

## **Association of Student Activities Board Meeting - 4/20/2009**

Attendance: Keone, Rachel, Leonid, Zhao, Paul, Tony, Nicole

<http://web/asa/about/board-members.html>

### **MEETING SUMMARY**

- New Group Recognition
  - o Equestrian Club, recognized as Funded Group 7-0-0
  - o Applied Buddhism, recognized as Funded Group 7-0-0, pending name change
  - o Armenian Society, recognized as Funded Group 7-0-0
  - o RecycleMania, recognized as Funded Group 7-0-0
  - o MIT Satellite Team, recognized as Sponsored Group 7-0-0
  - o Sigma Alpha Epsilon, postponed pending IFC action
  - o Arts and Social Sciences Development Forum, tabled pending discussion with MIT Admissions
  - o Communion and Liberation, tabled pending membership details
  - o MIT for Personal and Economic Freedom, tabled pending talking to the Libertarian Club
  - o MIT ROTC Association, recognized as Funded Group 7-0-0, pending name change
  - o Educational Development Initiative, not recognized 0-5-2
  - o Epsilon Theta, recognized as FSILG 7-0-0
  - o Nightline, tabled pending more information
  - o Zeta Psi, recognized as FSILG via email
- First-Year Summer Mailing
  - o No CD this year, will exist purely online
  - o Postcard will be sent to incoming undergrads
  - o Links placed in the Graduate Student News and on the First Year website for undergraduates
- Conflict Resolution
  - o Sangam
  - o MITaly
  - o MIT Assassins' Guild / SWE / Ballroom Dance Team / Folk Dance Club
- General Discussion
  - o About 50 groups have missed 2 General Body Meetings in a row
    - We will be following up with them via email
    - Possibility of derecognition
  - o Bulletin board application should be out by end of this week
  - o Will be opening discussions with Housing about early returns

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### **AGENDA OVERVIEW**

Keone:

- New Group Recognition
  - Rachel, Nicole, and I met with 10 groups
  - 1 got postponed (Sigma Alpha Epsilon)
  - 21 total apps
  - would be nice to start voting about some of these groups today
- will also take a 20-minute period to work on a few small things
- I was recently working on updating our new group application and changing categories to reflect the new group recognition guidelines
- discuss bulletin boards

## **NEW GROUP RECOGNITION**

### **Equestrian Club**

Rachel:

- have existed informally for several years, but were apparently never recognized, so lost continuity and had no transitioning
- DAPER isn't touching IM's
- DAPER wants IM program to break even
- won't get full funding, but could get some support, e.g. for transportation
- have talked with Club Sports Council but are not a club sport because they are not strictly competitive; competition is a "sidenote" to their group
- group is used partially to organize rides (barn is an hour away)
- envision 20-25 people
- \*\* Paul motions to recognize as Funded Group
- \*\* Keone seconds
- \*\* group is recognized 7-0-0

### **Applied Buddhism**

Rachel: can be considered different "denomination" of Buddhism

Leonid: most mainstream Buddhists consider them a sect

Rachel:

- goal of the group is to learn how to apply Buddhist teachings to your own life, no matter what religion you actually are
- affiliated with an international movement, Soka Gakkai International (SGI)
- plan on going to GSC for funding: meetings, small speaker events

Leonid:

- we should suggest they change their name to something more descriptive
- it'd be as if we had a bunch of Protestants call themselves Applied Christianity

Rachel:

- I had that thought at first, but it's more focused on the philosophical sharing
- There are lots of Christian groups that you can't tell their denomination from their name

Leonid: The reason I'm concerned about this name is that, suppose someone comes to MIT and wants to join a Buddhist group, and they see this, and they'll be led to believe that this is just one of the Buddhist groups on campus, but they're actually very different from mainstream Buddhists.

- have we talked to the MIT Chaplain about this sort of thing?

Rachel: they're not interested in taking an advisory role

<general consensus that we provisionally suggest that they change their name>

Rachel: Should they be funded or not funded? They seem relatively distinct from other groups.

