none.
- D. Deputy Treasurer's report
 - a. There is none.
- E. Chief of Staff's report
 - a. There is none.
- F. Student Trustee's Report
 - a. There is none.

CABINET REPORT

- A. Director of Diversity, Equity and, Inclusion
 - a. There is none.
- B. Director of Organizational Development
 - a. There is none.
- C. Director of Athletics
 - a. There is none.
- D. Director of Student Life and Greek Affairs
 - a. There is none.
- E. Director of Public Affairs
 - a. There is none.
- F. Director of Academic Affairs
 - a. There is none.
- G. Director of Campus Life and Environmental Affairs
 - a. There is none.

OLD BUSINESS

- A. There is none.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. SB57011: A bill to revise Senator's responsibilities.

1. Deputy Speaker Guerrero so moved.
2. Senator Zimmer seconded.
3. Deputy Speaker Guerrero states
 - i. “For SB57011, it is about revise Senator responsibilities as part our Bylaws. Part of some changes are minor things regarding attendance and who’s responsible for being in charge of that. One of the major things is regarding CODE Training and Ally training. We have decided to combine them together so it gives you that flexibility of either do CODE training or Ally training and it will fulfill your responsibilities compared to how we had it in the last session where both of them were separate. We believe this is better for you guys as your schedules are not flexible enough. So, if you are able to do CODE training or Ally training that will fulfill your responsibilities. The next thing is we combined public relations and outreach together as one. Speaker Gonzalez and I believe, and both are very clear; in past sessions we have not been successful in training with both of them. So, we combined them together to provide clarification and hopefully you guys are able to understand your responsibilities as Senators.
4. Speaker Gonzalez furthers,
 - i. “Just a quick note, this is part of our student government’s overall aim to cut bureaucracy of the bureaucratic apparatus that we have. This is one of them. We understand why they were included as a responsibility for senators in the first place but at the same time a lot of scheduling for this relies on the universities and also relies on the Speaker of the Senate. There’s so many moving parts to it. It’s very hard to ensure that all of these provisions are followed accurately to the letter. So, this allows a little bit more flexibility. In regard to that, it will still retain the core principles of why they were included in the first place. Of course, one last element I would also like to add is, as you can see at the bottom, the legislation is to take effect at the start of the 58th Session. So, this means it doesn’t take effect for this session. However, the reason why is because if we were to make it in effect for this session that also requires changing the SGA operating manual in order to reflect it because it's a part of the Senator’s stipend rubric. So, this is not to say that if we don't want to see this change and implemented this session that we can't, it just means that we need a resolution, essentially after this bill to be passed to amend the senate operating manual and then from there after the senate operating manual is amended we can pass

another resolution in order to change the effective date to this session. Although it sounds very bureaucratic that's the process we have to follow in order to ensure that there are no gaps in terms of coverage.

5. Speaker Gonzalez asks if there is any discussion or debate.

6. Senator Galloway asks,

- i. "So, I wanted to say, I understand that we as senators have a lot of responsibilities we're all here, and I'm grateful for that. I understand the Office of the Speaker takes up a lot of backend work, and we're trying to, you know, lighten that up. And I support that in principle, I support the amendment to combine CODE and the Ally training for increased flexibility. I think that's really good. I would encourage you guys for when the undocumented centers, when they do the Ally trainings, I would appreciate it if some of you came to those. I just feel that I can't support the portion about the outreach events. I understand what you said about combining the SGA events with the individual constituency outreach events. I appreciate like our role is, you know, to be part of student government. But I also feel that we need to stand for our constituents and be accountable to them and be accessible to them and I think that having it as a requirement as it previously was useful for that purpose. I know that I haven't been here for a long time, so I can't speak to like how that you know was implemented but I think it was valuable and I just feel that I can't like get on this with that as the current amendment. I would support if we took maybe the individual requirement and made it more of a collaborative thing. So, for example, me and fellow senators, or you know, my constituency, we could have a collaborative event, but I'm just concerned about the constituent outreach aspect".

7. Speaker Gonzalez responds,

- i. "No, 100% understand that point with you, when the piece of legislation was being drafted, a conversation between me and Deputy Speaker Guerrero was functionally, what is the difference between the two? And so, as you can kind of read, as it currently stands, like, yeah, in spirit, there

is supposed to be a difference than an actual. Actuality, there is not. So, I do understand your concern. If it is a concern about like, at least on paper, about the constituent point, I am open to maybe flipping it or instead it's the public relations portion is cut out, but the constituency points still stands, so I'm also open to that suggestion as well, though I would also like the input of the other senators as well. Is there any further discussion debate on this legislation?"

