



MARIST
UNIVERSITY



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING OF THE MARIST
STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION ON DECEMBER 3, 2025 IN DONNELLY
ROOM 225

Order of Business:

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

- The meeting was called to order at 11:05 am by K. Syrota

Members present:

■ Assembly:

- Karina Syrota - Student Body President
- Matt Fox - Executive Vice President
- Chella Calcagni - Vice President of Student of Life
- Itati Serrano - Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Alex Murphy - Interim Vice President of Club Affairs
- Brianna Perez-Quiroz - Vice President of Safety and Security
- John Genoni - Vice President of Academic Affairs
- Sarah Mazzella - President of Athletic Affairs
- Amanda Gracia - Vice President of Student Well-Being
- Megan Connor - Vice President of Sustainability
- Scarlett Richartz - Deputy Chief Communications Officer
- Griffin Carey - Chief Financial Officer
- Jared Kerin - Chief Information Officer
- Alyssa Bova - Director of Elections Commissions

Syrota - Fox Administration

- Class Boards:
 - Vi Geraci - Class of 2026 President
 - Noah Yurasko - Class of 2028 President
 - Adrianna Darosa- Class of 2029 President
- Judicial Board:
 - Marlin Hubbard- Associate Justice
- Associate Members
 - Neil Palmieri - Parliamentarian
 - Cole Harvey - Chief Archivist
 - Veronica Vogelman - Event Planning Chair
- Representatives:
 - Joseph McCormack- North End Representatives
 - Clifton Wise - South End Representative
 - Alyssa Comolli - East End Representative
 - Natalie DiLena - Distance Representative
 - Janel Sarpong - International Representative
 - Lauryn Trader - Commuter Representative
 - Emily Speno - Commuter Representative
- Assistants:
 - Katie Marrin - Administrative Coordinator

II. **New Business**

- B. Perez motioned to move new business above everything, A. Bova seconded this motion.
- **Conversation with Gourmet Dining**
 - C. Calcagni explained that at the last assembly, there were complaints about sustainability and waste. She asked if Gourmet had any plans to address these issues. M. Egert described the Food and Water Waste Committee within the sustainability plan. There is not a specific goal laid out for short-term organic waste intervention; however, the framework is being laid down for it.
 - C. Calcagni asked what happens to the compost that Gourmet has collected, and if it has been contaminated

or not. M. Egert responds that the compost goes to GreenWay, the provider, and they sift through it individually. There was a discussion of removing composting from the dining hall, as many students continued to contaminate the compost.

- R. Torres asked members and guest speakers to introduce themselves to everyone. Gourmet dining and speakers then went around and introduced themselves and their roles on campus and how students should reach out to them with concerns.
- J. Herschberger discussed that it is up to students to compost properly, but separation occurs back-of-house. The issue is that there is no space to pay employees to separate the food for composting.
- M. Connor mentioned there are goals in the action plan on zero food waste, and asked Gourmet how they are trying to reach those goals. M. Egert responded that there are no defined benchmarks for the goal in the action plan. One of the recommendations is to fix the obligation to be held accountable for sustainability. Looking at the contract, there should be certain definable goals in order to set something quantitatively.
- J. Herschberger explained that with the dining contract, they do an amendment every year to update their program and goals. He suggested that they will start to set targets regarding food waste in their next meeting.
- V. Geraci brings up the problem with the meal swipe donation and the multiple different perspectives that have been defined, with some saying that the meal swipe program exists and others saying it is not currently running.
- J. Herschberger explained that currently there are some obstacles for food-insecure students. He explained that students need to go to the Marist website and search for

food insecurity, and then students must reach out and the University would do its best to meet this need. He explained that starting in the Spring semester, they will be partnering with Gourmet to create a swipe donation program. It will be done through the Grubhub app and students will be able to donate and request swipes through the app. J. Herschberger also explained that student resources would be updated on both Gourmet and the University's webpage so students can have updated access. Swipe Out Hunger will be the link and it will allow students to request swipes from anywhere therefore providing privacy. The swipes will be loaded to the students card and they will be able to use those swipes in the dining hall. Students will be limited to 20 swipes a semester, he mentioned how this is only a temporary fix and it is not intended to be permanent.

