

Undergraduate Student Government

Newman Vertical Campus 3-270
55 Lexington Ave, New York, NY 10010

✉ info@usgbaruch.com

📷 @USGBARUCH



Meeting 8:

Meeting Date:	October 27, 2020	Meeting Time:	5:30PM - 9:33PM
Location:	Zoom Call	Note Taker:	Genesis Calle

Attendees:	
Tony Chen President	Briana Staten Executive Vice President
Nancy Sea Executive Treasurer	Genesis Calle Executive Secretary
Taji Sanders VP of Academic Affairs	Richard Reyes VP of Legislative Affairs
Steven Le VP of Campus Affairs	[Absent] Yam-Yu Li VP of Student Affairs
Irine Thomas Chair of Appeals	Kristina Khabarov Chair of Arts
Alison Lee Chair of Clubs and Orgs	Lesli Cuamani Chair of Finance
Cindy Chen Chair of Graphic Design	Christine Gajdos Chair of Marketing
Osvaldo Garcia Chair of Philanthropy	Laiba Hussain Chair of Public Opinion
Tomasz Horczak Representative Senator	Raphael Berdugo Representative Senator
Alex Cuanal Representative Senator	Erika Cumbe Representative Senator
Zariana Gonzalez Representative Senator	Mayer Estinville Representative Senator
Vacant Representative Senator	

Passing of the Minutes

1. Motion to pass Senate Meeting #7 minutes. Motion passes, 17-0-0

Reports

1. Elections

- a. Viewing of the video submissions. Topics that are covered include, “Who are you and a fun fact? Why do you want to be a representative senator? In this virtual environment, what are some things USG has done well and can improve on? What is one initiative/event you would like to implement?”
 - i. Polina: I want to be a representative senator because I want to be more involved in school and believe that being a part of USG will allow me to do so. There are certain changes I would like to see around the school and I believe this role will give me the platform to make those changes a reality. Fun fact about me is that I enjoy baking. In this virtual environment, one thing USG has done well is their persistence in engaging with the students through online events, and having the USG representative go live during quarantine and showcasing their skills to the student body. One thing USG can improve on is that there is not enough awareness about different opportunities at school, and perhaps they can create virtual meetings to spread the word on what is going on to the students. One initiative I would like to implement in this virtual

- community is I want to see more students being included in this community and the different positions. My leadership experience includes having been the president of UNICEF in my high school, a member of the Accounting Society, and a campus ambassador for the Pre-Law Society, so I do have experience working in clubs and I believe this would help me add value to the team.
- ii. Nisha: I am a sophomore majoring in HR management, minoring in communications, I want to be a representative senator because I believe I have what it takes to efficiently work with my team to represent the student population. I'm also passionate about completing my tasks. I'm very involved on campus in student life, and I have the eye for creativity and engagement and the strong persistence in voicing the concerns or needs of our fellow peers. Fun fact about me is that I performed an original poem for "Hamilton" on Broadway and met the cast. In this virtual environment, some things USG has done well is conducting such diverse and collaborative events online, such as the "Black Panther Discussion" and "Zoom Battle." One thing I believe USG can improve on to garner more student participation is to add a short clip of a segment of the event and post it on social media to spread the word for others who don't attend events as much. The leadership that I would bring is my communication, persistence, presentation skills, and most importantly my dedication. I am currently an FYS Peer Mentor and mentorship and social media manager for WIB, as well as being vice chair for the Arts committee last year, working on great events such as ChaosSerenity and the 48 hour film challenge. I'm currently part of the Diversity Committee as well. A virtual event that I would want to implement is a competition in which all students would create meaningful videos about their past experiences on campus and share in the event. This would help increase gratitude amongst the student body and get students excited to start school again for when we eventually reopens. Thank you.
- iii. Paola: I am an international transfer student majoring in management. Fun Fact about me is from the show, "Friends" I would consider myself to be Monica Geller. In this virtual environment, some things USG has done well is the constant posting on social media about events and resources for the students to encourage participation. I want to be a representative senator so I can have conversations with the student body, share tips and tricks with them, learn from each other, and be open to hearing their suggestions on what we can do better and advocate for them to give them the support they need throughout this virtual environment. I would share them on a blog for the Baruch community. Among my past leadership experience in my other college, my team and I worked to improve faculty life for our students and campus, and fought for the worth of our degrees. I would be honored to be the next representative senator because I love being a Baruch student and believe I can represent the community well with my leadership skills. I will end off with a quote from John DiMaggio: "A person always doing his/her best becomes a natural leader just by example," and with my support and example, I believe I can support and pursue others to achieve and establish an efficient student life. Thank you.
- iv. Matthew: I'm currently a senior majoring in International Business. I believe I would fulfill the role of representative senator because I believe I can best represent the voices of 1000 students. For the past 3 years I've been heavily involved in roles that have allowed me to be a voice for the students, being involved in athletics, with great cultural and diversity clubs on campus, T.E.A.M. Baruch, and in USG for the past 3 years, being involved in the legislative, marketing, and student affairs committees, and on the Athletics Board. I believe that USG is the face of Baruch, and especially during these times, I applaud their efforts for bringing all the aspects of our Baruch culture, including club and academic life, to our very own living rooms, or anywhere we