8. Senator Boinecki says,

- i. "I'm looking at a set of senators are required to attend or execute. So, yeah, my concern with this is [whether] it's either or so, like, if we have just a bunch of people attending, but it's not necessarily like, you know, executing to get that outrage. So I'm just like, I guess I'm wondering, like, what, like, what will we be able to do if, like, I guess, not able to do, but like, I just feel like presenting it as like an option to either attend or execute, sort of like defeats the purpose of reaching out to our constituency. So, you know, I, I like how you talked about the intentionally flipping it, but yeah, I do share some concerns about that, because, like, I feel like just having that option is, like, it kind of just creates sort of an out to not having to just, like, reach out to your constituents. Because if you could just, if you just attend, then, like, I guess twine Lodge, like, what are you really doing? So, I just wanted to express that. And as far as, like, the code and Ally training. So, yeah, before we had, you know, the code and Ally training, and I assumed there was, like, maybe a purpose to have them both, I guess, I was concerned to see, like, maybe there would be any sort of, like, I guess, sort of net loss to the purposes that each of these trainings would serve. So, I'm just not sure if, like, they were both intentionally, like standing on their own as each because they each serve their own purpose, or if just combining them would not create a loss of potential knowledge that we can be gaining for attending these programs. But yeah, that's what I have to say about that.

9. Speaker Gonzalez replies,

- i. “Thank you. And [here’s] a quick response to some of those points. There would be no net loss in terms of CODE or Ally training, aside from the intention being there. In terms of actuality, I remember last year we said it wasn't able to do any of the CODE training. So, in terms of, like, his terms of what we've been doing, it's kind of hard for assessment, loss, fortunate, provision hasn't been able to be done. But again, that kind of goes into the what was mentioned about like, it’s hard to try to schedule those. Ally training is a little bit easier, which is why Deputy Speaker Guerrero when he was Parliamentarian last year he added that as a requirement. In terms of either or it would be, it wouldn't still be that loss anyways, because they still cover some of the same basic concepts. And either way, one of them is still being required and mandated for senators to attend. So, one of those options is still being [implemented in] that regard and in terms of provision for the constituency. And again, I completely understand the rationale and the kind of hesitancy on that aspect of point. And I would just like to remind everyone that we don't necessarily have to just, you know, table them and you know, to approve them or vote bills down. There can always be motion to send them to Rules and Procedures Committee for further determination about what to do, either to separate the bills into to complete the same bills or to reword. The constituency aspect just depends on the feelings of the Senate. Those are made sure they put that out there to ensure that Senate understands that they have more power than just a simple motions table”.

10. Senator Galloway states,

- i. “So, like I said, I support the majority of the other premises. I think that maybe separating them would be an interesting idea, because I support, like I said, I understand the rationale of, like, the streamlining the process, and I support the Ally trainings. I just feel that, like, my responsibility as a Senator my top responsibility is to be a voice for the students and is to serve the students and my constituents, so I'm still a little concerned, and I

think it would be best maybe to separate that into a separate bill that we can consider. That's how I feel”.

11. Senator Boinecki asks,

- i. “Yeah, sort of going back to the part where you talked about, like, potentially, like flipping the twos, making sure, making it so, like they say it would be, like the outreach campaign would be the one that's required. And talked about flipping them. It, I guess I'm just like wondering, like, what steps like we could take, I guess, like, as a group, too, you know, get this, like, edited. It's like the way that, like, we wanted to eventually get it passed”.

12. Speaker Gonzalez responds,

- i. “In terms of that the that's the intention. What I would recommend is to do it motion, to send the bill to Rules of Procedure Committee, and then, as senators yourselves, you basically send me, or Deputy Speaker Guerrero, an email basically [stating] like concepts you kind of want the bill to kind of add or include, or what direction they may even have suggested phrasing or wording. It's [all] included an email. And then during the Rules and Procedures [Committee], we kind of review them as a committee, review them, spice them in there, revise them, and then the updated bill will be either, if it's separate, there's the same one that will be unrevealed on the next, following Friday meeting. So that is path forward”.

13. Senator Boinecki motions to send SB57011 to Rules & Procedures Committee.

14. Deputy Speaker Gurrero seconds.

15. Motion passes unanimously. SB57011 is sent to the Rules & Procedure Committee for further clarification and revisions.