Keone: They should definitely be able to try for funding.

\*\* Keone motions to recognize group as Funded Group, conditional to them changing their name

\*\* seconded

\*\* group is recognized 7-0-0

### **Armenian Society**

Rachel: fairly straightforward group

- consists of half-dozen Armenian nationals already, plus Armenian non-nationals
- spread Armenian culture, history, and (possibly) politics
- no Armenian groups currently on campus

Leonid: only problem is that they don't have huge room for growth

Rachel: would have core of Armenian students, could also get interested students

Leonid: What about funding? Palestinians@MIT is not funded

Rachel: That's mostly because Palestinians@MIT grew out of Arab Students Organization (ASO); they were a special case, which is why they didn't receive funding.

Paul: I think it should be funded.

\*\* Keone motions to recognize as Funded Group

\*\* seconded by Leonid

\*\* group is recognized 7-0-0

### **RecycleMania**

Rachel: MIT instance of a national competition

- oriented on undergraduate dorms, but has some interaction with grad dorms
  - would be willing to try to expand
- have been under the UA's Committee on Sustainability (just this year)
  - last year, competition didn't happen
  - they don't want to be part of Sustainability@MIT because they feel that undergraduate projects within that group have been ignored
  - UA Sustainability is also leery of pushing more things into Sustainability@MIT

Rachel: I think this is distinct enough to get funding, but I'm not sure if they'll get that much from Finboard

\*\* Keone motions to recognize as Funded Group

\*\* seconded

\*\* recognized 7-0-0

### **MIT Satellite Team**

Rachel: They want to make satellites. And send them to space.

- They are funded by Aero/Astro, and they **cannot** be funded by us
  - one of their grants requires them to raise money on their own
  - apparently getting money from Finboard is too straightforward for this grant

- this group is an interdisciplinary project, focused on Course 16, but with connections to 2, 6, 8, 12, 14, 15

\*\* Paul motions to recognize them as Sponsored

\*\* Keone seconds

\*\* recognized 7-0-0

### **Sigma Alpha Epsilon**

Rachel: didn't meet with them

- used to be a fraternity on campus

- were kicked off about a decade ago

- coming back as non-residential fraternity (initially) with an emphasis on service

- claim that they need ASA recognition to move forward

- Rachel talked to IFC President about procedure

- need permission from their national and IFC to become colony

- then need permission from IFC to become a chapter

- IFC wants us to recognize them *after* they become colony

- service is not a primary focus of their organization, nationally speaking

- they might get back in contact with us over the next few days, but we can basically assume they are postponed

### **Arts and Social Sciences Development Forum**

Rachel: it's the "Yay, HASS!" group

- want to work on internally promoting HASS majors/minors

- outreach to high school students

- sponsored by SHASS Dean's Office

Keone: my concern is that they're very outward-focused

Rachel: Since they're so focused on recruiting, we could make them meet with Admissions

Leonid: Are they bringing value to the community?

Keone: If they're successful, they're definitely a value-added, but if they screw up, it could be a detraction

\*\* Keone motions that we table the group until they talk to Admissions

\*\* Leonid seconds

\*\* 7-0-0

### **Communion and Liberation**

- sect of Catholicism, which is a bit awkward

- however, they are currently not 50% MIT students, so we cannot proceed anyway

\*\* tabled until we hear back about their membership

### **MIT for Personal and Economic Freedom**

- restarting Libertarian Club...but someone already restarted Libertarian Club this year!

- are going to talk with Libertarian Club, although they have been off the radar so far

- haven't populated mailing list, used locker, etc.

\*\* currently tabled until they talk to the Libertarian Club

### **MIT ROTC Association**

Rachel: applied last semester but were turned down due to sense of having too much emphasis on the military and recruiting for ROTC

- have made progress in adjusting their purpose and goals
- lingering concern of the name
- ties them to being outreach for the military, as opposed to outreach about the military
- we want it to be clearly open to non-ROTC students
- want to eliminate any possible discrimination issues

Keone: Keep in mind we couldn't ever have ROTC as student group.

