

AY 2022-2023

# Board of Visitors SGA Report

## Mid-Semester, Fall 2022

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Created by Joey Zeldin, SGA President, 2022-2023  
Finalized and Sent to the Board of Visitors on November 2nd, 2022

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## Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Mid-Semester Updates</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Construction and Campus Work Projects</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Talks with Sodexo</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Continuity with Student Issues</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>SGA Reform Plan</b>	<b>7</b>

## Mid-Semester Updates

Since the last SGA report, we have been pursuing a swarth of issue areas, namely infrastructure and services, where we've successfully seen the hours of the library increase and started talks with Sodexo to improve upon student complaints regarding dining. In addition, I myself have pursued SGA reforms to make our organization better and function to serve students easier, as well as ensure our team can create quality legislation. My SGA Reforms plan that I am collecting data on, researching, and drafting right now includes, but is not limited to reforming the way our committees operate and are structured, restructuring our executive branch to encourage more student engagement, and solidifying new SGA traditions, events, and norms into our constitution, like the ongoing SGA of UMW tabling series on campus.

However, with our gaining momentum comes emerging challenges. These challenges are highlighted below in their own separate categories. It is crucial that the Board of Visitors, UMW Administration, and any respective department on campus work with the SGA in order to accomplish the wants and needs of the students. We are thankful for our partnership with the BOV and UMW administration, and our SGA Class this year can easily tout one of the closest working relationships with both entities, as we continue to relay detailed information to the Board and hold monthly SGA-wide meetings with administration, as well as meet with members of administration on a consistent basis.

As always, I offer myself as a resource to you, the Board of Visitors, and I encourage you to come to an SGA meeting, reach out to me, or anything you see fit to gather more information on what we do and the student experience here at UMW. As you all are alumni serving on the Board, your SGA will welcome you with open arms no matter what you may come to us with, and hope to serve our own alumni as best as our students.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Huy', written over a horizontal line.

Joey Zeldin

## Construction and Campus Work Projects

Currently, we are still seeing incredibly disruptive amounts of construction on campus, as well as work projects like the grass-growing project on Ball Circle. I am personally disappointed to see such disruptive projects taking a toll on student engagement. The grass-growing project will close Ball Circle until roughly around graduation, limiting its usage for events that typically happen on Ball Circle, like Big Spring Concert, Multicultural Fair, and, most importantly, Devil Goat Day. Ball Circle is our premier green space for all things UMW, and it is important that we aren't restricting any more than we need to, especially since it has remained on-and-off closed for over a year due to various campus projects. The SGA hopes to meet with various administrators across campus to find some sort of solution to the Ball Circle issue.

In addition, students have complained about the construction projects in James Farmer Hall. Students are not only able to access the spaces due to the construction, but the loud noises and equipment audibly disrupt student classes to the point where it impairs student learning. We were able to gather this data from both Senators speaking to students as well as our first tabling event. We must ensure that construction is not becoming a disruptor on campus, both physically, in regards to impairing students with accessibility needs, and audibly, in regards to loud noises that make it difficult to listen.

Students also wish to have more information with construction projects, and I believe students should have access to this. Often in towns, cities, and other municipal areas, they will have hearing periods and forums to submit concerns and also hear from residents of the area to hear about the impacts these projects will have on their area. I believe having an open forum like this on campus would be a great step forward, as well as having consistent and easily accessible information (or directing students to said accessible information if it already exists) on projects and providing these updates in a timely manner. As the primary stakeholders in this institution, students deserve the right to have their input on these projects that occur.

## Talks with Sodexo

Students have lots to say about dining on campus, both good and bad. We have met with Sodexo, and will be touring the Top of the UC at some point to see how the facility operates and report back to students about it. Students have made complaints about Sodexo's operations, such as food quality, hours, and dining options. We hope that by establishing a relationship with Sodexo, we can not only report back to students about information on Sodexo's dining processes, we can also create ways to improve dining services on campus that benefit everyone. We also hope to bring more awareness of Sodexo's new app, Everyday, that promotes nutrition info and gives students updates on the food options and menus that Sodexo offers. They have emphasized that it covers a lot of the issues students bring up in regards to understanding dining, and we hope to partner with them to promote it further.

## **Continuity with Student Issues**

Our Senate is currently conducting a large amount of research for their legislation that will hit on a variety of different types of issue areas that were hit on in the Fall 2022 report. This includes parking, construction, student service operations, and Title IX, which are important issues to myself, as well as the rest of the SGA. Our continued efforts to create dialogue and pass legislation happen all the time, and when significant legislation on issues outlined in the Fall 2022 Beginning of the Semester report is passed, I hope to let you know as soon as possible, so that you are understanding the progress that we are able to make along these issues, as well as what benefits students are going to be able to reap from our hard work on these issues.

## SGA Reform Plan

In order for our organization to operate better, I am currently in the works of drafting reform plans that pull from the structures of multiple Student Governance Organizations at colleges and universities across the nation, and presenting this plan to our SGA as a whole, as well as the student body. This would largely consist of amendment proposals, legislative reform priorities that the Senate could tackle, and improvements to make the SGA function properly. With my 3 years on SGA, my focus within political science on the Legislative Branch and how elections work, as well as my experience as an intern for the U.S. Senate (one of the government institutions that our SGA is based upon), I believe I can create a plan that will benefit future SGAs and the future student body immensely. While I am not finished with it, and will present it to SGA first for their consent, some parts of the draft plan will include:

- Reforming our committees to eliminate committee chairs and instead directing the Senate President & Senate Vice President to assign Senators to committees to then have members of the committee elect a chair within the committee. Committees would also be tweaked to be more efficient.
- Recreating and tweaking executive level positions, as well as investigating the possibility of creating three executive level committees, the Judiciary Committee to help with student appointments to committees, constitutional issues, and other issues that would require a judiciary body, and the Universal Elections Committee (which exists outside of SGA, but would move to fall under SGA jurisdiction) to help ensure fair and equitable elections on campus.
- Meeting with the Inter-Club Association and the Finance Committees to investigate the possibility of merging them to be a part of SGA, so that our Senate can legislate and make them more effective, as well as have direct involvement in helping students with financial matters. In addition, ICA requires SGA approval for club chartering, and by having it under ICA and merging it into our constitution, our senate could improve upon club chartering and club rights at UMW.