B. SR57017: A resolution to approve meeting times, locations, and dates for the Spring of 2026 semester.

1. Deputy Speaker Guerrero so moves.
2. Senator Uhrine seconds.
3. Speaker Gonzalez says,

- i. “So, this resolution is basically just approving the spring schedule for Senate. Typically, we do this closer towards the last Senate meeting of the year. I decided I already knew what the schedule should look like and thought why should I wait until November? We might as well get it out as soon as we can. The Senate schedule is as follows. The rationales were some of those known meetings such as January 16th and February 13th, it is because of my position as graduate teaching assistant and because your Deputy Speaker Guerrero will no longer be around for that Spring semester until I’m able to find a new Deputy Speaker, I will have no one to step in as temporary Speaker. And those are the days I know for a fact that I have to attend as my needs as graduate assistant coach. So therefore, to prevent any issues, I’ve decided not to have meetings on those specific days. Also, for you lovebirds out there, February 12th is the day before Valentine’s Day, so you essentially get that Friday off. The 13th of March is off and that’s only because it’s Spring break. All of the locations will be in the Sky Room and one last thing we’re retaining the same meeting at 4:30 PM.”
4. Speaker Gonzalez asks if there is any discussion or debate.
5. Senator Uhrine asks,
 - i. “Given that many senators, especially those in education and health programs, will be in clinicals or student teaching. Is there an option for us to do hybrid attendance at all? Are they only supposed to do in person?”
6. Speaker Gonzalez replies,
 - i. “The Student Government Association likes to follow through on the rules set by the Illinois Open Meetings Act. Technically, we have to retain it to in-person meetings. If it's a decision to either hold these meetings at a much later time, say on Friday, since it’s easier. We can otherwise we could do what Senate used to do in the past, which was hold meetings on the weekends, so that’s also a possibility, if people are open to that”.
7. Speaker Gonzalez asks for show of hands to gauge Saturday meetings. There was a mixed slate and sentiments. [Chuckles from Senators]. Speaker Gonzalez says,

- i. “Kind of a mixed bag on that one it looks like”.
- 8. Senator Boinecki asks,
 - i. “I feel like this would be, since we're introducing our discussion element to our meetings, I feel like this would be a good subject for that to sort of like flesh this out”.
- 9. Speaker Gonzalez replies,
 - i. “We potentially could, but we like to see discussion items for more impacts that affects the greater NAU student body that just merely center procedural items. So, if anything, we don't necessarily focus on this. Now, is it more to introduce? Again, it's introduced earlier than normal. So just seems it's been pretty good since. We want to make sure that we're getting ahead of schedules. So, if anything, we could table this resolution until we have more people have an insight as to what their spring schedules will look like, especially as registration will open for most of you anyways, by like November 7. So, we don't always just table it. And it kind of depends on what people's schedules are, what they anticipate. We can revisit the idea of what the specific time and date will be for the meeting”.
- 10. Deputy Speaker Guerrero asks for friendly amendment to fix spelling in the resolution. The word “schedule”.
- 11. Speaker Gonzalez accepts the friendly amendment.
- 12. Deputy Speaker Guerrero motions to table the resolution.
- 13. Senator Zimmer seconds.
- 14. SR57017 is tabled for next week’s meeting.
- C. SR57018: A resolution to disperse funds to the Huskie Food Pantry
 - 1. Deputy Speaker Guerrero so moves.
 - 2. Senator Zimmer seconds
 - 3. Speaker Gonzalez states,
 - i. “What this resolution aims to do is that it aims to use the SGA Treasurer's power to disperse and allocate SGA funding to different areas. For the purposes of this resolution, that would mean diverting funds to the Huskie Food pantry. Just in case you may not be aware, the United States is

