1. Call to Order
   Attendance
   ○ Present:
     ● Andrew Fischer
     ● Silvia Radulescu
     ● Caroline Reppert
     ● Alex Hollister
     ● Natalie Klingher
     ● Conor Craven
     ● Elizabeth Ughetta
     ● Catherine Conroy
     ● Jose Olivares
     ● Lauren Mulligan
     ● Evelyn Torsher
     ● Ilana Schwartz
     ● Ryan McAlonan
     ● Kureem Nugent
     ● Mariaelena Hiller-Chacin
     ● Zach Oscar
     ● Isabel Grieder
     ● Lilly Pieper
     ● Lizzi Tran
     ● Annalie Garcia
     ● Maggie Horne
     ● Rachel Dawson
     ● Ram Franqui
     ● Jeremy Cottle
     ● Ellie Ducommun
     ● Chris Lee
   ○ Excused:
     ■ Phoebe Greenwald
     ■ Jordan Zeng
     ■ Alex Hirsu
     ■ Alex Black
     ■ Zach Hardmeyer
   ○ Absent:
     ■ Raza Zubair

2. Old Business & Committee Reports
   ● Committee Reports
     ○ Constitution
○ Cultural Affairs-
  ■ Food Truck this Wednesday (11/11) in Sadove in partnership with the Caribbean Students Association- tentative

○ Facilities-
  ■ Continuing work on the Jitney GPS system
    ● Communicating with Wei Lee about different additional features/customizations for the app and potential timeline
    ● Moving ahead with purchasing the trial period because it’s not fair to ask him to make all these changes with the potential that we still don’t buy the app
    ● First set of customizations will probably come after Christmas Break
  ■ Ilana Schwartz- Why did all the shades in dark side dorms change on the Darkside except for Babbit and Millbank?
    ● Andrew Fischer- They replaced the shades when they replaced the windows, which they haven’t yet done in Babbitt and Milbank
    ● Ilana Schwartz- This is something for Facilities Committee to think about.
    ● Zach Oscar- Are they broken in your room?
    ● Ilana Schwartz- Yes
    ● Zach Oscar- RAs do a walk through at the beginning of each year, so they would note the condition of the shades. If yours are broken, you should email your RA.
    ● Andrew Fischer- My freshman year, someone’s dad who went here in the 1980’s said that shades in McIntosh (since replaced) were exactly the same.
    ● Katie Conroy- The shades in Morris House only cover half the window. They don’t cover the top half of the window. This is an issue.

○ Food-
  ■ Update from meeting with Derek Roy (BonAppetit)
    ● If you have food allergies and have questions or concerns about the food being served in the moment, feel free to talk to a manager
      ○ If you have questions or concerns in general, email Derek Roy at derek.roy@cafebonappetit.com!
    ● Dairy-free labelling- Derek Roy might be able to provide the Bon Appetit employees working the hot food stations with a list of items that contain dairy. Gets rid of wait while employees call the chefs.
      ○ Official labels have to come from the corporate level
        ■ Our BonAppetit does not have control over the official labels
Lack of silverware and utensils
  ○ Recently bought 3000 new utensils, which are almost all gone because students take them and don’t return them.
  ○ Use plastic utensils and paper plates instead! Don’t steal dishes and silverware! Makes things worse for everyone

Diner update- We will be getting cheddar cheese in the Diner.

Health and Safety-
  ■ We need a new chair, so talk to Andrew Fischer if you are interested in the position.

LITS-
  ■ Upcoming Movie Channel survey
  ■ Password manager update- Around 80 people still have to enroll in Password Manager!
    ● If you haven’t changed your password, your wireless network access has been disabled
  ■ Hamilton Mobile app update- Estimated release date is the beginning of December
  ■ Elizabeth Ughetta- I have used the app and it’s very useful.
  ■ Andrew Fischer- President Stewart is a fan of the dining hall feature
  ■ Alex Hollister- One thing to think about is that it doesn’t show the menu for the rest of the week. It only shows the menu for today, which is a problem for those on the 7 meal plan who want to plan ahead.
    ● Chris Lee- That might be a problem with your download of the app specifically, but we are pushing out an update soon that will allow you to look at other days other than today.

