SGA Formal Minutes

*all minutes are paraphrased*

I. Dean’s Report
   ● Approved

II. Minutes
    ● Approved

III. Executive Board Report
    ● Sam
       - n/a
    ● Taylor
       - n/a
    ● Zack
       - n/a
    ● Tyra
       - n/a
    ● Molly
       - n/a
    ● Laura
       - n/a
    ● Maddie
       - n/a
    ● Diego
       - n/a

IV. Community Forum
   ● n/a

V. Old Business
   ● Taylor Haberstock
      - Taylor H: For most of this meeting we are going to spend time on going over some things about me that have been going on that I want to be transparent about so i will explain and then we will discuss… I am embarrassed to be bringing this up and want to be honest that I have to take personal accountability. A few weeks ago somewhere around Jan 17, the men’s lacrosse team hosted an annual “wine party.” Men’s lacrosse players buy large amounts of wine and everyone brings a date and it is like our team’s version of a
“formal” party. It is important to state that this party was planned at the beginning of January at the same time that our team announced captains and I was not named a captain and I was asked to take on a different role, sort of as someone who is a first follower who can support captains. But basically the party was planned and leading up to this some of the captains wanted to get sober monitors and when a captain was not willing to be a sober monitor, so I was asked to be one and I agreed. The party started around 9:30 and it quickly became overwhelming and clear that things were getting out of hand. As I was going around handing out water it was evident people were getting very drunk and not doing well. People had to get cut off from alcohol and leave early. The party got very out of hand. My night largely consisted of dealing with/helping one member of the team - a first year - who I cut off from alcohol very early. He started not doing so well and I was attempting to figure out how he was doing. One other person and I, really I, made the call that it was time for him to go home after seeing his situation for a while. For timing this was around 10:45 or 11:00. That individual person ended up being walked home by two teammates who were approached by an off-duty CER member. The two other teammates were scared and ran off and the freshmen who wasn’t doing so well stumbled into a snowbank. The student was assessed by CER and I was called by a CER member to come be with this teammate. The ambulance arrived, the police arrived, and that person was transported and spent three hours in the hospital. I went with that student in the ambulance to the hospital and that was the end of my involvement with the party. After I left, very shortly after, one of our captains shut down the party. As a result of the party, the school has attributed six transports to the party. Six people who in some way attended or were affiliated with the party were transported to the hospital. This is a very huge number. After the party, not a lot happened very quickly because our coach was having surgery, but the school started interviewing all members of the senior leadership and who organized and were involved with the party. I was interviewed by the school and the decision made by upper administration and the athletic director and our coach was that all seniors on my team who attended the event for a substantial amount of time - regardless of their role in the party - were suspended for the first four games of the lacrosse seasons. I will not be playing the first four games of the season. Simultaneously, I’ve been told by Dean of the College, Karlene, that I will be receiving a conduct meeting as a result of my role at the party - I have not received a formal letter stating what my meeting is for but my understanding is that the three things I will be having a conduct meeting for are: 1. being in a space and being complicit with underage drinking, 2. being present and complicit in a space where a theme party was going on with alcohol (which is a student handbook violation), and 3. for my role with the one freshman who eventually got transported. Also every senior had different roles and mine was as a not great sober
monitor who did not do a spectacular job, but I want to make clear that I was not involved in terms of planning, buying alcohol, or any other aspect of the party (however there are members of the team who will be receiving conduct for their role in planning the party, organizing, buying alcohol, serving alcohol to minors, etc). This conduct related stuff all went down within the last 72 hours. I also met with Karlene on Friday and she asked for the meeting in order to tell me that she believes very strongly that because of my role in the event I showed “low moral character” and that I should resign from SGA and that I should put that resignation forward in this meeting. She made it very apparent that my actions were, in her view, not emblematic of that of an SGA president and she said that it thinks it will be hard for me to lead going forward. Sam Lee and I have spent a lot of time talking about this and about how to proceed. There are some options. I can put forward a formal letter of resignation OR we can enact the impeachment process in which any SGA member can put forward an impeachment motion or Jess Mano can put forth that letter to begin the impeachment process. Sam and I believe that a formal letter of resignation was not the correct choice for today because I do not have a formal conduct letter from the school yet to give you all in order to base that letter of resignation on. The second reason we felt it was not right for me to submit a letter of resignation today is that we don’t think this decision should be in my hands or in Karlene’s hands. We think the route we would like to pursue is that next week Sam and I have decided that because Karlene told me that I should put forward a letter of resignation that I am going to propose a motion next week with my letter of resignation and you all can vote to either accept or reject that letter of resignation. Thus, the decision as to whether I stay or go will be in your hands. The reason for this is that an impeachment process would take at least a month… and another reason is that while I definitely, no doubt did not make perfect decisions that night, I do not think I showed low moral character. I recognize that I was in a position that while it was overwhelming, I fully decided to take on that role. I also could have taken a more prominent role in planning the event in efforts to ensure that it did not get out of hand (I could have tried to ensure that less alcohol was there or that non-team members did not go). I should have been more active in preventing such an out of hand party. But the main reasons Karlene thinks I should resign are because of the low moral character she thinks I showed - I know I was not perfect and I made poor decisions, but I chose to go to that party as a sober monitor in an effort to control that party and ensure that people were safe and that things did not get out of hand. I went to that party with every intention of doing my part to be a good community member who promoted the safety of teammates and others. I did my best, and while that was not perfect, I do not think it showed low moral character on my part. Karlene also thought SGA would not be able to function with me at the helm
and stated that I would struggle to get all of your trust back and the trust of all students back. This is something that I think is a more important question and determinant of whether I should remain President, and that is why I wanted to go down this route of presenting my resignation next week as a motion for you to vote on, because I think it should be all of your decision as to whether my behavior violates the SGA code of ethics. For the rest of the meeting we would like to have you all ask questions and voice opinions because next week there will be a motion and you will have to vote on it. So we will open it up.

