

**Student InterCouncil**  
**Monday, September 27, 2021**  
**Zoom Meeting**  
**5:30 pm- 7:30 pm**  
**Meeting Minutes**

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**Attendance:** Niharika Neela, Kate Wall, Jayanta Mondal, Nour Alia, Lia Olim, Logan Bliss, Mabel Giselle, Mary Fuentes, Meghan Orsak, Melissa Liu, Ruchika Mahala, Ruchira Gundlapally, Sharmeen Hamid, Zaid Soomro, Amber Chen, Angie Hayes, Cem Dede, Clayton Culp, Elia Macha, Jordan Swan, Charlie Figari, Nedra Booker, Eric Solberg, Yuliana Nunez

**1.Call to order .....Niharika Neela, SIC President**

Meeting was called to order at 5:35 PM. Niharika established the quorum and welcomed all the SIC members to the first official SIC meeting. Niharika also mentioned that the SIC requires at least 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the total number of members to attend all SIC meetings to maintain quorum. Thus, all the members should try their best to attend the meetings and if a SIC member can't attend the meeting that particular member should inform the SIC president about it. She invited Eric Solberg to advise the SIC members and provide any updates that needed to be addressed.

**2.Advisor announcements**

Mr. Eric Solberg mentioned that there weren't any particular updates which needed to be given. However, he would like to thank Nedra, Yuliana and Charlie for organizing an amazing SIC orientation and that he had heard that the brainstorming session was incredible too. Eric also mentioned that he is excited, and he would wholeheartedly support the SIC in its endeavors.

Mr. Charlie Figari didn't have any particular updates to share.

Ms. Tanedra Booker mentioned that Sonia Patel had informed her that the GSBS was currently looking for volunteers to join the community outreach program and she would be following up on it with an email which she would send to us.

**3. SIC Events..... Niharika Neela, SIC President**

**A. Fall meeting dates:** The fall meeting dates would be discussed in detail later and the meeting invites shall/have been sent to the SIC members in advance by Yuliana or Tanedra.

**B. Salutation:** The SIC salutation shall be held virtually from 5:30 PM onwards on the 13<sup>th</sup> of October. All the SIC members are required to attend the salutation event and this is a great opportunity to win prizes, meet the entire UTHealth community and also, get a debrief about all the resources that are available at UTHealth.

**C. Sports and Wellness week:** It was informed that the wellness week will be held virtually because of COVID. Also, it was mentioned that we had a successful wellness week last year and the SIC members must try to attend as much of the wellness week as possible. The Wellness week would be held from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> of November, 2021.

Niharika then requested Kate to give the SIC members a budget update and also brief the members about the budget for the prizes.

#### **4. Budget/Project Funding updates.....Kate Wall, SIC Treasurer**

Kate mentioned that there were certain changes made to the Salutation budget as the Salutation was expected to be held in-person this year. However, because of COVID variants the Salutation was moved to a virtual format. Also, it is intended to keep gift pick-up timings to the minimum. It was also planned to give about 40-50 UberEats gift cards to individuals who first pre-registered for the Salutation event. However, with the vendor that the SIC has in its system the minimum gift card amount from UberEats would have to be \$25. Thus, instead we would be having a prize of two \$200 UberEats gift cards and also an Apple watch. Also, we would be having AirPods, book-store gift cards and 14 parking passes as gifts. The plan is to have a two-week gift pick-up period from the UTHealth recreation center. In the event of people not picking up their prizes within the two-week period, we can recycle the prizes and award it to other eligible individuals who attended the event. The SIC could also try to send out UberEats gift cards online via email to the prize recipients.

Niharika asked Kate to clarify the three-month stipulation with regards to the parking passes which shall be given as gifts. Kate stated that the parking pass recipients would have a three-month stipulated time to avail of the one-month parking pass and the start date of availing the same would be without three months of receiving the parking passes. SIC would be covering 10 of the parking passes and 4 of them would be covered by Auxillary Enterprises. The book store gift cards would be covered by Auxillary enterprises too and if required, by the President's budget. Thus, the total cost that the SIC needs to cover for the Salutation would be \$1860. Niharika mentioned that the budget is lesser than last year and that bodes well as the SIC is running a slight deficit this year. Kate also mentioned that the budget looks good for this year and the SIC should be able to successfully cover all the SIC designated events.

