

SGA'S STRUGGLE UNDER STUDENT LIFE DEPT.

M.P. HASSEL

The Student Government Association (SGA) at the Community College of Philadelphia (CCP) made an attempt to provide snacks at a student gathering and continue to push for a more streamlined recognition and funding processes for student clubs — fights that administrative control has slowed and stifled.

Every enrolled student at CCP pays a \$4 per credit General College Fee, which funds student publications, athletics, and clubs. The total amount collected from this fee for this school year is approximately \$1,006,000.

According to the SGA constitution, "No club or organization can be formed and funded by Student Life without the sanction of the SGA," but the process has been marred by administrative delays and bureaucratic obstacles. However, only \$9,000 of that goes directly to SGA for distribution to student clubs, while a significant portion of the funds — \$801,000 — still goes to pay administrators in the Student Life Department, including Jenavia Weaver, Ida Swindell, Emily Bien-

Aime, and Dionne Easton among others.

Let's get nerdy for one second. The Student Activities budget, which at other school like Drexel and Temple is meant entirely for student clubs, publications, athletics and all the events, at CCP largely covers the salaries of a certain eleven or so administrators. The student activities, athletics & commencement budget this year had to be supplemented with an extra \$490,000 "Transfer from College Reserves," a rainy-day fund that, per budgetary administrators, will run out.

On September 19, Saad Fazloon, President of the Chess Club, recently raised the issue of the nonexistent club activation process directly to CCP Provost Dr. Alycia Marshall. John Politis is stepping down as Chess Club faculty advisor because he is unwilling to jump through all the hoops of faculty advising. As a result, the dean of students told the faculty advisor that SGA needs a new process for club funding before the next Board of Trustees meeting on October 10.

Great, we see the chain of command working to clear out the issue, so the school governance board does not have to see it.

SGA President Scales announced the formation of an ad-hoc committee to streamline the club registration process, opening the door for more student involvement.

Dr. Jeffrey Markovitz, SGA's Faculty Advisor, proposed using Canvas—the online platform students already use for coursework—to guide students through club activation, leadership training, and funding requests. Dr. Markovitz, also the co-advisor for the creative writing club and English teacher, likely meant to use a familiar platform.

Now up a link on the chain of command, Assistant Dean of Students Richard Kopp irreverently stated that all student club registration and funding requests will be managed through the Pride Portal, the platform used exclusively by the Student Life Department. "There may be some benefit to using Canvas for certain components," Kopp wrote, "but most (if not all) of the process can be centralized within the Pride Portal."

Faculty advisor and administrative advisor both shared their contradictory solutions with SGA's leaders. Scales with SGA focused

on their independent work in the ad-hoc committee.

Kopp then announced Student Life's finalized solution in an email: "Our team has come up with a revised draft of the current process; we would like to get input from the discussions your ad-hoc committee has had, incorporate any necessary adjustments, and ideally 'go live' with a new process within the next two weeks." The team includes Dean Kopp, Jenavia Weaver, Emily Bien-Aime, and Dionne Easton. The approach feels of a negotiation. The pitch is the same unrevised agenda with minimal compromise or input from students.

The week of Monday, October 1 revealed the college's convoluted process for allocating funding to any, even minor, student request. SGA leadership, including President Francis Scales and 2nd Vice President Jaritsa Hernandez-Orsini, organized a casual student gathering on Thursday in the Learning Commons, next to Saxby's.

Scales' and Hernandez-Orsini's plan was to provide snacks, typically a nice addition to student events. Snacks are always available at events put on by administrators. For students though, securing those snacks turned into a gauntlet of approval from these administrators before

the gathering.

Taking matters into his own hands, Abdul approached Canteen in the cafeteria of the Pavilion Building on the day of the event. Canteen staff agreed to provide snacks but needed approval from an administrator or advisor. Al-Hourani then sought help from Associate Dean Richard Kopp. What followed was an exchange that left him feeling frustrated and demeaned. According to Al-Hourani, Kopp furiously questioned whether they had followed Student Life event planning protocols and why the gathering was not listed on the Pride Portal.