- Jess Mano: I am willing to answer any questions, but I will let taylor speak for himself
- Taylor H: also part of the reason i am not resigning and i am putting a letter to a vote for you all is because i love doing this job and i want to work with you all and i still want to make change on this campus with you all.
- Sam Lee: I know this is a lot of information thrown at you, so please feel free to just process for a minute
- Taylor H: It’s also difficult because i know that many of you probably don’t have a lot of information about this event besides what I just said and I would like to try to make it more clear if you have questions
- Matthew Garza: to be clear, next week you will be presenting a formal letter of resignation that we will accept or reject?
- Taylor H: yes and I hope to do that next week to get the process going because we need to be quick about that because if I were to leave there would need to be a multitude of people moved into new roles so regardless of the outcome we would like to move this along and make it swift so that SGA can be able to function at a high level as soon as possible
- Zack M: I would like to talk about theme parties not being allowed
- Jess M: There is a student handbook rule stating that there may not be any thematic party (e.g. handcuff, formal, etc.) because the goal is to protect students against unsafe drinking environments.
- Taylor H: the idea is that theme parties are not as safe for the campus community as are other parties, and this wine party constituted a “theme party”
- Graeme Brown: I think in my opinion the most important thing that happened in terms of you showing your character was you stepping forward and offering to be a sober monitor. It seems like a tough situation for you and not having a choice as to whether or not to be involved. I know if you had been more instrumental in planning it, it might have just been another thing to get you in trouble for. Overall, you haven’t lost my respect i think you’ve done a great job this year
- Merrill Read: Ditto
- Molly Manuel: maybe that was an example of poor character, but Taylor did come straight forward to us to be transparent. I think Taylor has done a great job

- Tyra Daruwalla: I’m a little concerned with the broader implications in this whole thing... the fact that a student who we have discussed is stepping up in a difficult situation - Taylor can’t end frats by himself and I think for the administration to put pressure on a student like you who is trying to alleviate issues and dangers is problematic because you were just trying to make the best call you could... There isn’t a sober monitor training, we aren’t trained, we just do the best we can. I think it is problematic that a student who is stepping in trying to make a situation better is getting disciplined for not doing a good enough job. I think this throws a wrench in things that we are doing this year. And yes the culture that is bred out of those parties is not good and others in that party may need disciplining, but I think that this will throw SGA off and put a wrench in things we are doing

- Merrill R: I also think having a president leave half way through the year is not productive and I think you’ve done a great job and I think that I agree with Tyra

- Tyra D: Maddie and I were talking before this and as students we are not trained professionals and if there is another student in a dangerous health situation. It seems wrong to place blame on a student for not doing enough. For example if a student is dealing with mental health concerns is in a dangerous situation and if the student is with another student we cannot expect the other student to make the perfect call. I feel like it is concerning that the school is targeting one individual and making them responsible for another student’s health and safety.

- Gen C: I have a question, are you being brought to conduct for what happened with that student or your involvement in it?

- Taylor H: I think it’s both.

