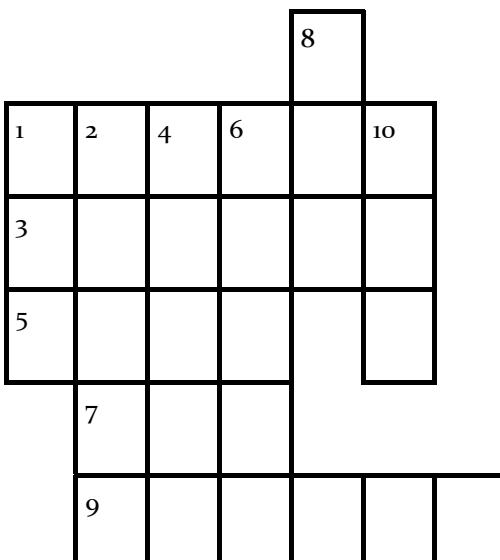


spring semester looms. This minority faction of the SGA Executive Board must consider what policies they stand for. Have they not learned bootlicking keeps beggars on the ground?

The college is perfectly fine with selectively enforcing its own rules, to the great disadvantage of students.

TheIndependentNews.com
for more articles and public comments

IndependentPhiladelphia725@gmail.com



Published January 9, 2025
mhassel1@student.ccp.edu

E Z O O N S
D I G
M E A N
S P R I N G
H O B B E S
T

The Independent

PHILADELPHIA'S COLLEGE STUDENT NEWS

Vol. II — Iss. 1 Wednesday, January 15, 2025 Philadelphia, PA

STUDENT ON BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Students delivered public comments to college administrators and trustees during the January 9 Board of Trustees meeting.

In total, 15 students made public comments. The board then appointed Student Government Association President Frank Scales as a non-voting, ex-officio student trustee. Scales will be able to attend Board of Trustees meetings, as he already has been for several months, and not be able to vote on official business.

Community College of Philadelphia's Board of Trustees holds monthly meetings in M2-1 at 2:30pm. The Board of Trustees are often senior level executives of Philadelphia appointed directly by the mayor to launder their corporate reputation through their influence of public education.

The Sunshine Act "requires that meetings have prior notice, and that the public can attend, participate, and comment before an agency takes that official action," according to PA Office of Open Records. To avoid deliberating in front of students and faculty, trustees and college administrators held an executive session prior to the meeting while students gathered in the hall. The session lasted 50 minutes and students were allowed in at around 3:20pm. After the meeting, trustees and administrators again held another executive session for about an hour.

CCP Students and SGA Host the First Winter Formal
Paulina Reyes

Page 2

Excerpts of Student Public Comments

Page 4

SGA Faculty Advisor Appoints Recording Secretary in
Breach of Constitution

Page 6

M.P. Hassel

CCP Students and SGA Host the First Winter Formal

PAULINA REYES

Despite constant dismissing, reluctance and zero support from most administration, the SGA and students successfully planned and organized the Winter Formal of 2024. The first ever winter formal at Community College of Philadelphia. This was important as Francis Scales and Jaritsa Hernandez-Orsini wanted to create something for students to come together and have fun! The SGA team including Shyann Davis, Julieanne Meas, Jaritsa Hernandez-Orsini, and Maria Baez only had a month to plan, with busy school schedules, finals week and the end of semester creeping by, the women had to act quick on planning, decorating, and budgeting how much would be needed to get this party started. Maria Baez, treasurer of SGA, worked to budget the event, Jules calculated the decorations list, and Jaritsa finalized it with contributions from Shayann Davis, senator at large at Main Campus. Everyone worked together despite the administration's attitude being "good luck." They let the team of students take charge of the event. With such little time, responsibili-

ties of their educational endeavors, work, and personal life, SGA and the students made it happen, although with little support from their faculty advisor Jeffrey Markovitz.

"We always must keep pushing for help even when we need more, they would try to ignore us, but we continued to apply pressure," said Jaritsa Hernandez-Orsini.