- M. Egert adds that if a student is donating their swipes, they want it to be used. There may be other ways to help support the community instead of the swipes.
- J. Hershberger explained that in his experience only 30% of the donated swipes are allocated and most students do not use them. He explained that there are many reasons these swipes are not used.
- M. McMahon brings up how communication with the program is going to be essential in making it successful. There can be stigma when being directed to a higher-up, but being able to have students be directed to a webpage will make students feel much more comfortable. Marist will be doing the American College Health Assessment. These questions come from USDA, and Marist is looking to get a high turnout for this survey, as opposed to the typical 10% the school gets for other surveys. There is an opportunity to partner with SGA for the spring semester to get a high turnout for the survey, along with a

communication plan. This administration likely won't see the full results, but those results can be spread wide and create future partnerships.

- A. Bova motioned to recognize A. McPadden to the meeting, J. Genoni seconded.
- G. Carey asks how recycling is handled at Marist. M. Egert responds with how all plastics, glass, and cardboard are recycled in the back of the dining hall. With Marketplace and North End, it is handled by housekeeping staff and not necessarily observed by Gourmet.
- J. Hersberger suggested that the assembly should invite Physical Plant to the assembly to learn more about the recycling processes at Marist.
- M. Connor gave a point of information that recycling is divided out within dorms, but if it is contaminated, it cannot be recycled.
- R. Torres gave a point of information and asked the assembly to think about the stigma surrounding food insecurity and how students may not wish to think about themselves as food insecure.
- M. McMahon explained that the questions on the survey ask more about eating behaviors and not necessarily about being food insecure. R. Torres explained how the term “unmet food need” may make students feel more comfortable than “food insecure.” J. Herschberger explained how Swipe Out hunger is the wording on the website, not “food insecurity.”
- A. Garcia explained that she is on the committee for the survey so she will be able to communicate to SGA members.
- V. Geraci asked if there is any education or spaces for students to talk about food insecurity. She explained that

students feel ashamed and that having a safe space would be beneficial for these students.

- M. McMahon explained that meal swipes are only one part of a larger, multi-layered issue and that the committee is actively working to address it. As a short-term goal, he suggested developing a new plan that includes a communication component to highlight the issue, noting that the survey will ideally help guide this process. J. Hershberger mentioned how Marist has a great willingness to help each other and how meal swipes will open doors to help others.
- I. Serrano explained that she believes the core of this problem is Marist as a community not being aware of this, and not making an effort to address it. She mentioned how we do not have a community where students can feel comfortable talking about this issue.
- C. Wise asked about the Swipe-Out Hunger rollout as word of mouth may not necessarily be the best, and food insecurity may cause isolation. He asked if there will be social media posts or other ways to access the information. J. Hershberger explained that their plan includes social media and will most likely roll out in early January. He mentioned how he will be happy to share this information when the plan is ready. M. McMahon discussed how the culture among faculty will also allow them to further give students these resources if they know there are issues of food insecurity. The grant is for a year, but there must be a plan to continue it further.
- J. McCormack asked if Gourmet has thought about first-year students being introduced to composting and food insecurity in order to instill these ideas early on in their college career and make an effort to destigmatize food insecurity. R. Torres explained that she is in charge

of orientation and this is something that can be implemented during orientation.

