

# SENATE

NEW JERSEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

## MINUTES

**Student Senate Meeting**  
**20 September 2023, 2:30 PM**  
**Campus Center Ballroom B**

1. Attendance
2. Previous Minutes
  - a. Approved - no objections
3. Public Forum
  - a. Dean of Students Marybeth Boger
    - i. Discussed students for life with Michael Davis, legal time
    - ii. We must be unbiased
    - iii. Cannot vote against club when they adhere to criteria and definition provided
    - iv. Important weight of responsibility as senators
    - v. Uniqueness
      1. Subjective
      2. Criteria after being passed through highlander hub, must be unique club and beneficial to student body - passed through student organizations committee, failed under general body meeting
    - vi. Think about votes entrusted in senate by university - must be objective
    - vii. Should not be done broadly
    - viii. Confidentiality
      1. Students for Life - denied as senate recognized in past, ready to take legal action against Senate, will come out of Senate pocket
      2. Vote based on criteria to be a club and will be beneficial to constituency
    - ix. They can act as club regardless, but principle is coming to a body and being denied
      1. Being senate recognized – benefits like space booking, funds from students activities fees
    - x. Constituency
      1. Vote based off it will be beneficial to the group you represent
    - xi. Point of information:
      1. they are known to sue other universities and winning streak is very long
      2. They just met criteria
      3. In past, sued other university for poor allocation of funds
    - xii. WILL BE TABLED TO NEXT MEETING NEXT WEEK (9/27/2023) AND HAVE THEM RETURN TO SENATE FOR PRESENTATION
4. Old Business
  - a. Vacancies
    - i. Residence Life
      1. Brian Dong
        - a. Intro:
          - i. Second-year computer engineering student, 2 main ideas: battle of the halls, free laundry - targeted at low-income students but can be opened up to everyone, collaboration with GDS - don't have time to get food, need to-go boxes
        - b. Questions:
          - i. Good ideas with laundry and GDS - how will you execute this?
            1. Work with VPSA to get ball rolling, don't know exactly who to talk to in GDS, talked to past VPSA

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- last year, look at John Hopkins on their free laundry policy, give food to take out option for everyone
    - 2. Point of information: Thoren is head of GDS, was gonna start swipe system was take-outs, potentially tabled for now
  - ii. Most pressing issue in reslife?
    - 1. Nothing to do on campus in weekend, free laundry using grants/scholarships - don't have to worry about cleaning clothes - basic right, fight for to-go boxes, don't want other students to go hungry
  - c. Conclusion:
    - i. Bring life back to campus with battle of the halls, free laundry for basic necessity, to-go box with GDS
- 2. Saif Bhardwaj
  - a. Intro:
    - i. Involved in multiple parts of reslife
    - ii. Work in RHA, Rise, nRHA, and as Maple Hall RA
    - iii. Work with resident coordinators
    - iv. Resolve frequent fire alarms, update utilities in halls, mold
    - v. Work alongside reslife and student affairs for events
  - b. Questions:
    - i. How will you differentiate from current maple events and student-wide events?
      - 1. Be more active in sending out emails, sending out surveys, making feedback forms available for residents
    - ii. Past experience that make you qualified?
      - 1. Meeting with floor residents, taking down attendance, getting active feedback, letting them know current policies
    - iii. Low-turnout at RA events - how would you make these events better and more active and make students more engaged?
      - 1. Very active in community, telling people hello and to spread the word to know about these events
    - iv. Most pressing issue in reslife?
      - 1. Communication, a lot of residents won't deal with problems because don't know how to, will post how-tos with more information and how to communicate with each other, not wanting confrontation can be resolved
  - c. Conclusion:
    - i. Will give full dedication and commitment, have past experience and bridge of communication, reached out to students about mold and utilities
- 3. Vote:
  - a. Brian 16
  - b. Saif 4
  - c. No confidence 0
  - d. Abstain 0
    - i. Brian is the new rep!

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## 5. New Business

### a. Swearing in

- i. Biochemistry
  1. Sriya Jidugu
- ii. Chemical Engineering
  1. Melisa Bilgili
- iii. Industrial Engineering
  1. Bridgitte Limaymanta
- iv. Webmaster
  1. Joshua DeMarco
- v. First-year representatives
  1. Youanna Labib
  2. Stephanie Nawar
  3. Jenny Ramzi
  4. Caren Samy
  5. Maryam Naguib
  6. Miriam Basily
  7. Janice Akladyous

### b. Vacancies

- i. Computer Engineering
  1. Natalia Pena

#### a. Intro:

- i. Past year on senate, worked on ECE advisory board, helped develop curriculum, connections and rapport within department, specific goals: make women within ECE group, social building, connecting and networking as women in ECE stay strong

#### b. Questions:

- i. Number 1 issue in CE department?
  1. Retention
    - a. Work with student advisory board to resolve issues, specifically within females - by creating specific group will help with retention, especially for females
- ii. Starting last sem, max and kirlus created a student advisory board, by applying to this position, you will commit to both positions?
  1. yes

#### c. Conclusion:

- i. Hope you see her capability, established commitment within department, made accessible to chairs and professors, hope to establish women within ECE program

#### d. Vote:

- i. Natalia: 19
- ii. No confidence: 0
- iii. Abstain: 1
  1. Natalia is the new rep!

