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The Independent

Community College Students' Source for Philadelphia News

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Excerpt of welcome message from Governor Josh Shapiro

August 30, 2024

"By pursuing a higher education, you are charting a course that will require you to think critically, act thoughtfully, and challenge yourself to be your best. Beyond academics, this is also a time to **make your voice heard**. Pennsylvania is the birthplace of our democracy – where our founders first created a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. As you step into this new phase of your education, I encourage you to explore the importance of that legacy – and the responsibility each and every one of us has to **get involved and make our voices heard**. Democracy thrives on active participation, and you play a crucial role in protecting our fundamental freedoms and shaping our future."

Students, Union at the September Board of Trustees: Show Up and Show Out

Paulina Reyes
September 2, 2024

This upcoming Thursday, September 5th, the Board of Trustees meeting will take place in the Isadora A. Shrager Boardroom in Mint Building, M2-1. The Faculty Union Federation has pushed for demands of fair wage compensations, better equipped staffing, SEPTA Trans Passes and on campus childcare at Community College of Philadelphia. Students, it's time to come together and stand with the faculty as they demand these goals that should have been finalized August 31st.

As the FSFCCP continues to fight for these contracts to get signed, Frank Scales the President of SGA encourages us to be there!

Faculty and staff contracts have expired, they are dragging out negotiations and no one knows how it may affect students. Despite the administration stating there will be no bargaining with students, SGA continues to fight for a student representative at the table. Scales also calls for democratizing our student government. Scales shared on social media to come along and be open to give public comment if you choose to. Show up and show out to the board meeting this Thursday in M2-1 at 2:30pm to pressure administration on the student's needs are and what we, as students, are fighting for.

Lee Child's "The Killing Floor," A Mystery Novel Actually Worth Reading

Aaron Bechtel
September 1, 2024

Growing up, I was never a big fan of mystery novels because it seemed like they were all cut from the same template. A big event happens, someone shows up to help solve the mystery, and the bad guy is taken down. I held this belief for a long time until I was introduced to Lee Child's Jack Reacher series. The first book in the series is the one I'm currently reviewing. Starting off, Reacher isn't a detective. He's a former Military Police officer and has since become a drifter. He travels throughout the United States, not staying in one place for more than a few weeks unless it's to save up some money. He happens upon a small town in Georgia, and he is immediately arrested for murder. The thing is, Reacher hasn't killed anybody. Not recently, anyway. This town is hiding a secret, and from crooked cops to bought-out mayors, they make sure to keep it safe. When you read this novel, I guarantee you will find it fascinating. Lee Child expertly sculpts this book with language that fits the situations perfectly. I can say with confidence that this book will leave you wanting more, just as I did. This led me to read almost all of the other books in the series, and the quality doesn't drop at all. In any case, drop by a library to pick up this book. It's worth reading, and it'll keep you busy for a little while. Drop by next time for another review!

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Puzzle Korner

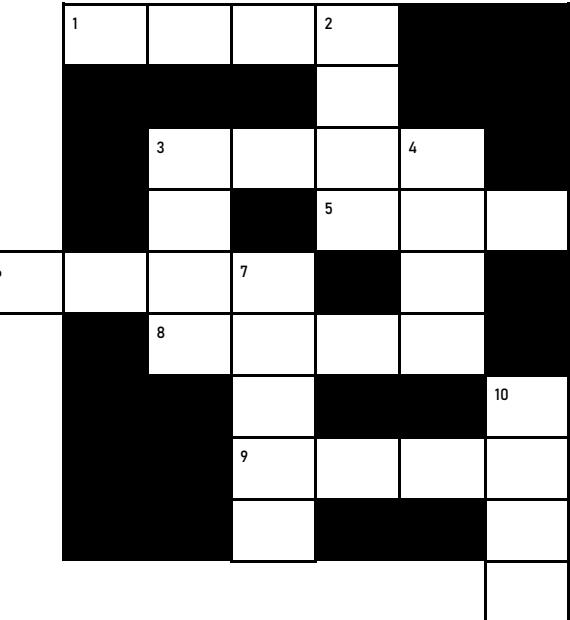
CROSSWORD

Across

- 1) Psychology course name
- 3) Calculus classes
- 5) Information Technology classes
- 6) Geography course name
- 8) Building with cafeteria
- 9) English course name