Philanthropy-
  ■ Thanksgiving Dinner for the ABC House update- Success!
    ● Great to meet the people we have been helping recently

Social Traditions-
  ■ Continuing to plan Citrus Bowl, which will be on December 5th
  ■ Also continuing to plan the Hockey Date Auction, which will be either on December 1st or 2nd.
  ■ Working on the T-shirt design as well

Student Affairs-
  ■ Andrew Fischer- Did you send the results of the survey out?
  ■ Isabel Grieder- Not the full version, but I will do that now

Jose Olivares, Lilly Pieper, and Annalie Garcia - NY6 Student Government Conference Debrief
  ○ Conference was held this past Saturday at Union College
  ○ Union:
    ■ Elections for the E-Board are held in May
It is a rigorous process to get on the ballot- 100-200 signatures needed
  - They want to change that
  - It deters people from running and makes the process less meaningful
Larger executive board, which are all elected, except the secretary
  - Lots of VP positions
45-90 minute meetings
Minutes are published through a school paper, which no one reads. That is distributed in the dining hall
Each meeting, they will choose question for the representatives to ask students and report their findings
25 emails per day
  - One email per week with all athletic games happening in that week
    - If we were to have something like this at Hamilton, it might encourage students to attend games
Having problem with excessive flyers
  - The student center was covered (2000 put up since the beginning of the year)
Working on transparency-
  - Increasing their presence on social media
  - Noted that social media isn’t really working for us at Hamilton
    - Instead, people read the minutes
St. Lawrence:
  - Elections for the E-Board are held at the end of the semester
  - Trying to avoid uncontested elections
  - For non-E-board positions, you have to apply
  - New representatives are then chosen by current Student Assembly
Elected officials represent districts set up by Residential Life
  - Representation is not by class year
  - Drawback is that it’s hard to represent people you don’t really know
  - Also strange that there are freshmen and sophomores representing juniors and seniors
  - There are elected councils for class representatives, but it is a separate body from the district representatives
  - The secretary drafts a template of the minutes and sends reports to each district
  - Some people feel more comfortable with this system, but there are considerable drawbacks
Meetings are as long as 3 hours, usually over 2 hours
Business casual dress code
Minutes are sent out to each district via the representatives
 Clubs can’t send all campus emails. Instead, the school just send one big email per day

 Representatives from the top 10 funded clubs on campus have to come to the meetings
  ● It lets them learn more about the funding process

○ Title IX Breakout Session:
  ■ Both St. Lawrence and Union have “Title IX student representatives” on their SA boards
    ● Andrew Fischer- We don’t have students involved in our Title IX process. We used to.
  ■ They also run a lot of programs, but hard to tell what student government’s role should be in addressing Title IX issues
  ■ St. Lawrence has a 24-hour hotline, staffed by trained students. Students who answer must attend 20 hours of training. Student body really likes it.
  ■ Investigation process is very different at all 3 colleges
  ■ St. Lawrence- Every time they talk about Title IX in Student Assembly meetings, they have a Title IX Coordinator come to the meetings
    ● This is something we should think about
    ● Definitely should have Title IX Coordinator to help facility the discussion
    ● At Hamilton, SAVES and other student groups address this issue specifically, so we might be stepping on their toes
      ○ Andrew Fischer- We had a “Sexual Assault Prevention Committee.” Silvia and I decided to get rid of it because it was unnecessarily replicating SAVES’ efforts. We also needed to cut the number of committees to a more manageable number. Definitely want input from SAVES when relevant, though.
    ● SAVES representative went to SAAC training and encouraged students to go to Peer Advocate training, which is something we could do
    ● Andrew Fischer- We had someone in the past do this presentation, but in an abbreviated version. It might be good to have them do it again.

○ Campus Dining Break Out Session
  ■ Union-
    ● They have a freshman dining hall, where only freshman can eat
    ● They also have an upper classman only dining hall
    ● Have alternative dining options, but they get old quickly
    ● Freshman meal plan is a 14 meal plan (2 swipes per day)
      ○ This is not enough food
    ● $200 credit per semester (for alternative options)
The Central Council of Student Assembly, Hamilton College

**STUDENT ASSEMBLY MEETING**  
**NOVEMBER 9, 2015**

- Don’t like current provider- Sodexo doesn’t listen to students
- No healthy options and few gluten free ones