### ii. Forensic Science

1. Fatimah El-Bekasi

#### a. Intro:

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- i. Improve overall education for FS students, classes canceled, entire course catalog has faults, overall want to improve that education
  - b. Questions:
    - i. Strategies to solve issue?
      - 1. Reaching out, making myself accessible for communication, getting feedback on what they need
  - c. Conclusion:
    - i. Here because i care about major and academic experience for peers, look at everything that is correct, does not want grad delayed
  - d. Vote:
    - i. Fatimah 20
    - ii. Abstain 0
    - iii. No confidence 0
      - 1. Fatimah is the new rep!
- iii. Interior Design
  - 1. Brianna Alvarez
    - a. Intro:
      - i. 2nd year interior design major, wants to have great communication skills, does not have smooth transitions and implemented solutions to problems, IAD club - in meetings- discuss issues within club, can relay information to other peers, great fit for role
    - b. Questions:
      - i. What is major issue and how to resolve it?
        - 1. Long hours, difficult time to attend other events and social events, communication with other people and networking - fix by networking event during evening where all can come together and discuss issues within major
    - c. Conclusion:
      - i. Thank you for time and honor to serve in student senate and contribute to better environment for NJIT students, and interacting with them to make sure issues are addressed
    - d. Vote:
      - i. Brianna 19
      - ii. Abstain 0
      - iii. No Confince 1
        - 1. Brianna is the new rep!
- iv. Engineering Technology College
  - 1. Matthew Torres
    - a. Intro:
      - i. Held position last fall, was vacant for long time, in semester - made every effort to speak to every professor and chair, plenty of issues still to address, having been in senate, knows what need to do and will
    - b. Questions:
      - i. Specific issues within college?

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1. Scheduling and communication, issues with needing to know which classes to take, catalog says they need to take ECET211, but it hasn't existed for several years, only know from word of mouth
    - ii. Open line of communication - was there anyone in position after you?
      1. It was vacant after, Matthew Patino was construction technology and Nicole Paula is current ECET major rep
    - iii. A lot of major reps under them are vacant - how will you work with current ones and filled vacant ones?
      1. Constant communication with filled positions, had communication with Matt Patino, took position and represented each major, worked with administration to promote position and will continue to do
  - c. Conclusion:
    - i. Thank you for listening, fully prepared to take on role, will make positive changes
  - d. Vote:
    - i. Matthew 18
    - ii. Abstain 1
    - iii. No Confidence 1
      1. Matthew is the new rep!
- v. Fraternity and Sorority Life
1. Suraj Bhardwaj
    - a. Intro:
      - i. Brother of pikappa phi, greek orgs help bring life to campus, wants to make sure orgs stay in good standing and get rewards for doing so, increase collaboration with cultural and ethnic groups, host a better greek week with more activities and improve
    - b. Questions:
      - i. Based on experience in greek life, what are some issues you see?
        1. Problems with safety, school only provides safety for 2/3 nights parties are held, will work from there
      - ii. Any plan on ethnic groups that fell off?
        1. More for rushing, including them in events will help promote them more and gravitate more towards their organizations, become more involved with them and attend rush events
    - c. Conclusion:
      - i. As representative, will increase involvement of cultural groups to promote diversity, greek week can be better made for the groups
    - d. Vote:
      - i. Suraj 11
      - ii. Abstain 2
      - iii. No Confidence 5
      - iv. On retreat:

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1. Suraj: 24
  2. No confidence: 0
  3. Abstain: 3
    - a. Suraj is the new rep!
6. Executive Reports
  - a. New Grant Hearing Process -VPF
  - b. New Weekly Vector Article - DPR
    - i. Table all this and will go under **old business**
7. Senator Reports
  - a. Senior Class President- Oktoberfest
8. Announcements
  - a. Retreat
    - i. September 22-24
  - b. Next Meeting
    - i. September 27th, 2023
      1. CKB Agile Strategy Lab

## **Residence Life Representative Position Description:**

- a. Serve on Student Affairs committee
- b. Act as a liaison between resident population and Student Senate
- c. Periodically provide their Committee Chair with an update on their goals
- d. Hold and attend resident-centered events
- e. Meet biweekly with Residence Hall Association (RHA) president
- f. Submit at least two senator reports to the Vice President of Administration per semester. At least one of those must be presented in a Senate General Body Meeting per semester.

## **Residence Life:**

### **Brian Dong**

Hi, my name is Brian Dong. I am currently a Junior Computer Engineering Major. Having been a part of Senate as a First-Year Representative I feel my experience would help me in this position. As Reslife Representative I would work with the heads of each residence hall along with RHA to make life on campus more enjoyable for those who live on campus. An idea I had would be a week called War of the Halls where the residence halls compete in events on campus to gain points for their Hall. At the end of the week, the Hall with the most points would win shirts and have bragging rights. Though NJIT is primarily a commuter school there are approximately 2,500 undergraduate students that reside on campus. This is why it is important that we don't forget about those of us who live on our campus.