have been doing our remote learning from. As a final year student, it makes me sad that I can't be in person to experience all these great events with friends, but I thank USG for their effort in moving these events to online platforms for us to enjoy. If elected, I would put my whole 100% and commit to providing those events to more students and reach out to those who may face difficulties attending them, such as our fellow first year students. I would use my past knowledge with hosting events for PAWS into helping to educate the student body on staying well-nourished and in shape throughout this online environment. We know we're going to be inside for at least another year, and safety is our main priority. I want to ensure that maintaining the physical and emotional state of minds of our student body is a #1 priority and something I would like to focus on. I would also like to bring more of Baruch to our students online, helping to host more raffles to increase student engagement. As we've seen in the past, that is the core in getting students to show up and have fun. I believe we should also focus on helping out students and faculty with their issues, and improving the student-teacher relationships.

- v. Mohtisham: I am junior majoring in finance, minoring in political science. Currently, I'm a part of USG as a BOD auxiliary board member, and am also the President of the Pakistani Student Association. Fun fact about me is I love current affairs. I want to be a representative senator to represent our honorable students. In the past, I have never shied away from sharing theirs or my own opinions. I have always conveyed what the students want to USG, and vice versa, particularly now in our virtual environment. I would bring the concerns of the students to the senate. Our current USG executive board and senate have done a great job adapting to this, but there are still things we have to address. Specifically, in the matters of the proctoring system, I believe USG did not do all it could with that matter. I believe we the students are the student government and for us to not have a say in this matter and have this decision imposed on us should not be allowed. If elected, this would be one of the issues I would want to address. Second, the USG has been hosting great events, such as a "Depression Awareness" event, Voter Registration, and the efforts of this year's Homecoming committee. I would like to host a serious event, town-hall style, where our USG president, representatives, faculty, the Provost, and others would be present via a zoom meeting so our students can come to ask their pressing questions, since this is something that has not been done yet since we started this virtual environment.
- vi. Cassandra: I am majoring in entrepreneurship and minoring in psychology. I would like to be a representative senator because I like to give back to my community, and look forward to meeting new people. Fun Fact about me is I am a transfer student, spending my first year of college traveling to Staten Island from the Bronx to attend CSI. In this virtual environment, some things USG has done well is bringing people together through different activities and informing them on how to vote and important information. If elected, I would like to host more zoom activities, maybe on a weekly basis, to get more of the community together. We could have a specific "USG community day" and host game nights on Tuesdays. We should also make Baruch face masks to better represent our school. Some leadership experience I can bring is having been in my student government in middle and high school, and being involved in a program called PGC, a mentorship program which has allowed me to interact with my school community. I would love to be a part of USG and help celebrate the bearcats.