**St. Lawrence-**
- They only have one dining hall
- You can use your card for alternative options on campus, but students have to spend their own money. Meal plan only covers the dining hall.
- The dining hall is really big- even has a sit down area where employees deliver food to tables
  - Still gets old
- 5 alternative options (3 only for lunch, 1 only for dinner)
- only one good meal plan on campus
  - It feels like the school isn’t working with students
    - There is not enough ‘free’ food covered by the meal plan, so you have to spend your own money to get enough

- Quick, Affordable, and Important Fixes
  - **Union:**
    - Publishes minutes in the school paper
      - More people read the Spectator than many students realize, so it might be a good way to spread the minutes here at Hamilton
    - Their student government hosts an annual late night breakfast and lobster dinner, which have both become staple events
      - We should do something similar that is solely funded by Student Assembly. This would help students know who is on Student Assembly
    - Athletic games are big, so student government will reserve tickets to raffle them off
      - We could work with athletics and potentially reserve tickets for VIP seats and raffle them off.
    - Student government board in Student Activities office
      - We need to find a way to get people’s faces and positions out there
    - American Student Government Association Database/Forums
      - Says it is helpful
      - Way for student governments to network and share ideas
    - They don’t have Zipcar
    - They do have a jitney GPS app, which they love

  - **St. Lawrence:**
    - Works with their equivalent of CAB to bring more fun to their student government
The Central Council of Student Assembly, Hamilton College

STUDENT ASSEMBLY MEETING
NOVEMBER 9, 2015

- Could we, at Hamilton, highlight a club if they work well with us? If they prepare great proposals and things like that? It would be a way to give credit to different organizations.
- Very nice student government website
  - Photo Club takes professional pictures
  - Natalie Klingher- Does an administrator run their website? It is linked to their main website, and looks very professional.
- Just switched to the APR 2.0 system for registration
- Registration- There is no seniority to register for classes. The live portal is open for everyone on the same three days.
  - This has lead to problems with system crashing.
  - Live registration- starts at 6am and runs for 3 days.
  - Students choose their top class on the first day, their second choice on the second day, and the remaining two classes on the final day.
  - Ryan McAlonan- Why 6am?
  - Jose Olivares- Not sure.
  - They also have a paper Add/Drop form.
  - Many classes have unclear, misleading, or out-of-date descriptions, so they are trying to get recent syllabi published to show what the class is really like.
  - Andrew Fischer- Thank you for the presentation!