- M. McMahon stated there is a section in the Sustainability and Action plan regarding curriculum, and how other areas of Marist would have the ability to speak broadly about sustainability, infusing it into the core and targeting first year students specifically to build up that culture.
- A. Comolli asked if students being abroad and transferring in would be given the same information on food insecurity and sustainability. M. McMahon agreed with the point about how these first-year abroad students need to have better education, but he needs to think about it more and discuss it with more faculty to put it into the curriculum. It is something that can be discussed among the orientation.
- R. Torres raised a point of information, noting that this is a highly multi-level issue and emphasizing the importance of organizations coming together to develop a cohesive plan. She also acknowledged the progress made through this conversation and encouraged members not to lose sight of other issues discussed throughout the semester.
- J. McCormack stated that food donations do not transfer to the next semester and asked if they could be accrued over time, potentially eliminating the need for grants in these cases.
- J. Hershberger explained that meal plans are designed on a semester basis due to financial requirements. He stated that he is not concerned about donation size because of Gourmet's contributions and explained that there will be sufficient meal swipes each semester. He added that allowing swipes to carry over would not be fiscally viable.

- A Gourmet representative explained that donations can also be directed to the food pantry and that shelf-stable food lasts longer than unused meal swipes.
- G. Carey stated that the biggest challenge is spreading awareness about food insecurity. He emphasized that increasing visibility is the first step in helping students access support and suggested something as simple as a poster outside the dining hall. He also noted concerns about Den Dollars not rolling over, unlike Thrifty Cash in previous semesters.
- M. McMahon explained that prior meal plans included both meal swipes and Thrifty Cash and discussed how Den Dollar-only plans relate. He noted that meal swipes never carried over between semesters and that, if Den Dollars were intended as a replacement, the same logic would apply. He explained that Gourmet's operation depends on the sale of meal plans and that an academic-year model rather than a semester-based model would make it extremely difficult to operate a food service on campus. Students typically determine the most appropriate meal plan during the first semester. Gourmet has conducted usage analyses across campus, and with the elimination of meal swipes, Den Dollars will function similarly in that they will not roll over between semesters.
- M. Egert explained that the updated meal plan system was designed to be more customizable and autonomous for students. He noted that past plans experienced significant underutilization and that allowing meal plan funds to roll over would have negative financial consequences.
- G. Carey explained that while bulk purchasing options are not currently available, students can use catering orders to spend remaining meal points rather than lose

them. He also mentioned that the Marketplace Store allows students to purchase items in bulk, such as laundry detergent.

- M. Egert added that bulk purchases were not anticipated this semester based on data from last semester. He explained that data from the current semester will be used to improve future plans and noted that many first-year students still have significant balances remaining.
- G. Carey shared an example of a parent who reported that her daughter had an \$825 meal plan but had only used \$400, noting that some students simply do not utilize their plans fully.
- B. Perez raised a concern regarding the Light Fare option in the dining hall and asked whether it would be possible to keep an additional station open during that time, as the limited options restrict students.
- A Gourmet representative explained that the closure of the Light Fare has not been widely raised as an issue but acknowledged the need for clearer communication about Light Fare hours. Operationally, this period coincides with the transition between meals. Pizza, deli, grill, and salad stations remain open, and students may also purchase food at other locations on campus.
- B. Perez agreed that having more stations open for students would be beneficial for students with busy schedules. She also suggested if it was possible to have leftover food from breakfast left out after the hours are over. M. Egert agreed that leaving food available could be beneficial but noted that other stations remain open. He clarified that only the Global, Life, Plant, and Pasta stations are closed during Light Fare and expressed interest in exploring increased access to the Light Fare.

- R. Torres noted that students have complained due to a lack of awareness about Light Fare hours and frustration over wasting meal swipes. M. Egert returned to the topic of orientation, stating that Gourmet would welcome the opportunity to speak with students. R. Torres clarified that time is allocated for Dining Services during orientation, but it is up to Dining Services to utilize that time.
- J. McCormack asked whether Gourmet could work with Grubhub to help students budget daily spending and whether discounted pricing during Light Fare hours was possible. M. Egert explained that reduced pricing would be difficult due to high levels of theft within North End. He also described technical challenges with Grubhub, as transactions pass through multiple systems. Gourmet would like to send notifications informing students of their remaining balance and whether they are on track to have sufficient funds for the semester.
- A. Comolli commented that the Marketplace convenience store option has been a strong addition but expressed concerns about limited hot food availability and asked whether it could open earlier. M. Egert responded that Marketplace traffic data does not currently justify staffing multiple hot food stations but stated that Gourmet is open to reevaluating based on future data.
- G. Carey mentioned that many universities allow students to bring personal containers into dining halls and asked whether this could be an option for students facing food insecurity. M. Egert explained that the current dining hall structure does not allow outside containers but referenced Cornell's model, where students can receive to-go containers with a meal swipe.