Recess starts at 5:58PM

Recess ends at 6:09 PM

2. Richard Reyes | VP of Legislative Affairs

- a. Richard: Just a little disclaimer; I am feeling a little under the weather. Today I'm going to be presenting a resolution to enact a Credit/No Credit Policy for Baruch College for the Fall 2020 semester. If this report is passed, we will be emailing this to the President and Baruch administration as well as a 37 page report that myself and Laiba have been working on which showcases students' opinions on how they're doing with respect to education and their well-being given the COVID pandemic. We've also gathered key statistics for another 22 page report.
 - i. WHEREAS, Governor Cuomo of New York State announced the shutdown of ALL SUNY and CUNY campuses, as of 03/19/20; AND
 1. Statement changes: none.
 - a. Passes.
 - ii. WHEREAS, "the Covid-19 Flexible Grading Policy was designed in consultation with CAMPUS PRESIDENTS and DEANS, the University Faculty Senate, the University Council of Registrars, and the University Student Senate to provide students with maximum flexibility during the ongoing and challenging transition of all courses to distance learning;" AND
 1. Statement changes: none
 - a. Passes.
 - iii. WHEREAS, an extensive survey conducted by Undergraduate Student Government at Baruch College spearheaded by Richard Reyes: Vice President of Legislative Affairs in collaboration with Laiba Hussain: Chair of Public Opinion found overwhelming data and metrics that align with the notion that distance learning is not at the capacity that of which Chancellor Felix V. Matos Rodriguez highlights; AND
 1. Statement changes: none.
 - a. Passes.
 - iv. WHEREAS, such survey indicates the lack of data that both CUNY and Baruch College have failed to administer on their end, where such survey denotes the effects of Covid-19 in relation to education and wellbeing as of present time; AND
 1. Statement changes: none.
 - a. Passes.
 - v. WHEREAS, the Chancellor has the discretion to review and extend the policy as necessary to meet public health emergency policies and practices; AND
 1. Statement changes: none.
 - a. Passes.
 - vi. WHEREAS, as of October 8 , 2020: "Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced that 145,811 COVID-19 diagnostic test results were reported to New York State yesterday—a new record high. In the top 20 ZIP codes in areas that have seen recent outbreaks - Brooklyn, Queens, and Rockland and Orange Counties - 7,349 tests were conducted, yielding 426 positives or a 5.8 percent positivity rate. In the remainder of the state, 138,462 tests were conducted yielding 1,410 positives or a 1.01 percent positivity rate;" AND
 1. Statement changes: none.
 - a. Passes.
 - vii. WHEREAS, the Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) confirmed that Covid-19 disproportionately affects communities of color; AND
 1. Statement changes: none.

- a. Passes.
- viii. WHEREAS, NYC Covid-19: Data states, Hispanic/Latino have a total of 5,970 confirmed deaths and 1,264 probable deaths, Black/African-American have a total of 5,348 confirmed deaths and 1,435 probable deaths, White have a total of 4,909 confirmed deaths and 1,201 probable deaths, Asian/Pacific-Islander have a total of 1,435 confirmed deaths and 413 probable deaths, and Other/Unknown have a total of 1,653 confirmed deaths and 333 probable deaths; AND
 - 1. Statement changes: none
 - a. Passes.
- ix. WHEREAS, according to the CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, there was a majority Hispanic and Black enrollment with a respective 30.2% and 25.2% enrollment across CUNY in Fall 2019; AND
 - 1. Statement changes: none.
 - a. Passes.
- x. WHEREAS, a survey conducted by Education Technology, Services, and Research (EAB) reported low-income students and students of color are not depositing or submitting FAFSAs at the same rate as previous years; AND
 - 1. Statement changes: none.
 - a. Passes.
- xi. WHEREAS, the DREAM.US reported on behalf of undocumented students that “the percentage of students who work fell from 70% before the start of the pandemic to 43% after; 83% have an immediate family member who was laid off or whose hours were cut due to Covid-19;” AND
 - 1. Statement changes: none.
 - a. Passes.
- xii. WHEREAS, the DREAM.US also reported, “These are college students in their early 20’s, and their worry is not just about how to pay for college – it’s about their families and what they’re going to do to support them;” AND
 - 1. Statement changes: none.
 - a. Passes.
- xiii. WHEREAS, “The second half of the CARES Act funding, which is \$118 million plus \$14 million from the Minority-Serving Institution (MSI) component of the CARES Act, is the institutional aid that will be allocated to the campuses;” AND;
 - 1. Statement changes: none.
 - a. Passes.
- xiv. WHEREAS, the combined state approved total of \$132 million in institutional supplemental aid has been held off after months of detailed “preparation” and “strategic planning”; AND
 - 1. Statement changes: none.
 - a. Passes
- xv. WHEREAS, the lack of transparency and institutional supplemental aid is incomparable, aggravating, and an injustice to the student body at Baruch College, in addition to CUNY as a whole; AND
 - 1. Statement changes: none.
 - a. Passes