3. Public Comment Period

4. New Business
- Prof. Paul Hagstrom (Economics) - Student Commencement Speaker Selection Process
  - Member of Academic Council, which sets agendas for Faculty Meetings
    - Upcoming agenda items include the college's practices with regards to ranking students at graduation and how we choose student commencement speakers
    - Conducted faculty survey and gathered opinions on these issues
    - Wants to get student feedback before this issue goes before the faculty
  - Currently, Hamilton does not officially rank students
    - The only place the rank is published is on WebAdvisor, even for the valedictorian
      - Valedictorian, for example, only recognized at commencement, not on official transcript or anywhere else
    - Hamilton has no requirement that we have a valedictorian or that he/she speaks at commencement
A long time ago, every student used to speak at Commencement. Transitioned between that system, no students speakers, and 2 student speakers. Currently, speeches delivered by Jane Soper Merrill Prize winner and valedictorian. Jane Soper Merrill Prize winner- selected by faculty. Student, ideally, embodies “highest ideals of the college”
- Very subjective and somewhat arbitrary. Both valedictorian and award winner is decided at the very end of the year, so the students who are speaking do not have much time to prepare. This is an issue because these speeches don’t fully represent the quality of writing and speaking that Hamilton students are capable of. This revisit comes to Academic Council from the President’s Office, who wants to know the general feeling about this on campus. Hamilton has no requirement that we rank students. Latin Honors (Summa Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude, Cum Laude.), unlike rank, are official and they show up on your transcript. Prof. Hagstrom distributed a survey to 19 other schools about these topics. This was not an official survey, but rather used just to get a sense of what they are doing. Nine schools have a valediction (all NESCAC schools)
- Only one has him/her give a speech
- Others put valedictorian in the front row, have him/her get diploma first, or have lots asterisks by his/her name
- Only one didn’t have Latin honors
17 schools have student speakers
- One had three- class president, valedictorian, and member of Phi Beta Kappa
- Most had some contest process to allow students and faculty to select a student speaker
Hamilton faculty- few would be strongly in defense of our current system
- Some like it, but most want some type of change. Not sure what that change would be, though.
  - Some want James Soper Merrill prize winner only (Winner is chosen by the faculty, though. Probably a little bit of self-interest there.)
  - Others would be in favor of a student-selected speaker or some sort of competition to choose a speaker
  - At Amherst, the selection of the student speaker is a big deal. It is done by competition, which gets a large number of students involved in the process. Close to 300 students gather in the chapel to hear finalists and make a decision.
The faculty want to keep the Latin Honors, but there is less of an attachment to the valedictorian.
  ○ There is concern about grading between departments
    ■ In some departments, you can get an A+; in others you can’t.
  ○ It would be a near disaster to reevaluate the grading system with the faculty.
  ○ There is not a lot that separates people from top 5% vs. the 15%
  ○ This issue is going to be discussed on the first Tuesday of December
  ■ Faculty will discuss for 30 minutes as a “committee of the whole”
  ■ Prof. Hagstrom wants their views on the topic, but wants to hear student thoughts before he went to the faculty
  ○ Silvia Radulescu- Regarding the Merrill prize winners- have you seen good quality in the speeches, more so than the valedictorian speeches?
    ■ Prof Hagstrom- They are typically strong speeches
    ■ Silvia Radulescu- One of the current speech competition prizes is only for seniors. Can that winner potentially give a speech?
      ● Prof Hagstrom- This has been brought up, but very early in the talks
        ○ Some of these competitions have a single question you prepare a speech in response to.
        ○ Other schools have competitions specifically on the actual commencement speech
  ○ Ilana Schwartz- Thanks for coming!
    ■ Graduation is about the faculty, but mostly it is about the students and their accomplishments
      ● It would be nice to consider a student-chosen speaker
      ● Even though the faculty choose the Merrill prize winner, the characteristics that make up “the ideal Hamilton student” could vary
      ● It would be nice to have a student-chosen speaker at Commencement. That would give students a voice.
      ● It’s great that Amherst has a system where they can have student input and have a speaker that represents them.
  ■ Class rank- Fine, obviously, for valedictorians,
    ● In high school, it was nice to not have rankings.
    ● It is hard to rank people accurately and fairly with different course loads
      ○ Different majors have different requirements
The Central Council of Student Assembly, Hamilton College

Student Assembly Meeting
November 9, 2015

○ Ranking students in a class of 500 becomes inaccurate when you consider everyone’s different course loads.
● Prof, Hagstrom- Hamilton isn’t in danger of starting a formal ranking process.
  ○ We are only talking about choosing 1st and 2nd place students and having first place give a speech at Commencement.
● Ilana Schwartz- Do you think the valedictorian speeches have been an issue in the past?
  ○ Prof Hagstrom- Yes. The have been an issue. I hear a lot of student presentations, and these aren’t our best.
○ Evelyn Torsher- Would like to have student and faculty input when selecting speakers
  ■ Valedictorians might not always be the best speakers, so it would be nice to have a system like amherst
  ● More exciting way to involve the whole community and get a good speaker
○ Jose Olivares- James Soper Merrill Prize is great, but commencement is about the students, so our voices should be represented
  ■ Likes Amherst idea
  ● It would create more excitement for commencement
  ■ Valedictorians- Maybe the speech should be optional for them?
  ● Likes the tradition of designating a valedictorian
    ○ Would be nice to have a non-Physics valedictorian every once in a while.
    ○ Prof. Hagstrom- Major of the valedictorian does vary. They are not always Physics majors.
○ Katie Conroy- How does the selection process for the Merrill Prize work?
  ■ Prof Hagstrom- The faculty nominate a student, then the nominated students write letters for consideration, and then the Prize Committee selects a winner.
  ■ If this is going to be a ceremony for students, it would be a good idea to send out a survey to the senior class.
○ Elizabeth Ughetta- Thanks for coming!
  ■ I think the faculty did a good job choosing last year’s speaker.
    ● Faculty members see students in a different setting than other students do.
    ● It is nice to have someone who sees students in an academic setting choose a speaker to represent Hamilton
    ● Not sure what criteria the Merrill Prize follows, but maybe we could change the wording of the award to make it more than
someone who “represents Hamilton.” It would get rid of some of the ambiguity and subjectivity.

