

Western Washington University Associated Students
Student Senate Meeting
Wednesday, October 26th, 2011 VU 567

Student Senators: *Present:* Kendall Bull (Chair), Jered McCardle, Victor Celis, Ean Olsen, Chris Savage, Chris Brown, Amy Stavig, Katie Vainikka, Evan Fowler, Jaime Hamilton
Absent: Fabiola Arvizu, Mason Luvera, Felipe Espinoza
Advisor: Lisa Rosenberg
Secretary: Marissa Jaksich
Guest(s): Michael Vierela

Kendal Bull, Student Senate Chair called the meeting to order at 6:31pm

I. Approval of Minutes - This was not needed as this is the first meeting of the year.

II. Revisions to the Agenda

III. Public Forum

Senator Vainikka introduced the idea that Western Care Packages are not very representative of Western, including items such as Mac N' Cheese, Top Ramen, toys that were made in China, etc. She was very taken back by these items that she personally received when she got a package. She believes Western values being more eco-friendly and green, and thinks that should be more reflected in the care packages Western sends to its students. She would like to see this eventually be included in the agenda. Chair Bull suggests if she would like to write a resolution for it, we can examine this issue further along in the quarter.

IV. Information Items

A. Parliamentarian Nominations

Senator McCardle wondered if Senators could run for two positions because he was interested in two. It was decided to hold Vice Chair nominations first, so that anyone who did not receive that position could still have the chance to run for the Parliamentarian position. Celis nominated Savage for Parliamentarian. He accepted the nomination.

B. Vice Chair Nominations

Savage nominated McCardle. He accepted the nomination.
Fowler nominated Celis. He accepted the nomination. Brown clarified that there were no incumbents returning to a position.

C. Class Standing Nominations

Amy Stavig is nominated for Freshman Senate Representative by default being the only freshman. Vainikka is nominated for Sophomore Senate Representative again by default being the only sophomore. Senators enquired what determined class standings, class credits or years at WWU. Since it was not specified in the Senate bylaws a consensus was made by the senators to allow both credit levels and year at WWU be a determinant. This was noted as an issue to be further examined in the Senate bylaws to be possibly revised in order to better clarify this process. Celis nominated Olsen for Junior Senate Representative. He accepted. McCardle nominated Fowler for Senior Senate Representative. He accepted.

D. Revision to the Bylaws

Doc. 1

Chair Bull explained that the Senate Bylaws were revised by last year's Senators in the spring, but were never approved. Revisions to the bylaws included reducing the number of committees senators are required to sit on from two committees to one to address the importance of quality over quantity. The elimination of the Summer Senate section of the bylaws, Article V, was also among the revisions. Savage asked what committees qualify for the one senate-required committee. It was agreed that as long as he was on a substantive committee that met frequently, it would satisfy the requirement. This was presented as another issue that could be looked at to be more clearly defined in the bylaws.

E. Resolution: *The Removal of Student Information from the Western's Publications Websites in Cases Where Harm Can Be Shown*

Doc. 2

A resolution was brought to the Senate to be reviewed on the removal of student information in Western's publications websites. The concern from the resolution writer was that with today's job market, more and more employers are researching job applicants via the internet and that online Western publications' writing could be harming the chances for students to receive job positions. Savage wanted more clarification about the circumstances, and came to the conclusion that this would really be dependent on who the person was and their situation. Stavig wanted to know if there had been a specific past event that brought this issue about. It was said that there had been issues of people being reflected poorly in Western publications, but no specific event. Fowler made it very clear that this could apply to a very broad spectrum of events, blanketing both the good and the bad. However he thinks this would be beneficial to the university, because it would increase the likelihood students getting jobs, and reduce the likelihood of people being exposed to controversy, and overall would reflect well upon the university.

McCardle wanted to know who offered the resolution, in what context. Was it by an individual, or representing a club or organization. The chair explained that it was an individual who thought this was important issue to bring to light. The chair suggested that amendments could be made and that they could invite Peggy Watt, a journalism professor, or Gina Cole, from the Western Front to weigh in on this issue.

Lisa Rosenberg, Senate Advisor brought up this resolution's potential to be a very complex, complicated issue, with potential legal implications, and is possible to bring media attention. This will definitely be an information item for a while. She introduced the possibility of putting together a taskforce to research with different stakeholders, publications on campus, possibly the Attorney General's office, and the University's Student Publication Council. McCardle would like to look at how student publications would differ from the general publications. There are no laws that require general publications to adhere to anything like this, he wonders if Western's publications be any different. Next week's meeting will continue this discussion.

V. Action Items

VI. Discussion Items

A. Issue of the Quarter:

Savage feels the previous discussion on the presented resolution would be a good issue. Fowler feels the Occupy movement is a very pertinent and current event and they should discuss how it affects students, Western as a whole, as well as the Bellingham community. Olsen seconds this idea as it is a big issue to this quarter, and might not be as an important of an issue in future quarters. Directing attention to this issue now would be a necessity to the provide students with information on how it is affecting students. There are a few student groups involved, and there is a protest that takes place every Friday at 3 O'clock. Vainikka raised a question about what exactly the Occupy movement was. Olsen clarified by saying that it was a movement that started on Sept. 21st with the Occupy Wall Street. It is a leaderless effort to protest happening in 1,500 cities around the world that are protesting the disparity in wealth and income levels, and how the top one percent owns most of the wealth in the world. McCardle urges making sure that the issue should be related back to how it affects Western students, and many other senators shared the same feeling. Brown thought a broad focus on the Occupy movement issues like income disparities or campaign financing would be good. Olsen brought up the issue of tuition levels, congress's super committee that was created to deal with all the budget cuts and what could determine future of financial aid, tuition increases, and Pell grants. Fowler said that there are lot of issues that pertain to budget cuts like income disparity and campaign finance that relates back to Occupy. McCardle stressed financial aid would be an interest to many people and that would be a good issue of the quarter to collect the feelings and opinions of the students. Rosenberg added to keep in mind of what senators want to be done with the responses and how that can best serve the students and have an impact. Getting feedback from the students by collecting data is an important part of the issue of the quarter. McCardle suggested asking the Board to make a resolution about financial aid to present to the Washington Student Association (WSA). Celis said financial aid is what many students are thinking about and could bring attention to Senate. By using such a big, well-known topic that people are passionate about, it can help Senate's image and get the name out there more.

VII. Senator Reports/Concerns

McCardle reported that Structure and Programs Advisory Committee (SPAC) had their first meeting, which was mostly training this week. Celis added that they are helping assess the Women's Center, AS Production Films, The Edge, Underground Coffeehouse, Veterans Outreach Center, and KUGS.

Olsen reported that Legislative Affairs Council (LAC) went over the rules, looked over previous agendas, looked at plans for the future, and discussed how higher education could be improved.

Savage reported that Residential Advisory committee went over how Western's beginning welcome book should be revised that is given out to new students each year on the rules and expectations.

Vainikka discussed AS Transportation Advisory Committee and their plans for the ride share and bike share. They are working on having bikes students can rent for the whole quarter.

VIII. Board Reports/Concerns

IV. Other Business:

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED BY ACCLAMATION AT 7:14 P.M.