currently within its second longest government shutdown. That shutdown began on October 1st of this year and if you want details, you can always look at that on your own time. For the purpose here, is because of the government's shutdown, the United States Department of Agriculture is already stated. On Monday, October the 27th. It will no longer support used funds dedicated to the SNAP program or the program utilized by millions of Americans in order to access food through government funds, which would go in effect November 1st. This is a constantly changing subject as just today federal judges blocked the Trump administration from suspending those funds. Nonetheless, the reason why this resolution was put forward in the first place was because both me and the SGA treasurer recognized that many students here at NIU may rely on those SNAP benefits and because of the constant changing situation in Washington, we understand that those benefits may or may not be dispersed to those who need it. Therefore, we are anticipating an expected increase in the Huskie Food Pantry, which provides food for all NIU students to those who need it. Therefore, this will authorize the Student Government Association to invest \$1000 in the Huskie Food Pantry. Specifically, to cover operating costs that way they can utilize their remaining funds. Because it's not using its own funding to cover operating costs it can then purchase more food for the pantry. To give the reason why we cannot directly purchase food for the Huskie Food Pantry is that we still have to abide by our own policies set by Student Involvement regarding student activity fees on funding. And we also can't send money directly to a nonprofit organization again but this is something that we are able to do, and we're able to have the same measurable effect. By covering or operating funds, which is why this resolution is being introduced in the first place”.

4. Speaker Gonzalez asks if there is any discussion or debate.
5. Senator Galloway asks,

- i. “So, I just want to say I support what we're doing, and I support the Huskie Food Pantry, I want to express that I've personally seen first-hand the positive impact that it has on campus for students and I know that many of my fellow senators have also interacted with the Huskie Food Pantry as part of husky service scholars, and I'm assigned to the center for student assistance. So, I have done some volunteering work at the Huskie Food Pantry, and I would encourage those of you that still need your volunteer hours. It's a great opportunity to interact with the students. I'll be there on Thursdays if that helps you guys determine when you will come. But it's a great thing, and I'm glad that we're able to support it”.
- 6. Senator Owusu asks,
 - i. “Yeah, I also support this. But then I was wondering, given that this resolution is kind of a response to this shutdown, I was wondering, is there like, any further plans to like, are there any plans to further allocate finance to the pantry in case... So I was wondering if this continues past the immediate time”.
- 7. Speaker Gonzalez replies,
 - i. “So, the resolution itself is a direct response to the federal government shutdown, unprecedented times requires unprecedented action from us. That being said, in the SGA Finance Committee, there was a discussion to still continue our efforts to support the Husky Food Pantry, such as more long-term fundraising activities and it may be having the tribe or all SGA members are able to volunteer their services to them as a more of a long term benefit. Remember, honestly, like having, like, you know, it looks like, like a rainy day fund for them, that's something I have thought about, going back all the way to 56th Session, more specifically, back in the Fall of 2024 when I was Deputy Speaker, this was something I was exploring, if there was something that student government could allocate funds to continuously support the Huskie Food Pantry. That is still an idea I have, unfortunately, because of other things I've sprouted on, and it's unfortunately an idea I've had to kind of put on the back burner. But if

there is support from the Senate, that is something I can look forward to in determining if it is allowed by university policy, and if it's something that we can easily allocate in either resolutions or even in our annual budget that we have to present. But I'm always happy to have those who are willing to have those conversations. And if you want, if you want to explore that possibility, send me an email or even send SGA Treasurer, Nicholas Lazor, so we can get ahead on those discussions regarding future resolutions. So far, this is supposed to be the first resolution that we're going to do depending on how long the government shutdown is the last I'm also open to having continuing resolutions on urges to give and allocate more funds to the food pantry, so long as the student government budget allows for it".

8. Senator Obabko asks,

- i. "I was going to ask if there was any continuation policy, like a rainy-day fund. Should the shutdown continue longer? Is there, like, anyway, like, if not, in this resolution, how we can introduce, like, a follow up, follow up ideas, or, like, actually materialize this, like, you know, emergency fund that we all can, that we can all volunteer for and help create".

9. Speaker Gonzalez replies,

- i. "Potentially, we could, especially if it's something that we create a fundraising campaign for, that we have those Money, we have. We able to fundraise that money, and we have those funds stay within Student Involvement specifically, but with the expressed intention and legislation from Senate being passed that close funds can only be utilized for the Huskie Food Pantry in the cases of emergencies or upon request, and as approved by Senate. So, it is something that we can potentially have. It is just something that we need to figure out with both Student Involvement on the SGA Treasurer, and then it was something that we need to be passed via resolution in the Senate floor. But yes, that's a possibility that we'll need to explore with everyone".

10. Senator Uhrine asks,

- i. “Regarding the funds, did the total amount of \$1,000 come from the finance committee, and how did they come up with that?”