- Prof Hagstrom- It reads: “...someone who, in character and influence, has typified the highest ideals of the college.”
- Elizabeth Ughetta- That’s a pretty broad description.
  - I can see how people would question the choice, but I like the spirit of the award.

- Likes the Amherst speech competition because voting on a speaker should not be based on a popularity contest. People should choose based on the merit of the speech.
- Regarding the Valedictorian- He/she is probably under very high pressure upon receiving the news that they have to write a speech. For someone who has been working really hard and probably wants to celebrate during Senior Week, this may not be the most favorable way to end their senior year.
- In high school, teachers chose the speaker from a pool of the top 5-10 students in the graduating class. Maybe this should be something we look into, especially if the title comes down to the top .001 of a GPA.

- Conor Craven- Likes the spirit of the Merrill Prize
  - Could we have a system where students nominate two students for the award, alongside the faculty nominations? This would add a student voice.
  - When it comes to GPAs and rankings, .001 gets arbitrary… Does it really define someone’s success relative to another’s?
  - The best speakers aren’t always going to be the top person in the class, so we should move away from the valedictorian speech.
  - Likes Elizabeth Ughetta’s idea.

- Alex Hollister- There should be a student speaker chosen by the faculty and another student speaker chosen by students.
  - Faculty sees who has high quality work, who works hard, etc. while students see the social side of their peers
    - It is important to have both represented.
  - Valedictorian should not be given a speech. Just because they work hard does not make them a good speaker.
  - How long do valedictorians get to prepare?
    - Prof. Hagstrom- About 1 week
  - Chris Lee- Before Class & Charter Day?
    - Andrew Fischer- No. Class & Charter Day happens first, then students take finals, and then the Registrar needs a few days to calculate final GPAs.
  - Alex Hollister- Likes the idea of an Amherst-style competition with speaker one chosen by students.
    - Have someone chosen from the ranks of Summa Cum Laude?
The Central Council of Student Assembly, Hamilton College

STUDENT ASSEMBLY MEETING

NOVEMBER 9, 2015

- Andrew Fischer- Agrees with Alex Hollister. One chosen by faculty and one by the students.
  - Merrill prize winner was good last year but not great.
- Zach Oscar- Have competition put on by Senior Class President.
  - They technically represent the senior class and they plan Senior Week.
  - Does the valedictorian have the choice to refuse given a speech?
    - Prof. Hagstrom- Not sure. No one ever has.
    - Zach Oscar- There should be the option
      - Some people don’t want to give a speech
      - The faculty should get a chance to pick a speaker. They are the one’s giving us our education.
      - Valedictorian should get to choose
        - They can give themselves stress to themselves during Senior Week or opt out.
- Lauren Mulligan-
  - There should be student input, this is our graduation.
  - Faculty sees how students have grown, so they should choose the Merrill prize winner speaker.
    - But, the ideal Hamilton student is not just one who performs well academically. They also engage with their peers outside of the classroom.
  - Students should nominate students who then give a speech. People can then vote on which speech they like the most.
  - Prof Hagstrom- If you had to choose between Merrill prize winner and student-selected speaker, which one would you choose? This is not the choice in front of us, but just for reference.
    - Lauren Mulligan- A student-selected speaker.
- Andrew Fischer- Likes how the valedictorian, salutatorian, and Merrill Prize winner are singled-out in the commencement program
- Katie Conroy- Not sure how good grades are correlated to good speech
  - Should be picked out of wider pool, like the top 10%.
- Andrew Fischer- Last year, students chose Anthony Jackson to speak during the President's Gala on the Dunham Green.. That was a great speech. Heard it from Dunham window.
  - Will look into how that person was chosen.
  - Prof Hagstrom- Anthony’s speech was great, but also not appropriate for graduation. Students would probably not want their parents hearing that.
  - Andrew Fischer- Agreed, but Anthony definitely would have delivered a good speech during commencement.
- Elizabeth Ughetta- Would the selection process be executed well? It is hard to ask Seniors in their Spring semester to write a speech and deliver it, especially without assurance that it will pay off. It’s a competition.
This would be especially difficult since it isn’t a tradition, like it is at Amherst.

