Undergraduate Assembly
Constituency Update

UA Committee Structure, Leadership for 09-10
The UA has already completed its annual reorganization with the creation of four standing committees and four Directors to lead those committees and the students who serve on them. Our committees and Directors are:

Academic Affairs, with cognizance over academic policy and technology, directed by GJ Melendez Torres (N/W ’11), academics@pennua.org

Housing, Sustainability, and Facilities, with cognizance over the aforementioned areas, led by Dan Sanchez (SEAS ’10), hsf@pennua.org

Civic and Philadelphia Engagement, with cognizance over all university-community relations and public safety, led by Emily Shaefer (SEAS ’12), civic@pennua.org

Student Life, with cognizance on dining and those areas covered by VPUL, led by Andrew Lum (SAS ’12), studentlife@pennua.org.

Directors will be reaching out to administrators and constituency leaders within their area of consequence shortly. Please feel free to reach out to them to get grassroots consultation and support on any initiative concerning undergraduates!

New ways to communicate with undergraduates
This year the UA has taken significant strides in communications, including:

1. The creation of a new website/blog at www.pennua.org, which is updated daily with news about Penn and UA work,
2. The launch of The Assembly Line, a weekly newsletter to 500 undergraduates who have opted in to news about student government and Penn administration,
3. Extensive use of social media including Twitter and Facebook,
4. The development of more sophisticated “targeted” communications systems aimed to direct information to the constituencies in the undergraduate studentry that would find it most relevant.
Please reach out to me (chair@pennua.org) if you have an announcement relevant to undergraduates you would like to send to the student body.

I also strongly encourage you to check out our website. Not only will you find detailed descriptions of our projects, past and present, but many useful contact details for student leaders right across the undergraduate community.

**Change in UA Council representation**
The UA approved a resolution that divides its 15 allocated University Council seats as follows:

- 1 seat to the top vote-getter in each of the UA’s five constituencies (SAS, Wharton, SEAS, Nursing, Freshmen)
- 1 seat to the Chair, the Vice-Chair, and the Vice-Chair of External Affairs,
- 7 seats to under- or mis-represented groups appointed by the NEC.

This is a net increase of 1 additional seat to the NEC. This year the NEC-appointed seat holders represent the:

1. Lambda Alliance (LGBTQ students)
2. Latino Coalition
3. Asia Pacific Student Coalition
4. Assembly of International Students
5. Muslim Students Association
6. Programs in Religion, Interfaith and Spirituality Matters

**Announcements from Undergraduate UC Seatholders**
In a new initiative, the UA’s status report will include updates from the undergraduate groups who hold seats on the UC owing to NEC allocation.

**Assembly of International Students**
The Assembly of International Students is committed to advocating for the interests of international students and enriching their lives at Penn.

One of our major accomplishments is the International Mentor Program, which pairs incoming international freshmen with current undergraduates from the same region or country.

AIS also continues to expand on The Yield Project, a collaborative endeavor with the Admissions Office that links newly-admitted freshmen with upperclassmen to encourage them to matriculate at Penn.

Our latest project targeting prospective students is the Student Ambassadors Program, again done in cooperation with the Admissions Office, where we send undergraduate representatives to their home country to encourage students to apply to Penn.

AIS is also committed to expanding the translation of Admissions materials into
languages other than Spanish and institutionalizing a consistent format for International Student Orientation. Finally, this year's newest efforts will push for the use of Priority Mailing for important Admissions documents and connecting current undergraduates with International Alumni all over the world.

**PRISM**
PRISM is currently working with the UA to conduct a "Religion Report" documenting whether religious students feel like their needs are met at Penn (social, academic, spiritual, etc) and we're also in the process of establishing a "Faith Fund" through the Chaplain's office to review requests by campus religious groups for event funding.

**Muslim Student Association**
Over the past five years, the Muslim Student Association has been developing a number of initiatives, many of which coincide with the organizations' 45th anniversary.

Most recently, the MSA has worked closely with the Chaplain's Office to deepen the interfaith support networks on campus. This has, as of this academic year, resulted in the establishment of the first ever Interfaith Fellow dedicated to supporting the Muslim community at Penn, in an institutional manner similar to other religious and organizational support mechanisms.

Additionally, the MSA has worked closely with Penn Dining to provide a Halal dining option for students who take advantage of the meal plan option, and now the Commons Dining Hall serves Halal meat upon request. Lastly, the MSA successfully lobbied for the establishment of alternative NSO programming for the diverse needs of students during their first few weeks at Penn. The first year of the alternative NSO program was tremendously received.

Going forward, the MSA hopes to better contribute to the university environment by leveraging its unique relationship with the West Philadelphia community to better integrate Penn and its surrounds, by representing minority interests that may span faith- and culture-backgrounds, and by working closely with the administration to enhance the organizational support systems available to the campus' most active groups.

Respectfully submitted,

*Alec Webley*
*UA Chair (chair@pennua.org)*