Down

- 2) West Regional Campus acronym
- 3) Kitty-cat say what?
- 4) History course name
- 7) First year required credits
- 10) Black Studies course name



Word Search

S	A	O	N	B	A	R	G	A	I	I	N	I	G
R	C	B	O	O	K	S	T	O	R	E	S	T	A
E	C	H	S	C	H	O	L	A	R	S	H	I	P
G	S	G	E	R	O	T	U	N	D	A	O	G	L
I	L	E	N	D	H	L	N	S	A	E	B	X	O
S	I	N	T	O	U	N	D	G	G	E	N	R	N
T	R	E	U	U	Y	L	G	S	B	R	A	I	T
R	I	R	S	O	B	X	I	R	R	S	O	D	N
A	N	A	G	O	L	G	E	N	T	I	X	H	O
T	G	L	O	R	R	A	N	B	G	I	H	R	O
I	E	S	A	O	T	E	X	T	B	O	O	K	S
O	G	N	R	A	G	D	N	A	S	B	L	A	K
N	D	T	I	R	T	H	T	G	R	T	R	E	B
R	S	R	O	Y	O	B	E	U	N	I	O	N	T

Scholarship
Registration
Scheduling
Union
Bargaining

Roary
Generals
Bookstore
Textbooks
Rotunda

Sudoku

	9					7		
			7	2		4	5	
			5		8	1		3
1		7					3	
			1					8
9	3			4	7			
	4					8		2
7		2	4	6	8	5		3
5	8	9	3	7		6		1

Letter From the President of SGA

Community College of Philadelphia emphasizes civic engagement and offers its students multiple leadership opportunities, and hundreds of student-led clubs! At least, this is what was advertised to new students on enrollment day. Unfortunately, after serving as President-Elect of the Student Government for the past five months, I can say that not only are these claims exaggerated, but the growth of campus culture has been stunted by bureaucratic administrators who prioritize enforcement of arbitrary policies & procedures. A more accurate description of CCP would go like this; CCP is home to civic engagement opportunities for students willing to parrot the administration's left-leaning political agenda and when students' appearances validate the school's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Many leadership opportunities exist to provide students with awards and resume fillers that seem to inflate egos and mislead four-year institutions. Lastly, hundreds of student-led clubs exist only on a spreadsheet that is locked away in the Director of Student Engagement's office for safekeeping.

"We are a two-year institution" and "Students do not take initiative" are a few excuses administrators seem to rattle off whenever challenged but my experience in reactivating the chess club and in campaigning for my position in student government has led me to a different conclusion. Students are excited to get involved. The diversity and resilience of our student body can lead to a rich campus culture and an array of student organizations that would ultimately lead to a vibrant and civically engaged student body. However, the policies & procedures that regulate campus life suppress students while the administrators and faculty that are supposed to support students act more like cops.

Issues in student life became apparent as soon as I decided to run to become Student Government President. The election was "hush-hush". Many were unaware that an election was even going to take place. I was fortunate to be scrolling on Pride Portal, the college's event planning software, when I saw an SGA election post. Furthermore, while campaigning we were not allowed to have any "substance", or make any promises, on our flyers. We were supposed to market ourselves with a slogan and free food. Sadly, this was just the tip of the iceberg.