- Jess M: I think that being at a place where underage folks were served and for being at a party that was themed. I think also this sober monitor piece is difficult. There isn’t an aspect of the handbook that talks about sober monitoring... CER is trained to do evaluations, and rather than talking about Taylor’s moral character I think it’s about the decision you made. The issue with sober monitor piece is that SGA put out a very public video about the amnesty and good samaritan policies and so I think that the issue is that we would hope/expect that Taylor’s first decision would be to call CER and get him evaluated sooner. I don’t know that it is a conduct

- Taylor H: also if I had a moment I would have printed out the code of ethics for you guys, but that should be the way that you all judge this situation - did I violate the code of ethics? It should be taken into consideration my actions in light of the code of ethics and whether my actions violate the code of ethics and make me
- Sam Lee: I have it with me right now and I would like to emphasize that many of us have probably been at a themed party, hosted a themed party, probably bought alcohol for a party, I also think that we have all likely brought a friend home who was not doing so well and maybe needed transport… we all signed this code of ethics and if Taylor broke the ethics code we all likely have too

- Avery: I feel that admin is harping on this specifically to you because the lacrosse culture has been toxic for a long time and I think this is a tangible thing that they can say that they did, but like Sam said, if every senior in SGA got kicked out of SGA for drinking at a party where there were minors or a theme... there would be no more seniors... I don’t think we can say this makes you unfit to lead

- Tanner B: I think Avery brings up a great point in that it is problematic to associate an individual person with an overall culture and just assume they were part of it. I’ve been in a situation where I have and a situation where I haven’t called CER and it is a very difficult decision. I also think that Taylor has moral character he did what he thought was the best decision

- Tyler W: I can say in my own experiences as a trained EMT (but not member of CER) and I have even decided against calling for someone who might have needed it. I have made the wrong call before and even if it wasn’t the perfect decision or in line with the code of ethics, if i were in Taylor’s shoes I would want someone

- Nena: even though it is an ingrained culture at Colby, if we don’t go forward with rejecting the letter of resignation, how else is SGA going to take a stance against this culture. How else will we definitively take a stance against this. I think the problem is the association of this being what SGA stands for. How else can we stand against that.

- Gen C: I want to echo Nena, I am very concerned about what does this mean for us. I think you are a great person, Taylor, but what does this mean for SGA going forward. Are we accepting this culture to go on? What are we saying in accepting or denying Taylor’s resignation letter? That we are allowing this culture to continue without any repercussions on you?

- Ashlee G: I do believe that you are a great person, but I do understand that at the end of the day you are a leader and SGA has been doing a lot of addressing things that have happened like things with this sports team and personally I think that in order to be productive and move forward we can’t be moving backwards and addressing something we did wrong. It is unfair to us as a whole SGA body and there are things I want to get done and I think it is unfair for us to be spending time on this meeting with this rather than focusing on other things we want to get done

- Diego H: I am personally in favor of keeping Taylor, but I do think we all need to keep in mind how we will be presenting this and ourselves to the school. The student body will
find this out in the minutes and we need to be mindful of how they will see and consider this.

- Matt G: I really appreciate that we are having this conversation. I would vote against accepting your resignation because I think you are being ethically punished for the action of people you were associated with. If I went to a questbridge meeting and we used this as a precedent for impeaching me, I think we have much larger problems. I don’t think you have done anything ethically concerning. Responding to your point, Diego, and responding to the student body as a whole. I don’t think the administrators will cut us off, and I don’t even think that would sway me in favor of accepting your resignation. I think you are being punished for association.

- Tyra: I think in terms of optics and what this means for SGA. the problem with if we were to say we no longer think Taylor is fit to lead the group is to put Taylor’s face on the lax and frat problem, and we know that Taylor puts himself in front of the entire first year class coming out against the frats. I think that it is a way to push the people who are really responsible for this under the rug. The administration thinks they will be getting something done and approaching the issue (Taylor is a leader on the lacrosse team) I think this avoids and is a scapegoat for approaching and reprimanding the actual frat and lacrosse problem… I think this misrepresents and distracts from the real issue

- Sam L: addressing binge drinking culture and transports, to change it it requires introducing a new way of partying at Colby. Right now everyone goes to the apartments and Karlene talked to us at conversation with the deans about getting people away from the apartments - to guide partying elsewhere. Karlene was saying that when she was a student people would party at Pulver and ultimately that was the end destination, and I think what we want is to change the end destination. Dog head is a great example, it is the epitome of binge drinking and so for us the question may be how do we provide alternative programming and provide more food and change the culture and pull people away from the apartments and finding solutions in new spaces. I think that’s a great goal. New programming is a good solution

- Taylor H: adding on to that, it is so hard to get help to people in a residential dorm. I don’t think it is easy or useful to have security running through residential dorms when if we all congregated in the spa or elsewhere we could

- Matt G: I agree with you guys, drinking culture is a huge problem… there is progress made in amnesty policy and etc. and there is more progress to be made. If Taylor were the person who bought the alcohol served the shots etc I think that he would need to be out, but I don’t think keeping him on here is going to prevent us from making progress on this issue.
- Sam Leppo: I don’t think your ability to lead or dedication has changed and I don’t think you continuing would prevent us from continuing to make progress this year. You still have my respect and based on what conduct means for you, it seems like it is punitive and not what we strive for on SGA - we strive for improvement. Taylor’s work ethic and ability to lead are not affected by this situation.