### **Saif Mairaj**

I'm Saif Mairaj, a third-year student majoring in Financial Technology, and I'm excited to run for the Residence Life Representative position in Senate. As a Resident Assistant and Peer Mentor, I've had the privilege of fostering a supportive and inclusive community within our residence halls as well as on campus. My accomplishments include organizing successful community-building events, addressing resident concerns effectively, and enhancing safety protocols. If elected, I'll continue my dedication to enhancing the on-campus living experience. My goals include implementing a more transparent feedback system, advocating for improved amenities, and ensuring that the voices of residents are heard and acted upon. I believe with the right



representative we can make our campus dormitories an even better place to live. Vote Saif Mairaj for a thriving residence life community!

#### **Computer Engineering:**

##### **Natalia Pena**

I'm Natalia Peña, a sophomore Computer Engineering student. Last year, I served as a First Year Representative in Student Senate and in the ECE Student Advisory Board. Previously, in the Student Advisory Board, we worked to address student concerns such as restructuring the FED curriculum to make the curriculum translate better to future courses. I volunteered at 3 ECE Open Houses as a Student speaker where I met members of the ECE Department. Due to my engagement with the Department, our advisor Ryoko asked me to have a prospective student shadow me for a day. As for my goals, I will work to strengthen the Advisory Board which serves all ECE students and I am involved in establishing a resource group for Female ECE students (WECE). WECE is something I am actively working on, creating the logo and organizing community building events. This will help with retention in the department specifically among Female ECE's.

#### **Forensic Science:**

##### **Fatimah El-Belkasi**

Hello everyone, my name is Fatimah El-Belkasi and I am a senior forensic science major. During the past year I have served as the forensic science representative on the student senate. While in said role, I was able to introduce a new course dedicated to helping students learn about research opportunities and possible career paths, help lay the ground work for the creation of lab manuals in forensic science courses, and speak with administration about increasing the limited sections offered for forensic labs. If elected I hope to continue my past work into fruition as well as tackle new issues that have recently been brought to my attention.

#### **Interior Design:**

##### **Brianna Alvarez**

Hi, my name is Brianna Alvarez. I am currently a second-year interior design major. Throughout my time at NJIT some activities that I have been a part of thus far have been being a part of the IIDA (International Interior Design Association) club. Where we gather together to talk about events and other activities we can do to create more opportunities for others within my major. Other than being a part of IIDA I have also been a part of RHA. I was a former floor representative where I made sure information about activities and events on campus were related to the residents for them to stay up to date. While also being a part of RHA one accomplishment that I made while being a part of this organization was being able to relay concerns students are having during our meetings. Such as healthier options within the dining space. By relaying this information to my peers there were significant changes since then. Such as bringing in cauliflower as another option other than rice as a healthier option for our keto-friendly students.

#### **Engineering Technology College:**

##### **Matthew Torres**

Hi everyone, my name is Matthew Torres, I am currently a third-year Electrical and Computer Engineering Technology student. I have previously been a part of Senate in a few different positions. I was the previous Engineer Technology College Representative and I am looking to come back to this position to finish off what I started. For the semester I had in this position I was able to work very closely with administration and try to make positive change, but there are still plenty of ideas and initiatives that I am looking to finish as well as new issues I would like to tackle. I want to be the spokesperson and advocate for the students who fall within



this college and give them a voice. I am grateful for this opportunity and look forward to hopefully filling this position.

**Fraternity and Sorority Life Representative Position Description:**

- a. Serve on Student Affairs committee
- b. Act as a liaison between Greek Life population and Student Senate
- c. Periodically provide their Committee Chair with an update on their goals
- d. Organize senate events in collaboration with Greek Life
- e. Responsible for being informed on Greek Life organization finances
- f. Meet biweekly with the NJIT Greek Life Coordinator as their Advisor
- g. Submit at least two senator reports to the Vice President of Administration per semester. At least one of those must be presented in a Senate General Body Meeting per semester.

**Fraternity and Sorority Life:**

**Suraj Bhardwaj**

Hi, my name is Suraj Bhardwaj, a brother of Pi Kappa Phi. I'm in my second year as a computer science major with minors in data analytics and innovation and entrepreneurship. In this past year I've been involved in clubs pertaining to my major (ACM, Programming Club, etc.) and served as the treasurer of RHA. Recently, this summer, I've taken part in research in the field of AI. At NJIT there are about 30 social and professional fraternities with 150+ members who account for the majority of active participants at NJIT events. Greek orgs have a positive impact on campus life, as seen with highlander helpers. This is why greek organizations deserve representation in the NJIT student senate. In the past, OFSL has organized greek week (a week long competition between orgs). Despite the fact that it has operated smoothly, having a liaison between the school and the orgs would not only help to have a more consistent event but also provide a contact for all participants with any suggestions.