After winning I was excited to get to work but that excitement was greeted with a reluctance to share the SGA constitution and contracts by the Director of Student Engagement. After a few "hostile" emails, our faculty advisor provided access to the documents. The student government then met with the Director of Student Engagement who told us that the student government was "dormant" over the summer. This had me questioning how we were going to get anything done. How could we create an agenda or draft legislation if we had to wait for the busy school year to start? Most of us disregarded that statement and soon after we decided it was a wise idea to create an event planning position in SGA, but our faculty advisor "advised" us not to. These issues led me to question the purpose of student government, but my hope persisted. We turned our attention to constitutional reform and the finances of the SGA. Our current constitution delegates SGA the power to distribute funds, specifically \$9,000, to clubs every year. To our astonishment, this power seemed to be usurped by administrators. It appeared the money was not being distributed by the student government or even given to clubs. The Director of Student Engagement later confirmed that

Dear Student Body,

money not spent gets recycled back into the institution but also added the money goes towards things we need, like carpets! After scouring over the school budget we found SGA was allocated an additional \$25,000 under "Student Government," and \$42,000 under "SGA Special Events".

Over the summer, a handful of students and I worked to rewrite the constitution of SGA to enable students reasonable access to their funds. We also asked the Dean of Students, the Assistant Dean of Students, the Director of Student Engagement, and our faculty advisor where the 42,000 dollars is and have not received an answer. Our faculty advisor explained his background as an English teacher makes him no use pertaining to budgetary concerns. I respect honesty but the faculty advisor contract states that the faculty advisor must handle budgetary concerns. We have even asked the Assistant Vice President of Budgets and Business Services and the President of the college who have then redirected us to the Dean of Students. We are looking forward to a meeting with the Assistant Vice President, the Dean of Students, the Assistant Dean of Students, and the Director of Student Life to finally get to the bottom of our budgetary concerns. If I am the Oppenheimer of emails I expect this meeting to resemble the Manhattan Project with the result of bombs of financial knowledge being dropped on the student body.

All of these issues tempted me to become sour towards CCP but inspiration from the potential of the students to form a rich community catalyzed the development of a plan to empower students instead. First, we must demand transparency surrounding the SGA budget and reform SGA to ensure SGA and college officials are held accountable to the greater student body. In our reforms, we must ensure SGA can manage its budget. It must also be made easier for students to form clubs. These ideas strengthened my resolve that a rewrite of the SGA constitution, which we plan to solicit greater insight from students as they return for the fall semester, is necessary.

Unfortunately, in all of this, we have been stonewalled by the Department of Student Life, or as some call the Department of Student Death (some as in me). Our faculty advisor who seems to be the defacto SGA President, dictating what SGA does and does not do through his "advice," has "recused" himself of any talks of constitutional change. Meanwhile, the Director of Student Engagement seems to be the unelected SGA treasurer serving a life term deciding who receives what money.

Despite a discouraging response from some members of the administration & faculty, we will succeed in changing the constitution of SGA and in doing so ensure that student representatives and college officials are held accountable to the greater student body. Next, we expect to learn where our money is and secure funding for all student clubs. Our bigger goals consist of getting a student a voting seat on the board of Trustees and securing all students free SEPTA trans-passes.

Those who would rather SGA function as a puppet government rely on secrecy, confusion, coercion, and division, all of which are failing to slow our momentum. If you are interested in making a difference, please know that a formal title is NOT REQUIRED. We will democratize the student government, force administrative transparency, support clubs with funding, secure free SEPTA Trans-Passes, and get a student a voting seat on the Board of Trustees only if the student body unites.

I am your president not the puppet of the administration and faculty, but my ability to incite change is dependent on your support. Always remember that together our opinions are valuable, and our voices matter but divided we can do NOTHING.

Letter From the Editor: No Lackadaisical Press for SGA Faculty Advisor

M.P. Hassel
September 4, 2024

Our elected student officers in Student Government Association (SGA) have been very active over the summer terms. To arrange a meeting about an article on SGA activities for the upcoming semester, I contacted Dr. Jeffrey Markovitz, the faculty advisor for SGA, but he declined to comment on SGA affairs. In response to my asking why he was avoiding an interview on the club he is advising, Dr. Markovitz wrote “Off the record: I do not believe previous reporting on the subject has been ethical and fair.”

This response is emblematic of the patronizing tone administrators and certain faculty have taken with members of Student Government Association and Student Vanguard News.