11. Speaker Gonzalez replies,

- i. “total amount? So the 500 initially, finance committee recommended a minimum \$500 and the actual draft that was submitted to rules and procedure committee had the amount as \$500 in terms of conversation I had with Jeff, who is the Director for Center for Student Assistance, he explains about their operating costs, which was within the kind of the \$500 mark of what they offered during the Rules and Procedures Committee, it was decided to increase it for \$1,000 solely to in order to ensure that we're able to cover as much of the operating expenses for a longer period of time, because we didn't know how long the shutdown was going to occur. So that's why \$1,000 was used. So they did. It was both a bit arbitrary, but it was also based on the some some president of what Huskie Food Pantry does originally an ideal to raise it to \$5,000 was considered just because, apparently, in the fiscal year 2023 student government did supply funds to the husk food pantry with the amount of \$5,000. However, I have been unable to verify that amount in either our own student government records, or even in Northern Star articles, I got nothing. So, which is why that \$5,000 wasn't utilized. Otherwise, if there was a precedent, we would have, I would have been a bit willing to go for as much as \$5,000 but for now, \$1,000 was decided [in the] Rules and Procedure Committee, as the amount for now. And again, moving forward if you want to have these resolutions with different dollar amounts, we absolutely can, so long as the budget allows for it”.

12. Speaker Gonzalez asks if there is any further discussion or debate.

13. Speaker Gonzalez calls for a vote.

14. The vote passes with a count of _14_yays,_0_nays,_0_abstentions.

15. Speaker Gonzalez adds,

- i. “With the resolution passes I will ensure that those funds are distributed to the Huskie Food Pantry as soon as possible. I will notify the accountant in

Student Involvement and John Schmidt about the passage of today's resolution".

D. SR57019: A resolution to confirm a Senator

1. Deputy Speaker Guerrero so moved.
2. Senator Zimmer seconded.
3. Candidate Sanders says,
 - i. "Hello everybody. My name is Daitrell Sanders, and I'm a sophomore. Okay, so before I start, I want to ask question first, when you first started, when you were in my position, how nervous was you and when you started speaking, was the words that was going on in your mouth and the ideas in your head? The same thing today, I'm gonna start off by telling you this. My name, again, is Daitrell Sandman. I'm a sophomore at NIU. I major in computer science. Growing up. I've always been a competitive person. When I say this, I mean, like, my goal was to be the best. And when I usually tell people that they would hit me with, "Oh, what do you mean? Like, do you want to be the president?", and I said, "No, I don't want to be the president. I want to be the best at what I'd like to do". I want to get it. My all to what I choose to pursue in life, and this brings me to where I am now, trying to be a senator at SGA growing up, I'm not type person that likes to be in the spotlight, but in my competitive personality, I do prefer to be the leader in the group. Now, if I feel as if someone's more qualified than me to do so, I will do so, but I also like to be correct, so I tend to try to add my input into things, you know, because you can't succeed without failing first. So honestly, I feel like there's a lot of things that can be fixed or that need to be which is why I'm here at SGA. One of my main ideas, basically, is for soft for freshmen, pretty much like when I was a freshman, my main problems was money, financial or where can I find things? I feel like the Holmes Student Center, for instance, right? We have a bunch of clubs and everything going around there. And of course, we got the fair on Wednesdays that allow them to actually go out and introduce themselves, you know, to people to give them the resources. But that's like once in a couple weeks or semester, and majority of the time people are going to classes, they aren't actually looking for that help. And I feel like one of those main reasons is because it's not that they aren't aware of them, but some people are, but they aren't sure how exactly helpful they can be. So, I feel like we were to put certain flyers or people in the home student center

that can actually help you bring more resources and more people to have the knowledge and the ability to help other students around them with the same issue that they once did. Once again, my name is Daitrell Sanders, and honestly, I just hope that I can be really helpful to you guys. Thank you.”.

4. Senator Obabko asks,

- i. “First of all, good speech. You talked a lot about proposing new initiatives and new ideas to help student involvement and help NIU students. What are some of your ideas that you would like to try should you be confirmed to the Senate?”.