Tony: How is this different from cultural or religious groups?

Rachel: Not much, but ROTC is part of an officially discriminatory organization

- we could force them to change their name, but they don't want to, and I don't think it would really change the purpose of the group
- if we're concerned about the purpose, we should be concerned about the group itself

Keone: I'm not concerned about the purpose

- we told them clearly last time that they need to be adding value to the MIT community and opening dialog

- seems like they actually did change what they wanted to do

Paul: doesn't ROTC already go to the midway?

Rachel: yes, but that's adults involved in ROTC

- I would be more comfortable with having students there, in fact

Paul: could we call it the ROTC Students Association?

<general consensus of liking that>

Rachel: That would satisfy our problem of it sounding too official, and they really want ROTC in the name.

Nicole: If they actually do what they say they're going to do, should be fine.

Rachel: If they stray too far from their purpose, it would be an issue, but we will talk to them if anything happens.

\*\* Keone motions to approve as Funded group, contingent to name change

\*\* Paul seconds

\*\* approved 7-0-0

### **Educational Development Initiative**

Rachel: My basic take on the group is that they want to run an SAT II Prep program, make money on that, and donate it to various international development organizations

Nicole: A little bit odd...

Rachel: I find this a bit discomfoting

Tony: ESP [Educational Studies Program] runs a SAT Prep program right now; in fact Chris Su [proposed president of Educational Development Initiative] runs it.

[Tony is also the current Chair (President) of ESP.]

Nicole: Their argument against that is that ESP does SAT I, not SAT II

Tony: If Chris had wanted to run this as an ESP program, it probably would have been approved.

Rachel: The SAT part already exists in ESP, the international development already exists in numerous other groups.

Keone: Given that we're kind of low on classroom space, this could be an issue

Nicole: They should talk to ESP

Rachel: Due to it being so late in the year, we should have a very concrete idea of what we want from them.

Keone: let's enumerate the issues we have:

- conflict with ESP
- shortage of room space
- not unique

Leonid: What do we do with groups that want to do something for profit and give the money away?

Rachel: The issue doesn't come up much, but it should be fine.

Rachel: Regarding uniqueness, do we want to classify groups based on what they do on campus or who they send their profits to? I think we should do it based on the former.

keone: I don't think this would negatively impact ESP.

Rachel: Yes, but is that just because ESP is a very strong group?

- Part of the reason they want to be part of a new group is that they want financial autonomy.

Keone: Okay, I think we have exhausted the debate.

\*\* Keone motions to recognize as Funded Group

\*\* seconded by Rachel

\*\* vote 0-5-2 [Tony abstains]

### **Epsilon Theta**

Rachel: didn't meet with them

- want ASA recognition to reserve rooms on campus
- more of a formality
- \*\* motion to recognize as FSILG
- \*\* seconded
- \*\* vote 7-0-0

### **Nightline**

Rachel: can't meet with them due to maintaining anonymity

- currently funded through S^3
- want to reserve rooms
- can't be put in the database without actual MIT students
- specifying signatories is also an issue
- need to get more information about their funding situation, how they plan on reserving rooms while maintaining anonymity, and whether they want to be a sponsored group under S^3 or an MIT Funded Group / MIT Student Group
- \*\* table until we have more information

### **HS&T Grad Students Association**

Rachel:

- department isn't sure if or to what extent they can fund the group
- we had some motions and a partial discussion online, but nothing was resolved

Keone: there is also an issue of them being half Harvard and half MIT students

Paul: Yes, but their department is officially Harvard and MIT, and other Harvard/MIT collaborations exist like Harvard-MIT Math Tournament.