The turnout was so good, they ran out food facing some drawbacks at the event, even needing more tables. Students had to be mindful of how many meatballs they put on their plate; perhaps if administration and SGA advisor Jeffrey Markovitz were more proactive, this would not have been a problem. Even so, Julieanne Meas, Ivy Yim, and Shayanne Davis were instrumental in decorating the entire event, turning the Sandra Klein Cube into a festive winter wonderland with fake snow and candle lanterns on each table with white flowers. Ivy Yim went outside and collected rocks to add to the flower arrangements. Not only did this teamwork go above expectations, but they were resourceful

and worked as a team, even though it was 30 degrees outside with harsh rain; they trudged their way in their winter formal dresses and of course, finals anxiety...

Nothing stops CCP students when they put their mind to something. I have learned students do the best they can to come together, plan and manage an event that students need and want. There is nothing stopping students from making a place for themselves on our campus. It was wonderful to see students come together, dance and have an enjoyable time. Francis Scales-Frails hosted the entire event with a mic in his hands. Students were dancing the cupid shuffle, with the constant Spotify playlist queue lists changing where students could add their favorite songs to dance on the dance floor. It got to the point where students were missing a couple of their favorite hits from so many songs! It was epic. Even if the food ran out, the laughter and fun went on till it struck 9pm and Jenevia Weaver and students cleaned swiftly and ended the night with a memory of a great time and of course, beautiful fashionable students, ready to strut the dance floor and feel good that they made it through this semester. It is good for students to have events to celebrate their accomplishments and

all our community at our college campus. With more proactivity from administration, SGA and students will have an easier time planning these momentous events for the great students that attend our college.



When I asked Frank Scales what he thought of it all, he told me, "It was great to see the team come together and get something done! Considering that was the first time the Student Government Association has done something so involved it makes me more optimistic about what is possible. I was disappointed that our Faculty Advisor Jeffrey Markovitz refused to order the amount of food we knew we needed or set up the number of tables we requested to be set up. He underestimated what was possible, and as usual did not show up at the event."

Published December 19, 2025
preyes11@student.ccp.edu

Student Public Comments at the Jan. 9 Board of Trustees Meeting

SHYANN DAVIS — *Student Body Main-Campus Senator:*

Hello everyone, my name is Shyann Davis and I am in my last semester at CCP. I am also currently working my last week at a job I really enjoy because I was forced to schedule 2 out of 4 of my classes very recently. Both of those classes were ELEC 124 and BMET 202.

I spoke and worked with the director of my department to get those classes running for the Spring and thankfully they are. But because I had to wait until about 2-4 weeks ago to register, I got really terribly timed classes that no longer fit with my schedule at work.

Now, I can no longer work there effectively to earn a living. My schedule went from 3 8-hour shifts a semester to 1 4-hour shift. Changing my monthly income for the semester from a potential \$1700 a month to only \$515 a month. And both of those numbers include my monthly stipend from Catto.

I encourage you all to please be a little more transparent with your students. I know many students who expect classes to run during certain semesters because that is how it was shown and now they are stuck waiting for that class because it isn't running.

KATHERINE SHAMOUT — *Chairperson of Media Committee:*

I love the work I do for SGA and look forward to doing it all semester. This work includes managing all the social media accounts to get students free SEPTA passes, a student on the board of trustees, and holding the Department of Student Life accountable. Also, I'm happy I helped plan the Winter Formal.

Unfortunately, neither the faculty advisors, Jeff Markovitz nor Je-navia Weaver, has acknowledged my existence. They make me feel invisible. They even refused to print business cards for me while they printed them for the rest of the team. These advisors have done this to Frank, Jar, and anyone who speaks up. Now, the advisors are refusing to treat me as part of the team.

FRANCIS SCALES — *Student Body President:*

During my presidency I have witnessed why student government has been silent in the past and didn't do much. It is not because students are not capable or willing to manage student life. It is because the administration does not want students to manage student life. The Faculty Advisor for Student Government, appointed by the administration, has not been to one SGA event. The SGA has already conducted a no-confidence vote to oust the current faculty advisor. The vote passed with a 7 – 1 majority but was ignored by the administration. We reached out to Dr. Marshall and the response we received, that is in front of you, was deflating.

I come here not opposed to the existence of a hierarchy, a board of trustees, or an administration. But in a college, the Board of Trustees, and administration must serve the student body, which right now my constituents feel it is not. There is a plethora of policies we must fix, and the culture must change, but I am confident with the Boards help it can be done very quickly. But until that day comes, with Student Government being ignored and silenced by many, I see that it may be necessary that the students form an independent union to further their interests.