- xvi. WHEREAS, Hunter College of CUNY has implemented at their respective institution a re-envisioned CR/NC policy that accommodates the circumstances that Covid-19 and distance learning has had on their student body; AND
 - 1. Statement changes: none.
 - a. Passes.
- xvii. WHEREAS, academic institutions such as Baruch College must safeguard the historical educational accessibility and success to communities of color and in general for the students.
 - 1. Statement changes: none.
 - a. Passes.
- xviii. THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Undergraduate Student Government of Baruch College calls upon action to be taken by the Baruch College administration, specifically President David Wu as has been done by Hunter College and their respective administration headed by President Jennifer Raab and/or for Baruch College to go through the channel of bureaucracy to gain access to such policy known as Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) to be enacted by CUNY Central and Chancellor Felix Matos Rodriguez at Baruch College.
 - 1. Statement changes: none.
 - a. Passes
- xix. BE IT ALSO RESOLVED, the Undergraduate Student Government at Baruch College is unwilling to see a Fall 2020 semester with no implementation of the Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) policy and therefore is open to negotiations on the matter with the introduction of a compromise that consists of the implementation of a maximum 2 class policy of CR/NC, which would safeguard student wellbeing and success, in addition to adhering to institutional academic rigor.
 - 1. Statement changes: none.
 - a. Passes.
- b. Erika: Do you know when Hunter implemented this policy?
- c. Richard: It was done very early in the semester, from what I gathered, because they had a certain deadline for near November. In all honesty, it's a disgrace that Baruch hasn't stepped up and implemented a similar policy given the long-term and dire circumstances as well, given everything they learned from how the situation was handled back in Spring 2020?
- d. Briana: Would you like for everyone who votes in favor of the resolution to sign their names on it?
- e. Richard: Yes, I just wasn't certain how table members would feel, but I think it's more than warranted given that we each represent 1000 students and their needs, and this is something that the student body has been calling on it as well.
- f. Kristina: For the Credit/No Credit, what happens to the classes that you need a specific average for? For example, when you start taking classes for your major, and you need to maintain an overall specific average. Would this policy be applied to those courses, or just others like capstones?
- g. Richard: We would follow suit with how it was implemented last semester, and on a case-to-case level. The policy overall stated it would acknowledge for the time being, and it is optional as well.
- h. Cindy: What letter grade would be considered for a "No Credit" qualification?
- i. Richard: Anything lower than a C. You can apply the "No Credit" option and retake it again.
- j. Alison: I feel like it should be stated again that this policy is optional for students. They don't have to do so if they don't want, but can potentially benefit students.
- k. Richard: Yes of course. As a society, we try to do things for the benefit of the people.

- l. Steven: To show how effective this survey was, a lot of students have voiced their support for it and gratitude for USG, and I want to give a big thanks to Richard and Laiba for their work on this.
- m. Richard: Thank you. As mentioned, this virus has disproportionately affected a lot of communities and the students and overall, I think this would be the best solution for students and as representatives.
- n. Irine: I want to add on that a lot of people who opt in for Credit/No Credit also seek academic advisement beforehand and to make sure it's a good option for them, in case they decide to go to graduate school or beyond and it may end up affecting them.
- o. Richard: Yes, that same guidance was mentioned and encouraged to students back in Spring 2020.
- p. Raphael: I monitor the Baruch subreddit, which is an interesting way to get some feedback from the student body. Normally, nothing on the site ever gets much engagement, but today the top post was "This semester should be Credit/No Credit" and people talking about their own experiences on it.
 - i. Motion to adopt "Enact Credit/No Credit Policy for Fall 2020" resolution.
 - 1. Motion passes, 17-0-0
- q. Briana: Thank you again Richard and Laiba for your work on this resolution.
- r. Richard: I just want to thank everyone who shared the post, who sent me their feedback on the survey, it was very insightful and to make sure we were delivering a survey that was both concise and informative and would bring about change in our community. A major shout out to Laiba for collaborating with me on this and helping out with the survey.
- s. Laiba: Thank you to the table and Richard for all the support. I can't wait to see the outcome.
- t. Richard: I know at times it might feel a bit defeating on whether or not this will be put into effect, but it will amplify our voices and make sure we are being advocated as students, and adding our perspectives as students on the matter. Be optimistic thinking the administration will be on our side, and they will make sure they do the best for our overall success.