Keone: Even if they are recognized as Funded, would still need to get past GSC Funding Board

Rachel: have not been very responsive

\*\* Keone motions to recognize as a Funded Student Group

\*\* Rachel seconds

\*\* 3-1-3; motion fails

### **Zeta Psi**

\*\* was recognized as FSILG via email

### **FYSM (First-Year Summer Mailing)**

Keone: so for the past few meetings we've been talking about our options:

- mail it out on a CD
- put it online and send out a postcard
- email with a link

<consensus is reached to put it online and send out a postcard, since this causes less waste than CDs and might be more effective anyway>

Keone: how are we moving forward collecting information?

- we could ask for just a slide, a link, and a short description with tags
  - in the past we have asked for a mini-website (entire directory)
- <discussion>

Conclusion: Accept a slide/link/description. For delivery, we will put a notice in GSN (Graduate Student News), put a link on the UAAP (Undergraduate Advising and Academic Programming) website for incoming freshmen, and send postcards to incoming undergrads.

### **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

1. Sangam (filed a complaint about this year's election procedures)

Rachel: according to our guidelines, the only authority we have is to ensure that they follow their own constitution

Leonid [outgoing member of Sangam Exec]:

- it was not, strictly speaking, an issue this time
- election bylaws cannot be found, even though they are mentioned in the Constitution
- the main issue here is that a lot of people took part in the election but were not part of the group in any formal way

Rachel: I think that's suboptimal, and I would not write an election procedure that way...but if they want it to be that way, they get it to be that way. We can encourage them to change it, but unless we create a standing policy about how all ASA groups should do elections, we can't actually do anything.

Keone: the window to act has mostly passed

Rachel: I don't think redoing their election was ever seriously an option of ours.

Leonid: I agree. On the other hand, it is unfortunate.

Keone: can someone write an email to their Exec and the election officers about our conclusions - okay, I'll do it.

2. MITaly (internal problem between their Exec, with the rest of Exec complaining that their president is being unresponsive and not allowing new elections to proceed)

Leonid: we should meet with their president personally

Rachel: agrees; after that we can decide whether we want to involve the other officers, who brought the complaint

Conclusion: Keone will email them.

3. MIT Assassins' Guild / SWE / Ballroom Dance Team / Folk Dance Club

(Assassins' Guild brought forward complaint about SWE not following reasonable expectations for sharing office space.)

Rachel: I think we have a fairly well-documented history of the case, with emails from both sides. I think the easiest way to progress with this quickly, which we need to do, would be to call a meeting with representatives from each of the four groups - I imagine SWE and the Guild would send 3 people each, while the other groups would send 1 each, since they are less involved. The Guild and SWE seem to have sort of come to an agreement with office usage, but it was never formalized, and there's no way to get it enforced. Maybe we could draft something during this meeting, make all the groups and ASA Exec aware of it, and use it for the next six months.

Rachel: Office allocations are constitutionally due in November, so this will probably only be an issue for the next six months.

Keone: who's going to write the email inviting them to a group meeting?

Rachel: I can email them.

Paul: We should offer the option of one-on-one meetings

Rachel: Sure.

- The meeting will probably be before our new Exec comes in

- But it would be nice to have people from the new and old Exec there

Paul: I'm affiliated with the Assassins' Guild, so I won't come to the meeting.

## **GENERAL DISCUSSION**

Rachel: need to decide what to do about groups that have missed 2 GBM's

- about 50 have missed both GBM's, but that includes some who have excuses

Keone: email to be drafted

Paul: I will try to get the bulletin board application out by this week.

- Also working on early returns, not sure who to email

Keone: you should email Diana Ryan

Keone: decide to drop the 20 minute work period, since the meeting has been going on for 2 hours



Rachel: does anyone know when the Invested Reserve policy was last reviewed? The website says it was supposed to be reviewed in Summer '08, but I don't think that happened.

- I can talk to Shan about it.

Keone: Yeah, that sounds best.

\*\*Paul motions to adjourn

\*\*Keone seconds

\*\*meeting is adjourned 7-0-0