"For the record," Al-Hourani remarked in a follow-up email to Kopp and, one more up the chain, Dean of Students Brad Kovaleski after the event, "I did not 'fail to answer' Richard Kopp's questions. [He] interrogated me, which made me feel uncomfortable. He needs to understand how to talk to people rather than demeaning them. This is why no one wants to be a part of student life."

"He wasn't able to answer any of my questions satisfactorily." Dean Kopp defended his actions in an email to Scales, "I didn't say that I wouldn't approve of your catering request—I asked you to explain the rationale."

Unfortunate for SGA, Kopp could not accept the delegation of this request for snacks and Scales, between classes, was not

able to meet with Kopp, who was only free that day "until 2pm." While the student gathering was put on by student leaders, no funding from the Student Life Administration was provided for the event. "It is unfortunate that you will not allow us to use student government funds for a student government event." Scales wrote in his response "We are just asking for snacks."

The struggle to secure snacks reflects larger issues between the SGA and the administration over control and hoarding of funding for student activities. While SGA leaders are pushing for streamlined processes for recognizing clubs and distributing funds, the administration has imposed strict protocols that often delay or stifle student initiatives. Beyond snacks approval or club leadership training on Pride Portal, the Student Life Administrators create a culture of threatening and diminishing the autonomy of student governance and their basic functions outlined in their constitution. ☀

GOT A PROBLEM?

TELL ME ABOUT IT.

Write a letter to the editor:
mhassel1@student.ccp.edu

RAINY DAYS - AVA HAMPTON

It's on rainy days like this
Where I lose my mind a little.

I am transported back to my childhood,
and am transformed into this beastly form.

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EDITORIAL BOARD

The Independent invites any student writer to our teatime on Mondays. Meet fellow writers and get involved with a functioning, student-run newspaper. Tea, hot chocolate, and Erich's shortbread cookies will be available. Journalists and creatives of all kinds welcome.

THE STURN SHORTBREAD RECIPE

ERICH STURN

Shortbread cookies originated in Scotland during the 12th Century and were originally made from leftover bread, which was eventually swapped with butter. Shortbread cookies should be a light golden brown on top with a slightly darker bottom and edges. The cookies will be crumbly, buttery, and the perfect pairing for some coffee or tea. They're a holiday staple.

1. Take 10tbsp unsalted butter (142g) and let it get to room temperature. If you use salted butter, don't add any kosher salt during step 3.
2. Add 1/2 tsp of vanilla extract and beat the vanilla and butter until it's creamed.
3. Add 1/2 cup powdered sugar and 1/2 tsp kosher salt, mix until incorporated.
4. Add 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour (180g) 1/2 cup at a time, beating on low, mix until combined. If your dough looks really crumbly and won't come together, you can add 1/2 tsp of water or milk to the dough and keep mixing. Do this until the dough forms a thick, sticky mass.
5. Shape the dough into a rectangle, wrap it in plastic wrap, put it in the fridge for about two hours.
6. Preheat oven to 350F. Cut the dough with a sharp knife, about 1/2 inch in thickness.
7. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone mat and place the cookies about 1 inch apart.
8. Bake for about 12 minutes. Rotate the baking sheet halfway through. The cookies will be done baking when you see them starting to change color on the bottom. If you want them extra crispy, wait until the edges start to turn golden brown. Once the cookies are out of the oven, move them to the wire rack immediately. Let them cool for at least 15 minutes before eating.

Note to the reader: Between you, me, and the wall, the trick to great shortbread cookies is browning the butter.

To make browned butter, add about 1 tbsp (14 grams) of butter during step 1 above. Put the butter in a saucepan and cook it on medium heat, stirring constantly. After a few minutes of stirring, you'll see the butter starting to foam. Keep stirring. Once you start to notice little golden-brown flakes mixed with the butter, immediately remove the saucepan and pour the butter into a bowl.