ENISA NAZAJ — *Writer for The Independent:*

I live on the outskirts of Philadelphia and my journey from my house to CCP lasts more than one hour. I take the SEPTA Regional Rail every weekday and pay a monthly fare of \$204.

I want to highlight that SEPTA offers University Pass Programs for Colleges and Universities, namely the ability to purchase deeply discounted All-Access Passes for students. This program is called UPass, and through it participants receive up to an 80% discount on their SEPTA passes on every region of Philadelphia. However, according to SEPTA Fare Info, this program is initiated by colleges and universities and cannot be purchased by individual students. So, only the school can make an application for a Key Advantage UPass and enable its students this program.

CCP is not simply an institution where one can receive a degree; it is a community of people with values, ambitions and goals, an association of students and faculty immersed with diversity. The cost of transportation ought not interfere with how students perform in their collegiate life!

SGA Faculty Advisor Appoints Recording Secretary in Breach of Constitution

M.P. HASSEL

Disputes within the Student Government Association (SGA) at the Community College of Philadelphia (CCP) have escalated into what can only be described as a crisis of legitimacy. Faculty Advisor Jeffrey Markovitz, already embattled following a 7-1 No-Confidence vote in November, breached constitutional procedures during winter break to unilaterally appoint Brayan Orozco as Recording Secretary. The move, announced late on Friday, December 29, has drawn sharp criticism from SGA President Frank Scales and 2nd Vice President Jaritsa Hernandez-Orsini, who accuse Markovitz of undermining democratic processes and favoring personal connections.

In his email announcing the appointment, Markovitz stated, "Brayan was interviewed by officers then vetted by myself. Congratulations Brayan; I look forward to working with you in the spring!" But SGA leaders point out that this supposed "vetting" process was neither transparent nor democratic. As SGA President Scales highlighted in an email to College President Dr. Donald Generals,

"Dr. Markovitz unilaterally appointed his own candidate. No vote was held."

2nd Vice President Hernandez-Orsini expressed outrage at the lack of communication and transparency, stating, "I did not even know that Brayan was nominated." Hernandez-Orsini pointed out that the Executive Board had already collectively agreed to fill the Recording Secretary position at the start of the spring semester. Instead, Markovitz sprung his decision upon them during winter break, late on a Friday, leaving no opportunity for deliberation or a vote.

The SGA Constitution clearly states that appointees must be approved by all SGA officials and presented during a General Assembly meeting for discussion. Markovitz contradicted his own November 21 guidance, in which he wrote in an email: "Please remember that no student can serve in the SGA until they are affirmed by all current officials and vetted by the Faculty Advisor. Any appointment not following this protocol will not be honored by the college."

"It is not wisdom, but authority that makes a law."

— Thomas Hobbes

Adding fuel to the fire, Brayan Orozco had pre-existing ties to Markovitz as one of two regular members of the Creative Writing Club, which held regular meetings during the Fall semester. Orozco also holds personal relationships with members of SGA, 1st Vice President Angie Orozco-Rasique and Treasurer Maria Baez, who purportedly conducted interviews without broader Executive Board involvement. These connections have sparked accusations of favoritism, further undermining the legitimacy of the appointment.

The administration has refused to act in response to the November No-Confidence vote, which passed with an overwhelming 7-1 margin and signaled widespread dissatisfaction with Markovitz's leadership as Faculty Advisor.

The faculty advisor's decision to sidestep established procedures is an affront to the authority of student leaders, but it is typified of administrators and those who work closely with the Department of Student Life, which oversees all clubs and organizations. SGA has been unproductive for years, at least partly due to years of Depart-

ment of Student Life's bureaucratic malaise.

It's difficult to see this move as anything other than a deliberate bypassing of the rules designed to ensure fairness and accountability. Do not be mistaken; this is business as usual. The college's selective enforcement of rules is emblematic of a broader pattern of patronizing student organizations and disregarding their autonomy.

Now that passionate student leaders in SGA want to make change and represent student needs, will every action be denied or disregarded? Administrators' real intentions for handling SGA is to mimic the 'deny, defend, depose' tactics like UnitedHealth and stop any change from occurring that makes college administrators uncomfortable.

A few misguided members continue to abet an unpopular faculty advisor and an administration content to disregard their own student-led governance. Whether former ideologies of student representation have been turned into administrative saviorism, or they are desirous of a letter of recommendation and a title on a resume, the