3. Cindy Chen | Chair of Graphics

- a. Cindy: I wanted to speak briefly again on graphics. In case you didn't know, I can also do Snapchat, Instagram, and Facebook filters. This week, I had the privilege to work with Erika and Christine to create 2 filters out for Homecoming. If you are planning on requesting a filter for your event, please make sure to do so with at least a 2 week's notice because apparently Facebook needs to review the filters to make sure it meets their guidelines. Showing you both filters right now, one for Homecoming and for the Talent Show, they will be uploaded this Friday on the day of the event. To use these filters, which are only available on Instagram because Facebook rejected my filter request, go on the "Story settings" and go to "effects" and type in "Homecoming paws" and you should see Christine and her beautiful face and you can download it for yourselves.

4. Nancy Sea | Treasurer

- a. Nancy: We have late payment vouchers for 2 organizations today.
 - i. Ascend
 - 1. 6 late vouchers, for a total of \$709.67.
 - 2. Motion to allocate \$709.67. to ASCEND for their late payment vouchers.
 - a. Motion passes, 17-0-0
 - ii. USG 2019 - 2020
 - 1. One late payment voucher for the shipping costs of the laptop vouchers. \$2158.80.
 - 2. Motion to allocate \$2158.80 to USG 2019-2020 for their late payment voucher.

- a. Motion passes, 17-0-0

Executive Session

1. Motion to enter into Executive Session passes at 6:48PM.

Unfinished Business

1. Steven Le | VP of Campus Affairs

- a. Steven: We have exciting Homecoming events for this week. For Wednesday, we have “Escape the Room,” Thursday, we have “Pajama CampFire” and Friday, we have our “Bearcat Talent Show.” For Wednesday and Thursday events, please RSVP beforehand. They’re not only for the students to come and destress but also for you all. The only drawback is table members can’t win prizes. I want to thank everyone who came to yesterday’s Game Night, specifically the team who was in charge of leading the event themselves. It was great to see how much they blossomed in the last 2 months. Thank you also to my design committee, as well as Christine, Cindy, and Erika.

2. Richard Reyes | VP of Legislative Affairs

- a. Richard: Who would be willing to add their signature on the resolution?
- b. Briana: We are going to assume if you voted in favor of the resolution, then you will also be providing your signature, If you don’t want to do so, please message Richard privately.
- c. Tony: I double checked with Savanna, and E-board can also sign their names onto the resolution.
- d. Richard: I can gather the names of the representatives after the meeting, and have those signatures submitted via a docuSign. Damali had also suggested that, prior to releasing the resolution to the public, I reach out to GSA for them to double down and be a part of our resolution to enhance our statement to the President and Provost.
- e. Briana: Do you know when you will be sending out the resolution?
- f. Richard: On my end, I’m hoping to send it out by Friday if we can get everything together by then. It will also depend on when GSA responds to me, but because we’re on a time crunch, if they don’t respond, we can still send in the resolution.

3. Laiba Hussain | Chair of Public Opinion

- a. Laiba: Charity Week’s Auction night event is still going on so if you can, please come out and show your support. I hopped on for 5 minutes and got an off-white crop top for \$65. If anyone wants to join afterwards, I sent the link in the chat.

New Business

1. **No new business.**

Election Results

1. Motion to elect Matthew Sanchez as Representative Senator.
 - a. Motion passes, 14-0-0

Adjournment

1. Motion to adjourn Senate Meeting #8 at 9:33 PM. Motion passes, 14-0-0