Butter will go from browned to burned in about a minute. If you burn the butter, it will taste incredibly bitter. If you brown the butter, it will give off a rich, nutty aroma, and it becomes much more flavorful. What you're doing by browning butter is evaporating some of the water, and you'll wind up with butter that has a slight caramel or toffee flavor. After browning the butter, let it cool for about 30 minutes before moving it to the fridge for another 30 minutes. Once the browned butter has solidified again, weigh it to ensure you're at or close to 142g. If you need to add more butter, it's okay to use non-brown butter at this point, you'll still get the flavor profile of the browned butter. 

SGA: SURVEY OF STUDENT CONCERNS

Student Government wants to know all about the best and worst parts of your student experience. Your feedback will tell us how together we can improve life **for all students**. Give us your honest opinion. Let's make a change!



SGA will hold a special election for three senator positions.

Contact 2nd VP Jaritsa Hernandez-Orisini for ballot information:

jherna84@student.ccp.edu

THE IDEA OF HAJILE - AVA HAMPTON

I

She was in her bed when she thought of him again. The same ideations came to her, just as safe and sweet as before. Comforting feelings poured over her, and the warm honey blanket of her imagination soothed the other reality.

As she picked her wounds, she thought about him touching her, smiling at her, speaking softly to her. Gently. He was a gentleman, a gentle man - such a rare commodity. One she hadn't known very much at all. She thought about the abrasiveness that male hands could possess, the vitriolic forms that those hands can take shape as. How hard these shapes can claw at someone... She picked harder. The warm honey came to a boil inside of her.

His face appeared again. His smile beamed and the light reflected onto her closed eyes. The hum of his voice vibrated in her mind and throughout her body, and again she was cool stone. Or at least she pretended - for the moment - that she was.

She couldn't wait to see him. She *could not wait* to see him. There must be something she could do to accelerate the process, couldn't there? She grew more desperate as each thought progressed.

She knew where he lived. She knew where he went to school, of course. Could there be a moment in her day when she could swing by? Maybe some god would allow them to bump into each other. Maybe there would be - following the confusion of the crash - a remembrance between them. What would she say to him once she saw him? A list of responses floated to her:

'Oh my god! I haven't seen you in forever, how have you been? You look so good, you've been taking care of yourself I see.'

'Oh my gosh, forgive me! I'm so clumsy. Oh my god... Is that you, Hajile?'

Hajile.

His name rolled off her tongue and she bit her bottom lip at its exit. The name felt like a kiss on her mouth, a gasp for air. Indulgent. All encompassing. It left her wanting more, that is, if this feeling could be qualified as mere desire.

Something must be done to remedy this. Maybe she could take matters into her own hands.  4

- POETRY AND PROSE -

RAINY DAYS - AVA HAMPTON

It's on rainy days like this
Where I lose my mind a little.
I am transported back to my childhood,
and am transformed into this beastly form.

The raindrops pitter patter on my windowsill.
The clouds move in a sheet of grey.
I am the host of this pity party
And all of my guests are indefinitely delayed.

I am alone once more
And my sobs echo off these bare walls.
My teardrops hit the floor
And the rain on my window mimics its fall.

I am a continuous sheet of grey
On days like this.
The remnants of this time flows from my sole windows
And I wait to evaporate. 

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DUALITY - KALLI RIVERA

i do think i am beautiful. there are times where i see myself as beautiful as a flower i have seen on the side of the road; so striking: this form of atoms combining into a being placed in a room. so striking to see something with a beating heart amongst this cluster of things.



she needs that reminder. the allowance of each petal bursting onwards instead of curling in. sometimes she forgets about these petals entirely; and it is hard to remind her of the pink buds that can blossom if only she opened her eyes.

there is a duality of the child and the mother. the blossoming and the gentle whispers, pots of soil, nutrients spoon-fed until she feels herself again. there is both inside of me, never not there. to feed the child until she can come out again and take whole. to allow the mother to sit on the sidelines and watch, and go 'i feel proud.'

this writing is like the child and the mother, the fingers playfully tap as the mother tells her to write the things she needs to remember. the intrinsic balance, ever dancing.

i write and i write and i write and i write. until i am full. until i believe.