5. Candidate Sanders responds,

- i. “One of my ideas would be, like I said, the Holmes Student Center. I feel like a lot of the posters over there are majority, you know, like you got the parties for Halloween. It just happened you got parties for the Halloween posters. You have posters for clubs and everything, but you don't really see posters for like the for financial aid or for the support that most people would look for when they first come here. Like, for instance, I did research on my own way. I found out that NIU has a therapy session here, but majority of people wouldn't know that unless they actively looked for it. Or, for instance, when you're talking to your advisor and they tell you about the career choices and everything that you can go down those aren't and like plain sight, you must be told about them. So if you had flyers out there, instead of people keeping it to themselves, more people would know about it and be able to help others, like for me, for instance, when I came in as a freshman, I learned about the career thing from my advisor, and when I talked to him, it was actually really helpful to find out how to get a job, to find out how I can set up payment plans, and it solves a lot of my issues. And when I was going around asking for signatures for SGA, a lot of the freshman students that I met actually agreed and said, “Oh, these would be helpful” because for the current situation, they aren't sure how to move around in a new environment. So instead of having a bunch of clubs or party signs out there, we can have signs that tell them about offices around campus and how they can help or, like, give them a number or an email. That's one of my main ideas. Honestly. You know, obviously it would take time to actually get it out there, but I feel like a step could just be the flyers themselves. Like I said, fear it's a good idea, but most of the time, those are held during class periods, and they don't really last that long for students to be able to actually get to know how it can be helpful. Most people

have a problem asking questions. You would think, Oh, since you have that question asked it, but it's not that hard. It's not that easy to ask a question. So once again, I do feel like in order to implement my idea doing more than just the fair or club flyers out there”.

6. Senator Robinson asks,

- i. “Yeah, you mentioned you had previous leadership experience, just the way you work. Can you give us a few examples of that?”.

7. Candidate Sanders responds,

- i. “When I mentioned previous leadership experience, I mean, like, Okay, before I came back to NIU as a sophomore over the summer, I looked for a job and I worked with big and kids. My role there was to lead the other workers to make sure that they did what they had to do. Like, for instance, I was in a committee of, like, at least 11 of us. After work, we meet up in the office, and we talk about what we do for the next day or for the next week. Most of the time, we set up the ideas biweekly and even chose to inform the parents ahead of time. Like, for instance, most of the kids, you know, they have a problem with going outside and being hot. You know, if we provide water and stuff, but you know, also providing water would cause them to have to go to the bathroom constantly. You know, in my experience of being a leader, you have to find ways around that, without making the kids or the parents feel like they're, you know, unsafe or unsatisfied. So, when I mentioned previous leadership experience, that's one of them. Another one would be group projects at schools. One time in high school, we did a project for math where we had to build a bridge. You know, most of us probably know that one, where you gotta see if it can withstand the weight of waves or books being placed on it. So, what I had to do was I had to talk and discuss what's going on and how we're going to get it done. Most people just choose to go off on their own and do things to figure out the best way to do it by themselves. But if it's a group thing, you know, obviously everybody would want to be a leader or introduce their own ideas as that leader, you have to be able to take other people's ideas and find out how to use them along with the other people's idea to make sure that everyone's satisfied and not just one person”.

8. Senator Uhrine asks,

- i. “I just want to say I thank you for your initiatives and coming up with your idea about putting more posters up for financial needs and mental health when

partnering with these organizations on campus, will you do info sessions where you can gather more students, or partner with housing to get more students that are focused in freshman year or sophomores involved in those info sessions or different events catered to What you're trying to accomplish here in the center”.

9. Candidate Sanders responds,

- i. “That's a really good question. One of my main ideas for that was the TAs on the floors, for instance, they have weekly meetings, or like, twice a semester. When I was living in that zone, they took us out of our room. They had conversations with us. We could use them or connect with them to be able to allow them to tell the Freshmen about these ideas. So, if, like I said, flyers out there on home students. But that's not the only way to use the TAs to give them information or allow one of the Senates here to go to their meetings and give them this information, not having them find it out at a later time, it could have been more useful. So, one of the ways we can connect is using the TAs another way, like you said, like catering events and everything we could think about those. But I prefer to start it off slowly that way. A lot of people don't feel like a bunch of information is coming at them at once, give them the information that they need at the start, and then slowly push more information that way. That's my idea”.

10. Deputy Speaker Gurrero asks,

- i. “What motivated you to be involved in next year? What motivated you to be involved in next year?”.

11. Candidate Sanders responds,

- i. “What motivated me to be involved in SGA? Honestly, it's because I feel like I've had leadership experience, but I want to understand it on a grander scale, like I'm a computer science major. Honestly, I'm really doing it. It's like a hobby, because I just want to learn how to do it. I also like to play games, so I want to web design and make my own things. But whatever made me join SGA or want to, it's pretty much because coming to NIU, I realized, like, there's more to life than just your own circle. I want to be able to be involved and make something matter. You know, like, there's a lot of things that matter, but I want to be the person that makes it matter. So, this is the step to beginner”.