Andrew Fischer- What if we did something like how we chose Presidential Search Committee student representatives?
- We asked students to nominate peers, I checked with every nominee to assure they wanted to participate, and then the entire student body voted from the list of nominees.
- There’s the element of senior class choice, without pressure to come up with speech then and there as the valedictorian does now. Students who don’t want to speak can decline their nomination before the names go to vote.
- No one wants to write a speech when it might not lead to anything, as in a competition. This system avoids that issue.

○ Lilly Pieper- Is the faculty committee that chooses the Merrill Prize winner made up only of professors?
- Prof Hagstrom- Yes.
  - The faculty Prize Committee has an ex-officio (non-voting) Dean as a member, but the faculty comprises the body of the committee.

In high school, the speaker at graduation was selected in way like Presidential Search Committee members were. That could work well.
- Students who graduated with honors got to help select the students
- The people who were excited to speak were very outspoken about it, so the finalists were those who were outspoken and good speakers.
- Andrew Fischer- We could also run a hybrid system. Have student nominate, vote, and then have the top 4-5 vote-getters write speeches and compete?
- Silvia Radulescu- Having students choose the speaker is a good idea because the learning that takes place in college is not limited to a classroom. A big part of this experience and the shaping of each student comes from his/her relationships and meaningful interactions with others.

○ Maggie Horne-
  - At my high school, salutatorian and valedictorian both gave speeches. This made the ceremony very strenuous because they tried too hard to be funny.
  - Likes the idea of a student-selected speaker
  - Would student have to present the exact speech they plan to give at commencement in the competition?
    - What if the speech given during the presentation was just one page long and similar to their commencement speech. This would be a lot easier for students.
Andrew Fischer- Agrees

- Zach Oscar-
  - When the faculty gives awards, they don’t just look at academics, right? They know what makes a student stand out beyond the numbers, don’t they?
  - Prof Hagstrom- Merrill prize also looks at what you do outside the classroom (clubs, activities, athletics, arts, volunteer)
    - GPA is not a restriction or criteria for the award. The student chosen is one who is involved in a lot of activities or who made a big impact on an important issue on campus.
  - Zach Oscar- Ok, good. Just wanted to clarify that it is not just a numbers game for this award, especially since faculty make good relationships with students

- Lauren Mulligan- If there is a student speaker, there should be no GPA cut off.
  - A student can still be a good speaker without being in the top 10%.
  - If there were a competition for the speaker, they shouldn’t present the whole speech beforehand. It would make it harder to get students involved.
  - Zach Oscar- Agrees. It would be ridiculous to ask students to write a whole speech so far in advance.
  - Elizabeth Ughetta- That’s what Amherst does.
  - Prof Hagstrom- Not sure exactly what Amherst does. They do have a competition, but not sure if students present the whole speech.
    - Would be shocked if the length of the speech in the competition -- a whole speech verses 1 page of the speech-- would dissuade people from applying.
    - Andrew Fischer- But people may not want to hear the whole speech.
    - Prof. Hagstrom- That makes sense.

- Ilana Schwartz- If we only wanted one student speaker, then it should be a collaboration between faculty and students.
- Andrew Fischer- Thanks for coming!

5. Funding

Rollbacks: Community Farm ($11,000), Tumbling After ($621),
Amount Remaining prior to 11/9 meeting: $12,347.25

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The Central Council of Student Assembly, Hamilton College

**STUDENT ASSEMBLY MEETING**

**NOVEMBER 9, 2015**

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**Total Amount Recommended:** $3281.72  
**Total Amount Remaining if funding Passes:** $9,065.83

- Community Farm- Rolled back funds from project they were planning on working on, so now we have money! Yay!  
- Hamtrek- Rounded up the number they were asking for, so we cut the extra money on the top.  
- Lizzi Tran- Figure Skating Club got funding from Late Night at Hamilton, so we don’t need that money any more.  
- Everything passes!

6. **Announcements**  
   - Silvia Radulescu- Elections are coming up!  
     - Think about if you want to run or not  
     - Ilana Schwarts- Is that for the E-board?  
       - Silvia Radulescu- Yes, it is just for President and Vice President  
     - Ryan McAlonan- what happens when people go abroad next semester?  
       - Andrew Fischer- Class Presidents have to fill vacant spots