and there are times where i have to take care of myself as gentle as a flower; i do not focus on every petal, or even see every petal. i have to strain its roots, hold it by the stem, give it water and nutrients and gently caress it into soil and whisper at the darkest hours 'grow.' sometimes,

it is a human urge to want only the sun to shine, for days of energy and blossoming, to block out any fear of dark, any thoughts that creep in. humans are so feeling: we feel the bad and we are so quick to place 'this is bad.'

we are slower to place these things as a duality, a second half to the whole circle, one being that flows equally as the "good" or the sun shining. we are quicker to turn away once the moon rises; quicker to check the weather app and pray it is a shining day tomorrow. quicker to place ourselves on the one side of the circle and look forward to when we get to the other instead of accepting where we are in the moment.

this mess/



this beauty.

duality is hard, but it is unstoppable. it is fundamental. the light and dark, moon and sun, walk and sit, words and fight. there is heart in this equilibrium. it is never opposite. it makes up every fiber of this earth. it is not subjective, it is a force that flows through hand and soul, and it is beautiful and breathing. to look in the mirror and fully accept. to see a flower soaked in rain, and go 'it is her feeding day.' to be human is full; to be human is to feel, without constraints of good or bad, light or darkness. but as wholeness. ☺



SWEET HONEY MOLASSES - PAULINA REYES

Sweet honey molasses drip down her back in the warm sun

Her skin and eyes a breath of fresh air

Newness that made my world center close to her laughter. Sweet and dry
like dates falling from palms. Jumping a popping hubba bubba bubble
gum with her tongue

Giggling freely, jumping below the willow tree. You added jasmine to our
hair. Thinking of what women we would be.

Tired, and shadowed.

Or A bad girl who starts a revolution.

But this summer we daydream and count fireflies or hummingbirds.

She heats the pot of icy water

Oolong steam with brown sugar and dirty dusty hands sticky sweet of tangerines

Deep into the summer month along Avenue 48 we walked along the
highway for frozen strawberries with cream. The lingering smell of road-
kill and sweat simmers in our breathy air.

Her ankles dust off mosquito bites and sand.

I rub the lime with salt along your itchy rash.

Our eyes drift between being sober and blissful never-ending highs
My hot Cheetos and your red nails matched, and we kept on with red in
our heads as the sun toasted us sweet honey molasses.

Rotting oranges and dates scatter along the dirt, tart, and rotting,
flies waspy

Orange blossoms full bloom

Your eyes

A honey dripping sweet molasses.

Flashes of red because we were angry for being stuck.

Or heat exhaustion

Unable to move or run.

Flashes of red are all we see as we stare into the sun.

Blindly.

Hoping to become a shell.

An emptiness of never needing and dreaming again. To slowly lose a
light in the dark, on a burning everlasting day, we are falling.

A fallen rotting date up in the palm tree. ●●

THE INTERNET - E.L.K. NOSZKA

I'm freer here but

Lithium-fueled blue fire
Burns my eyes and wings

●●

DABED - AMBROSE GRIS

Struggle to leave bed

Don't want to get up and start
'Cus I don't wanna

●●

UNWIND TO REWIND - ARIANA SANDERSON

We're at week 6 of the school semester, truly into the full swing of things. It's important to remember that we all need to take a step back and smell the roses. It's easier to power through when you know what or who you're powering through for, but it's also imperative to stop and smell the roses. Studying is good but it becomes more productive when short breaks, between 5 to 60 minutes are taken in the middle.

You could breathe deeply. You close your computer screen and take some steps back from your workstation. You stand, your back to the wall, and close your eyes. You lightly shake out your body, rolling your neck, your shoulders, you breathe deeply from your chest, then let it out. You shake one leg at a time, and your knees, and your ankles. You lean again, back against the wall, and take a slow deep breath, imagining that the air you take in is filling you up, from your stomach, your chest, your arms, your head... then you hold for 8 seconds. Once your seconds are up, you let it out slowly. Count to 7. Breathe in through your nose for four seconds, hold it for seven seconds, and let it out through your mouth in eight. Be careful. This specific breathing technique can relax the mind so well it can lead to sleep. You open your eyes and start fresh, turning on your computer to go back to work. ●●