The “off the record” comment is a veiled threat. Dr. Markovitz, a self-proclaimed former journalist, likely knows very well the rules of the phrase. According to an article by Poynter, “A source should ask a reporter first if something can be off the record. Then the reporter can agree or refuse. The source then can decide whether or not they want to share that information.” I firmly believe in my ability and right to report on injustice at CCP, from abuse of power to laziness.

The reporting Dr. Markovitz did not approve of was in a SGA election article, in which several former officers were left off the ballot because they simply did not know about it. In one case, Thomas Haley, a member of SGA the year prior, lost in a write-in

campaign to Frank Scales, the only presidential candidate on the ballot and now the current president-elect of SGA. I asked Dr. Markovitz how this situation came to be, and, although he did not want any blame to fall on himself or his colleagues, I did quote his concession: Professor Jeffrey Markovitz, the faculty advisor for SGA says he could “take responsibility for the lack of foresight,” noting that he gives the members freedom in responsibility, “I just assumed that those officers would have known already or [seen] the email.”

I repudiate Dr. Markovitz’s conflation of “ethical and fair” reporting with his utter agreement. My reporting did not represent all of Dr. Markovitz’s opinions on the previous matter, nor could it have; I am a reporter for students at CCP, not his biographer.

Achieving fairness is incredibly challenging without open communication.

Dr. Markovitz has declined transparency on SGA before. In our previous interview, he declined to comment when asked whether the former SGA President was indeed enrolled at Drexel University. Instead, recommending students should work around the president’s “TBA” office hours and email him directly to reach him. That did not work.

I must note that I apologized if my previous coverage had not met his expectations and expressed a desire to discuss his views on ethical writing in a future interview. Dr. Markovitz is a published author and – if you have taken a class of his you would likely agree – a great English teacher. As editor of *The Independent*, I acclaim contribution of

all kinds, including a letter to me, the editor, addressing concerns with SGA, my reporting, or the like. I would surely publish and share with my classmates a viewpoint from an SGA advisor.

Still, my worry remains that his rejection of further interviews and direct negation of my reporting is an attempt at subjugation and subversion. SGA President-Elect Frank Scales has lamented on the advisership Dr. Markovitz has offered over the summer, saying “he’s very good at what he does, unfortunately what he does is suppress students’ voices.”

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Course Cancelled? Here's What to Do

D. Campbell
September 3, 2024

If a class you were registered for was cancelled because of low enrollment or tuition services, you still have time to sign up for a new class. Check your registration status in the MyCCP portal under Student Services and then Enrollment Services. Click on the bullet point link, Search for Courses/ Register Online to register for a new class. Click on Register. Select the Fall term. Select whether you want a 15-, 10-, or 7-week course. Type in the subject and course number then search. Or you could select the tab Enter CRNs which is the Course Reference Number.

Select the class you want that still has seats available. By clicking the link to the course, you can view who the instructor is, the campus and building the classroom is in, when the class

meets, if it is online under the Instructor/ Meeting Times. You may also want to check the Course Description, Restrictions, and Corequisites tabs.

To view what classes are necessary for you, go to the MyCCP portal under Student Services and scroll down to Important Links and click on My Degree Path/Degree Audit. Then click the button that says My Degree Path half-way down the page. The subjects highlighted in red with an empty box are classes that will need to be taken to graduate. The classes in light blue with a squiggly line are the classes you are currently enrolled in. The classes in yellow with a green checkmark beside them are completed classes. You can go to your course director and ask for a substitution of another class to fill a requirement if it is similar.

If you have more questions, visit an Academic Advisor, Counselor, or your Curriculum Coordinator. You want an Academic Advisor if you are a returning CCP student in good standing. You should go to Counseling if you are a new or transfer student. If you were (or still are) on academic probation, Counseling is the place to go. You can email your teachers to figure out who your Curriculum Coordinator is.

Across	1) PSYC	2) CATC	3) MATH	4) HISIT	5) CIS	6) GEOG	7) GENED	8) WEST	9) ENGL
Down	Down	Down	Down	Down	Down	Down	Down	Down	Down