

## **Chelsea Grate- CFO**

### **Why are you running for [position]?**

I am running for Chief Financial Officer of the Student Government Association because I am fascinated and inspired by the work that our clubs put in to create events that benefit the SUNY Cortland student body. Finances are usually the starting point for holding an event and it would be my priority as CFO to ensure that clubs are knowledgeable of the SGA's financial policies so they can focus on making positive contributions to the campus.

### **What changes would you like to see brought to campus?**

There should be more understanding and responsiveness to student concerns about accessibility and diversity-based issues. The campus does have committees related to addressing these concerns, but their progress towards fixing the issues is not easily seen by the students. Other changes could be implemented in collaboration with ASC including allowing students to donate unused meal plan swipes to those who are food insecure, lowering some of the meal/drink prices, and offering students higher prices for selling textbooks back.

### **What changes would you like to see internal to the SGA?**

The SGA's internal structure is supported by the incredible work of our various committees. However, I would like to see SGA's internal committees utilized more effectively. Specifically, the Advocacy Committee should do more work with advocacy groups like NYPIRG, the Institute for Civic Engagement, and Students for Access and Ability in College (SFAAC). If I was CFO, I would also require members of the Finance Committee to attend club events or meetings so they can make more informed decisions regarding usage of SGA funds including contingency.

### **What would be your top priority as [position]?**

As Chief Financial Officer, my top priority would be making financial policies that are clearer to students. I have noticed that some clubs are unhappy with policies being enforced that they can't find explicitly written in SGA's Bylaws. I understand this frustration and will be more available to students, so they are able to explain their thoughts. Because the Chief Financial Officer is responsible for funding, a vital part of a club's operations, I want to increase communication and transparency about the financial processes. This includes but is not limited to sending updates about the amount of money left in Contingency and sending detailed explanations of the Finance Committee's decisions.

**SGA has over 6,000 members and 70 clubs. The elected officers themselves oversee a staff of 8 students and 1 part-time employee that collectively work over 100 hours a week and get paid over \$30,000. What makes you qualified to serve as one of the executive officers of such a large organization?**

I currently serve as an Executive Board Member for the SGA as the Secretary. This role has given me the experience needed to understand the needs of the many students involved with

SGA. I am confident in my ability to oversee the SGA staff because I know what needs they must fulfill for the student body and will ensure that they have the resources to do so. As

Secretary, I have familiarized myself with the 70+ clubs on campus so I would easily be able to transition into the role of CFO. In addition, the Secretary and CFO's work are both time-sensitive and require quick responsiveness to questions. This makes me prepared to respond to many people in a short amount of time.

**How familiar are you with the policies and operations of the SGA, especially Robert's Rules of Order, the SGA Constitution, and the SGA Bylaws, and in what ways have you been involved in SGA previously?**

I am quite familiar with the SGA's policies because I am required to follow as well as enforce them in my role as Secretary. I take the minutes at Senate which allows me to have a general knowledge of Robert's Rules of Order. I first read the SGA Constitution when I was elected Secretary to give myself a better understanding of the organization and my role as a member of it and therefore have a good base understanding of it. I am also aware of recent revisions to the bylaws due to my relationship with various Executive Board members who worked on the revision process and my involvement in the Senate confirmation process. Most importantly, I am well versed in the Financial Policies from my time as a Financial Board member during the 2018-2019 academic year and from taking minutes during Financial Board meetings this academic year. My other involvement with SGA includes attending Faculty Senate and sitting on the Joint Committee on Student Interests, two external committees vital to SGA's advocacy work.

**[Position] requires you to spend 10 hours a week in the SGA office, and up to 25 hours a week on SGA work and projects. Are you prepared to spend the time necessary to serve as [position], and what other responsibilities and time commitments will you have next year?**

As the current SGA Secretary, I spend 10-12 hours a week in the SGA office, so I will not have an issue doing that as CFO. There will not be an issue for me to continue doing up to 25 hours of SGA work next year because I will only be taking 12 credits per semester. The only other responsibility/time commitment I would have next year is with NYPIRG. My work with NYPIRG is very flexible and I can take a step back to do more SGA work if I need to.

**Serving as C.F.O. can involve upsetting many people in order to ensure the financial stability and success of the SGA. How would you handle balancing the needs of the SGA overall and the concerns of individual clubs or students?**

As CFO, I plan to build a more personal relationships with clubs. With the clubs' permission, I would like to sit in on club meetings when they are planning events that require a lot of financial attention. My input on budgeting ideas and knowledge of Financial Policy restrictions would save the clubs a lot of time planning if I am there to help them. I would also like clubs who are not familiar or comfortable with attending the Finance Committee meetings (formerly known as Financial Board) to meet with me to go over their presentation for the Finance Committee. This

should ease the tension that comes with presenting to the Finance Committee and give clubs a better idea of the best way to present their budgetary needs. While no club can receive all the funding that they would like, I am committed to ensuring that all clubs gain access to the funding they need, and that the allocation of funding is done in a fair, unbiased manner.