12. Deputy Speaker Gurrero asks,

- i. “What are your top three. Priorities for next semester, if you're elect appointed senator?”.

13. Candidate Sanders says,

- i. “My top three priorities for next semester, well, one, I'd like to push my idea to allow freshmen to get more information and more resources. Another idea that or priority that I like to do is be able to give more, like tutoring sessions, if I'm being honest, because, like, I feel like a lot of students, you know, they do good on their own, but they could do more and be more successful if they had more help, not even just with the financial things, just education in general. My third one, my third priority, really, I haven't really given that much thought, but if I had to give it a thought, I'd honestly just say to make campus better, because it's already good as it is, but there's a lot of things that could leave it better”.

14. Deputy Speaker Gurrero further asks,

- i. “Can you elaborate more on your second priority, which is tutoring. You elaborate how you involve? SGM today”.

15. Candidate Sanders says,

- i. “Okay, so when I say like the tutoring, I mean, like, okay, I have a couple friends that I know. You know, they're good with their grades and everything, but if they actually had a way to keep it engaged and not just see it as a piece of paper they got to turn in, you know, like, there are projects and stuff that can be engaging, but if we made every project, not everyone, of course, that wouldn't really be possible. But I'd say, like, if we took the time from SGA and interacted with the students on other majors or like within our major, to get them to cooperate with us, we can make it engaging and allow them to like, think of it as more than just something that's meant or something that they have to do”.

16. Senator Owusu asks,

- i. “Yeah, so I like your initiative and then your motivation as well. But then I wanted to know, when did you hear about the SGA?”.

17. Candidate Sanders responds,

- i. “Actually, so I like to spend some of my time at the Holmes Student Center. It was a couple flyers over there that I had seen about SGA, and like I said, I wanted to know some on the grand scale. I don't have a question. I don't have a problem asking questions. So, what I do is tend to do my own research on things, while also asking questions around campus about what it is. That's how I found out about it”.

18. Deputy Speaker Gurrero asks,

- i. “So, if appointed Senator, you have November to you know, get yourself know what session is about. Do you have any specific goals? Do you that you hope to accomplish your first semester or next month as senator?”.

19. Candidate Sanders responds,

- i. “I wouldn't really say I had a goal. I just, well, no, okay, if I did have a goal, it'd be to show how useful I can be. Like, I'm not just an able body that's able to speak, I'm able to also show what I'm capable of doing”.

20. Speaker Gonzalez asks if there is any discussion or debate.

21. Speaker Gonzalez calls for a vote.

22. The vote passes with a count of 9 yays, 4 nays, 1 abstentions.

E. SR57020: A resolution to confirm a Senator

1. Senator Owusu so moved.
2. Deputy Speaker Guerrero seconded.
3. Speaker Gonzalez says,
 - i. “I am requesting for us to table this motion specifically because Tristan has informed me that he's not going to be present for today's meeting”.
4. Speaker Gonzalez asks if there is any discussion or debate.
5. There is none.
6. Deputy Speaker Gurrero so moved to table SR57020.
7. Senator Owusu so moved.
8. Speaker Gonzalez calls for a vote.
9. The motion passes and SR57020 is tabled to next week’s meeting.

F. Discussion Regarding Transportation

1. Deputy Speaker Guerrero so moved.
2. Senator Zimmer seconded.
3. Speaker Gonzalez says,
 - i. “How this works is people will have time to have a discussion regarding this item. And then, if people don’t volunteer, I'll just go once via through the roster to have everyone speak. And then from there, either we can keep discussion, or we can have a motion to close the agenda item. However, also recognizing we have been sitting here for almost an hour, I'm also not opposed if people wanted to that we can save today's this discussion item as well and save it for next week's meeting. Well, I do at least want to broach the subject in of itself. So, I will first speak on what the reason rationale behind this agenda item piece, and that will

open up for volunteers, either motion to table or I will just go off the roster. So that being said, the reason for today's discussion item piece regarding transportation is just because it's part of a long-standing item of concern here at NIU, which is just transportation initiatives. This is something that I'm no stranger to is I was the one who wrote the resolution for the Transportation Ad Hoc Committee, which, although it hasn't been able to meet because of the initial lack of Senators we had at the time at the beginning of the 57th Session now we'll be able to fill in those seats. The Transportation Committee will be able to up and run and carry on these conversations from this specific discussion item piece. But this also allows us to explore other ideas and situations and complaints you might have heard as capacity as a senator or a student as well. So that is the gist of why we're discussing this”.