- Molly M: I think first years are probably a bit disillusioned by dorm damage but when I was a freshman it was understood that living in the apartments would come along with HUGE thousands of dollars of fines in dorm damage and that was an issue highly associated with binge drinking and drinking culture and we have combated that, so I think that we can combat this larger issue too…

- Graeme B: I think that going forward we should all be mindful not to view Taylor as the lacrosse team issues and of binge drinking culture. I think you have consistently exhibited moral character.

- Merrill R: I also think that former members of the team were there who are far more toxic and so I think it is important to remember that they are trying and also just because Taylor is on that team it doesn’t mean he is the problem.

- Tyler W: I don’t know much of SGA’s work with admin, I fear that the admin and the school will feel like something has been done and then nothing more will be done. The admin will do something that sounds like a great idea but then nothing happens after and it isn’t a solution. Like Sam said there are better things we can be doing to address drinking culture on campus.

- Sam Lee: this is why Nathan has all of his drinking free programming

- Matt Mitchell: I think we have a tremendous opportunity in this semester to make progress on this issue and I think you can help us accomplish this

- Diego H: I think another thing to think about is that Karlene can still push for the impeachment process and we need to think about the likelihood that she will push for it

- Taylor H: I think part of the logic of this is that this will get us to the end vote and we will know the outcome of an impeachment and so if we vote on this

- Holly L: I have a question about the process, are you writing this letter regardless? You are writing it even though you don’t want to resign?

- Tanner B: I think we should resist a force of hand from the administration so I would be weary to feel the request of them. Also I think going back to the generalizations thing, someone brought up that the optics of Taylor would reflect onto all of us… so I think that wouldn’t be a super logical way to go.

- Sam Lee: I think this is a great reminder to us all to be conscious of how we act on the weekend because we are student leaders and we should be acting in a good moral meeting. This is an incredible learning process and in respect to Ashlee and Gen’s
comments about SGAs reputation, perhaps some people might view him as a damaging character on SGA but ultimately we are the character of SGA as well. We all have our different views and reputation-wise I think we can come back from this. We are personable people and taylor is not the only face of SGA

- Taylor H: going back to what holly said, I was strongly encouraged by Karlene and asked by karlene to resign and so my thought was that i want to respect what the administration feels in that karlene wants me to resign and that is with reason and I want to respect that but i still feel like I can lead and help you all tackle these problems. I don’t think this is my decision or Karlene’s, it should be all of SGA’s decision. My hope is that this is a quicker process than impeachment that gets us to the same result.

- Ashlee: I agree with the premise that we are the student government organization and we are dedicated to student issues not to the whims of the administration, but I think we should take stances against administration in other ways. You all chose not to take a stand against the akon party and the administration in that way then.

- Sam Lee: I understand that and you might have been on the end who says we should have stood up to them but there also may be someone who thought the polar opposite and this highlights how difficult it is to take stances and do things through SGA. I don’t think that it is anyone’s fault that this is where and how we would taking a stand against the administration.

- Taylor H: this is not me attempting to stand up to the administration. We can still make change or endeavor to make changes on any topic. We can still pass motions to take a stand against the administration against the akon day and of administration’s response. At the dean’s conversation the number one thing talked about was how to support students and mental health and how to make students feel safe on our campus. These are still issues that sam and I very much care about.

- Matt M: going off of what holly said is there a way for us to write a motion of support for you saying we don’t want you to resign and so you don’t even have to submit a letter of resignation at any point.

- Taylor H: I mean yes, you can bring forward any motion you want. A lot of my thought was that a lot of the time people will hand in a letter of recognition and then a board has to accept or reject the letter of recognition and that was part of the logic behind this. Also we can all continue to talk about this and i am also embarrassed that I have to bring this up and it hurts me and love playing lacrosse and I care about people on my team but having to address this culture that is associated with our team is really embarrassing and there is a very good reason why our team is being punished, but what i am trying to say is that I am embarrassed that this has to come up, I hope this is something that you are willing to think about this week. I will be available this week if you want to talk and also
please talk with the Eboard members and please look at the SGA code of ethics and the SGA impeachment process.

VI. Committee Reports
- Academic Affairs:
- Academic Honesty:
- Budget:
- College Affairs:
- Mission and Priorities:
- Student Conduct Board:
- Admissions and Financial Aid:
- Athletics Advisory:
- Campus Life Residential Program:
- Cultural Events:
- Diversity and Inclusion:
- Information and Technology:
- Library:
- Off-Campus Study Advisory:
- Parking Ticket Appeals:
- Security:
- BIPR:
- Dining Services:
- Health Care Advisory:
- Finance:
- Housing and Facilities Advisory:
- Community Engagement:

- OCOC:
- Publicity:
- Traditions:

VII. Class Reports
- 2019:
- 2020:
- 2021:
- 2022:

VIII. New Business