Gourmet is exploring options to allow students to take food to go.

- M. Connor asked whether the introduction of food lockers on campus has affected campus culture and student relationships. M. Egert stated that he is not a fan of the lockers but acknowledged the concern and expressed interest in exploring a more hybrid solution.
- J. Kerin asked how Gourmet plans to encourage upperclassmen to purchase meal plans and whether a lower-cost \$400 plan could be considered. M. Egert stated that offering a lower-cost meal plan is under consideration. G. explained that Den Dollars are tax-free, providing an inherent discount, and noted that Marketplace offers access to both food and essential items. M. Egert added that selling meal plans remains challenging, particularly since it is atypical for students to be on campus without one.
- M. McMahon suggested establishing regular meetings with Gourmet next semester to provide feedback and address concerns early. He emphasized that student engagement is especially important during the initial years of implementing changes and noted that meal plans are amended annually.
- R. Torres thanked the assembly and Gourmet representatives for their discussion and suggested that the assembly forgo concerns and board reports.
- K. Syrota asked whether SGA could assist Gourmet in any way.
- G. Carey explained that stolen orders have become a major issue on campus and emphasized the need to raise awareness and identify ways to reduce theft, which also contributes to longer wait times. M. McMahon added that theft has also occurred with off-campus Grubhub orders and packages and suggested this could be

addressed through an SGA initiative or awareness campaign.

- M. Egert thanked the assembly for communicating student concerns and providing valuable feedback.

- **The Appointment of Brady Merrow as the Director of the Elections Commission**

- B. Merrow emphasized how he is excited to take on a larger role in SGA.
- G. Carey asked how spring elections differ from fall elections, referring to them as a “different beast,” and asked what actions B. Merrow would be able to take if issues arose and what his plans were. B. Merrow explained that the fall semester produced unexpected results and stated that he would address situations as they arise, using his commission to respond to challenges during the spring elections. He added that he has developed materials and prepared in advance for the spring semester elections and feels ready to handle any issues that may occur.
- G. Carey asked about Merrow’s involvement in the music honors society and which instruments he plays. B. Merrow responded that he primarily plays the baritone, saxophone, and French horn.
- B. Perez commented on B. Merrow being a biology major and asked whether that background lends itself to a political role. B. Merrow replied that he does not view being a biology major as a weakness. He explained that he has a strong interest in political science, is considering adding a minor, and is currently taking a law class. While STEM majors often have demanding lab schedules, he emphasized his time management skills and stated that his academic background provides a broader perspective for the role.

- G. Carey asked B. Merrow to provide an example of working under a tight deadline or in a stressful situation. B. Merrow described his experience with Key Club, where he made decisions affecting over 700 individuals. He explained that his role involved increasing membership to more than 8,000 members through collaborative work. He emphasized his ability to delegate tasks, rely on team members, and manage responsibilities.
- J. Kerin motioned to move to an informal discussion. J. Sarpong seconded the motion.
- B. Perez motioned to move from informal discussion to voting. J. Sarpong seconded this motion.
- B. Merrow was appointed with 18 affirmatives, 0 negatives, and 1 abstention. The Bill passes.
- **Amendment to Add a Publicity Coordinator in Place of Class Archivist**
 - M. Connor asked who typically handles social media responsibilities for the class boards. J. Kerin explained that the secretary usually oversees social media and noted that establishing a dedicated role would improve delegation and workflow within class boards.
 - B. Perez added that, as a class secretary, she found it confusing to manage both administrative responsibilities and Instagram duties. She stated that creating a separate role would allow for more qualified individuals to take on social media responsibilities. A. Darosa agreed, explaining that she currently manages social media for her board and believes there would be strong interest in the position, making delegation more efficient.
 - I. Serano asked how this new role would interact with the Chief Communications Officer (CCO).