The approximate budget of the SIC this year would be \$28,000. Niharika also mentioned that Amanda Bennett would manage to obtain \$25 UberEats gift cards and that could be gifted instead of the \$200 gift-cards too. Kate stated that it is better to stick to the prizes that has been decided for tax purposes and subsequently Niharika put the budget to vote. The motion to put the budget to vote was successfully passed and Yuliana sent out the poll. The motion received 21 votes and the budget was approved with 100 percent approving votes.

Kate mentioned that SIC could provide funding to 5 events this year through its project funding budget and that the guidelines with regards to utilizing the project funding budget was mentioned in the SIC bylaws too. The events which could apply for the project funding from SIC would require advance approval from the School's dean and from the Vice President of Auxiliary enterprises. Charlie mentioned that the issue with gift-cards were that the UTHealth students who receive a graduate research assistantship would be taxed if they are to receive gift-cards as they are considered to be employees. Also, SIC funded events could provide alcohol if the event is held in campus, subject to HOOP 009 and the events could include fundraisers. The SIC could provide \$500 in funding and the events should be organized by UTHealth approved student

organizations. The application for project funding should be sent at least two month ahead of the event date.

## **5. SIC Business.....Tanedra Booker, SIC Advisor**

Tanedra mentioned that a SIC Microsoft Teams folder would be built for the SIC members and all the members could access it from their UHealth emails. Tanedra mentioned that since Microsoft teams is the official UHealth platform, it would be best to house all the essential folders within Microsoft teams to ensure privacy. Also, a Microsoft Teams has been created for all the SIC members for document sharing and listening to any meetings' recordings.

Tanedra mentioned that the SIC members photos would be taken for the SIC website and the photo shooting sessions could only be held from Mon-Fri from 8 AM to 4 PM. Tanedra would send us an email to know our schedule and our available timings for taking the photo. The photos will be taken on the 17<sup>th</sup> floor of the UCT.

As for scheduling future SIC meetings, 17 SIC members (the majority) voted to have Mondays as the official week day for SIC meetings. The majority voted to have the meeting time scheduled from 6 PM instead of 5:30 PM onwards. A motion to vote was approved to decide on whether the future SIC meetings would be scheduled from 6 PM onwards. 22 SIC members voted to have the future SIC meetings scheduled from 6 PM onwards.

With regards to the Speaker Series, Jayanta mentioned that we plan to go virtual at least for the first few Speaker Series events in light of the COVID situation and we could put to vote if in-person or virtual speaker series is preferred by the SIC members. Jayanta mentioned that the Speaker Series would be open for all the UHealth students and faculty. Jayanta also mentioned that the broad topics for the Speaker Series that the SIC members had suggested in the brainstorming documents were:

1. Academic guidance with regards to applying for fellowship and grant applications and/or jobs
2. Talks focusing on developing leadership qualities for assuming leadership roles in academic/industry/government orgs.
3. Career development talks by industry leaders and profs focusing on tips and tricks of getting recruited.
4. Talks focusing on promoting diversity and equity in the STEM field.
5. Talks about research ethics, humanities and appropriate scientific and research conduct.

Jayanta suggested a vote for deciding if the meeting would be held quarterly, monthly or once every two months. Eric suggested forming ad-hoc committee for this pilot year and inviting speakers from the McGovern School of Ethics and Interprofessional development. Eric would be willing to help the ad-hoc committee to decide on the speakers and develop the requisite connections. Also, Eric has availability of funds which could be provided towards organizing the ad-hoc committee. Jayanta's proposal for a motion to establish the ad-hoc committee was successfully seconded and the proposal was passed with overwhelming majority of 22 out of the 23 SIC members. Thus, the ad-hoc committee was successfully established, and it was decided

that Jayanta would be chairing the ad-hoc committee. Jayanta also mentioned that individuals would be given food gift-cards for attending an entire Speaker Series meeting. Zaid suggested that we live-stream the Speaker Series event and potentially thus, have a hybrid event. Jayanta requested the SIC members to suggest speakers too.

## **6. Committee Assignments and charges.....Niharika Neela, SIC President**

Niharika mentioned the results of the committee selections and assignments and the SIC members were introduced to their committee chairs. Yuliana created the breakout rooms for the SIC members and the SIC members headed off to their individual break-out rooms for further discussion and deliberation.

## **7. Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn the SIC meeting was proposed, seconded and approved at 6:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Jayanta Mondal.

Approved 10/20/2021