4. Senator Bonecki says,
 - i. “Yeah, I like the idea of getting that committee up and running again, especially since we have more senators. So yeah, I’d like to see what that can go”.
5. Senator Obabko says,
 - i. “I'd like to support what Senator Beneke said. I like that idea of, I like, I like that idea of, like, Finally, establishing the ad hoc committee. I remember last spring when we voted on establishing it, but we never had a chance to fully set it up until now. It's an idea that has to be, that has to be looked into, given the concerns, given the concerns of finding available parking for students. But that being said, due to the fact of the time of the hour, I wouldn't be opposed to tabling the rest of the discussion to next week's session, if that's what the rest of the body decides to”.
6. Speaker Gonzalez asks if there is any discussion or debate.
7. There is none.
8. Deputy Speaker Gurrero so moved to table SR57020.
9. Senator so moved.
10. Speaker Gonzalez calls for a vote.
11. The motion passes and the Discussion Regarding Transportation is tabled.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

- A. Speaker Gonzalez asks if there is anything for the good of the order.
 - a. Speaker Gonzalez says,

- i. “As stated before, Deputy Speaker Guerrero will be stepping down, in effect at the end of the fall of 2025 semester, I would like to iterate those who are interested in seeking [the] Deputy Speaker position are more than free to email me or even review the SGA bylaws to determine what is in effect required for the Deputy Speaker position, if you are so interested. The reason why this has been announced so early is because it allows myself and the rest of the Office of Speaker, and including Eddie, to have time to find a suitable replacement for him to take on the mantle. Being Deputy Speaker also entails you taking control as Chairperson of the Organization Oversight Committee, which has a large amount of responsibility tied within it. So, this is just to put that out there, because without a Deputy Speaker, essentially, I would also have to take over the Organization Oversight Committee for the spring of 2026, semester. So, it's not a bad thing, but at the same time, it's a little too much, you know. So that is why we're getting a head start on this”.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Speaker Gonzalez asks if there are any announcements.

a. Senator Galloway says,

- i. “I just want to inform everybody, the Illinois State Legislature, General Assembly, is currently in veto session right now. They're addressing certain issues to do with immigration. The reason that I bring this up is because some of the legislation could have implications for universities. For example, there's foreign legislation to my notes. My notes here are for public universities and community colleges to adopt model policies for whether ICE can enter campus. Typically, they have to have a signed nutritional warning, and then also notification for public school parents and also campus communities if ice is around the area. So, I just want to notify everybody, because I think it is my understanding. I haven't read all the legislation, but I understand that some of it has passed the state legislature, so assuming it's signed by the governor, that it could have implications for the university. So, I just want to make everybody aware of that”.

- b. Speaker Gonzalez responds,
 - i. “Thank you, Senator Galloway, and I'll make sure the rest of SG leadership is also aware of the legislation in the Illinois General Assembly”.
- c. Senator Kushimo says,
 - i. “I have two announcements. The first is that there is a beyond the form status webinar on Thursday the sixth of November organized by the International Student and Scholar Services. Second announcement is that the network of nations and organization on campus here, in collaboration with the Nigerian Student Association, is organizing a taste of Naija kitchen, which is an international, intercultural cafe where they will be selling African Nigerian food, and this is an opportunity to meet international students on campus and have like understanding of the international community and relate with people”.

ADJOURNMENT

1. Speaker Gonzalez calls for a motion to adjourn the meeting.
2. Senator Salerno so moved.
3. Senator Boniecki seconded.
4. Speaker Gonzalez asks if there is any discussion or debate.
5. There is none.
6. Speaker Gonzalez calls for a vote.
7. The motion passes and the meeting is adjourned at 5:36 pm.

CLOSING ATTENDANCE

1. **Voting Members Present:** Senator Tinajero, Senator Robinson, Senator Uhrine, Senator Zimmer, Senator Salerno, Senator Galloway, Senator Obabko, Deputy Speaker Guerrero, Senator Asante, Senator Owusu, Senator Kushimo, Senator Lynch, Senato Adoye, Senator Boniecki, Senator Sanders
2. **Voting members Absent:** Senator Moskal
3. **Voting members Excused:**
4. **Candidate Members Present:**

MINUTES SUBMITTED BY

Speaker Gonzalez on March 5th, 2026

57th Senate on October 31st, 2025