- N. Palmieri explained that the position would streamline communication between class boards and the communications board. J. Kerin added that the role would eliminate the need for multiple board members to be involved in creating and approving posts.
- R. Torres noted that she was previously unaware that the class archivist position functioned in this capacity and stated that the new role would be more intuitive and provide better opportunities for collaboration.
- A. Bova motioned to move from formal discussion to voting. I. Serrano seconded this motion
- The Amendment to Add a Publicity Coordinator in Place of Class Archivist Bylaw Change was brought into fruition with 22 affirmatives, 0 negatives, and 1 abstention. The Bill passes

III. Reading of the Minutes

- I. Serrano motioned to approve the minutes from the November 19th assembly meeting without reading them out loud. M. Connor seconded the motion.
- Minutes approved without reading upon a voice vote in the affirmative.

IV. Open Floor

- Student Concerns
 - Two students were chased with a knife in the Home Depot parking lot last week, and asked if campus security was aware of this issue. B. Perez suggested that these students should report this to security, and that they usually patrol the Home Depot.
 - V. Geraci asked if they could expand the MaristSafe app into Fox Run so security can be aware of people there. B. Perez explained that there are plans to expand to both Shoprite and Fox Run.

V. Announcements

- **SGA appreciation and Secret Santa event right after Assembly!**
- **Good luck on finals :)**
- **The Application to be a student commencement speaker is now open.**

VI. Board Reports

- Advisor Reports
 - Robin Torres - SGA Advisor
 - Yielded time to the chair.
- Leadership Reports
 - K. Syrota - Student Body President
 - Had a meeting with Kevin Weinman on Wednesday, and if any assembly members have any concerns, please let her know.
 - M. Fox - Executive Vice President
 - Yielded time to the chair.
 - Chella Calcagni - Vice President of Student Life
 - Yielded time to the chair.
- Cabinet and Senate Reports
 - I. Serano
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
 - A. Murphy
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
 - B. Perez-Quiroz
 - Mentioned her meeting with security and asked the assembly to bring up any concerns so she could communicate them with security. She mentioned one project she will be working on this

winter is theft of food on campus. She will also continue supplying Birdie alarms. Yielded time to the chair.

- J. Genoni
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
- A. Gracia
 - Mentioned her event on Friday and encouraged members to attend.
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
- M. Connor
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
- S. Richartz
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
- G. Carey
 - Mentioned his meeting with administrators this morning regarding purchase cards for clubs and RAs, he will have more information next semester.
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
- J. Kerin
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
- A. Bova
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
- V. Geraci
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
- N. Yurasko

- Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
- V. Geraci motioned to recognize C. Kiel to the meeting. B. Perez seconded this motion.
 - A. Darosa
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
 - M. Hubbard
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
 - N. Palmieri
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
 - R. Harvey
 - Mentioned how he finally got a hard drive and will be working on archival reports.
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
 - V. Vogelman
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
 - A. McPadden
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
 - J. McCormack
 - Mentioned how cans and bottles have been returned, and how it was a total of \$35.
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
 - C. Wise
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
 - A. Comolli

- Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
- B. Falloy
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
- N. DiLena
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
- J. Sarpong
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
- L. Trader
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
- E. Speno
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.
- C. Kiel
 - Referenced board report. Yielded time to the chair.

VII. Old Business

- There was no old business from the previous meeting.

VIII. Miracle of the Week

- **Last Assembly of the Semester!**

IX. Meeting Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 1:05

Respectfully Submitted,

Grace Mintel & Katie Marrin

Administrative Coordinators