

**Western Washington University Associated Students  
Student Senate Meeting  
Thursday, April 26th, 2012 VU 567**

**Student Senators:** *Present:* Kendall Bull (Chair), Jered McCardle, Ethan Glemaker, Christopher Brown, Sharon Schultz, Matthew Yoo, , Katie Vainikka, Felipe Espinoza, Victor Celis, Christopher Savage  
*Absent:* Druksel Dorji, Mason Luvera, Evan Fowler

**Advisor:** Lisa Rosenberg

**Secretary:** Marissa Jaksich

**ASVP for Academic Affairs:** Fabiola Arvizu (*absent*)

**Guest(s):** *Aramark Employee:* Chrispy Stift, Deborah Borden  
*SEIU Local 925:* Lyle Harrod, Tracey Whitten, Robert Hadley  
*Student:* Patrick Stickney, Andrew Taylor  
*AS Board of Directors:* Anna Ellermeier  
*Western Front:* Brook Warren

*Kendal Bull, Student Senate Chair called the meeting to order at 4:50 pm*

**S-12-S-06** Approval of the minutes of Thursday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2012. *Passed*

**S-12-S-07** Adding Senate Reform- Anna Ellermeier to Discussion Item. *Passed*

#### **I. Approval of Minutes**

**MOTION S-12-S-06** by McCardle

Approval of minutes of April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2012

Second: Glemaker      Vote: 8- 0 - 1      Action: **Passed**

#### **II. Revisions to the Agenda**

#### **III. Public Forum**

#### **IV. Information Items**

##### **A. Aramark Employees Unionizing**

**Doc. 1**

Chair asked the guests present at the senate meeting to introduce themselves and say a few words. Chrispy Stift started off saying he was the one who contacted the union because Aramark policies had been oppressive to its employees. He said employees were encouraged to quit or slowly fired, so he called the union. Deborah Borden said that she had worked in campus dining services over 18 years. She explained that they get written up for two minutes wrong on the time clock and other series of events that are oppressive. She also explained that Aramark is not friendly to families because they need to know they have medical coverage. All employees were told that they would be laid off over summer except students and management. The same benefits would continue through COBRA, but employees would be responsible for paying for 100% of the costs while without a job, she explained. She said that the employee handbook is subject to change at any time. McCardle asked about any other problems like the time card issues. Stift explained that shifts were being taken away, cut from 40 hours to 17 hours. He said that they were told that the hours cut were to give hours to students, but then they went and hired a full-time employee to

replace him. He then was very aggressive in looking for hours in other departments, but he was told by a manager that he could not continue to do so because he makes too much money and the business needs work to go to the lowest wage holders because it cuts down on costs, regardless of seniority or ability. Debra and Stift mentioned that a baker that had been at Western for 40 years was demoted for that very same reason. Lyle Harrod, an organizer for SEIU, said that COBRA is only used by about 10 percent of employers because of the financial strain it puts on its employees. McCardle asked about the firings without explanation and whether or not they give them any written reason. Borden explained that they may give somewhat of a reason, but they never give it in writing because it could be used back against them. The chair asked what Bruce Shepard and the university's response was on this issue. Stift said there was no official response from the President Shepard and that he has deferred all response to Willy Hart who wrote a letter that had been posted vaguely supporting an open election without harassment, but in Stift's opinion, he felt it was weakly worded. Yoo wanted to know more about the intimidating policies. Stift said that management had treated him differently since he had begun organizing unionization. He says that he is no longer allowed to go in some areas and he has been prohibited from using the computers, and his position for Engrained requires him to research new sustainable recipes and use campus email to communicate with his coworkers and managers. He also no longer has access to an office to keep his cookbooks. All of those in addition to the reduction of hours have been intimidating new rules. Borden said though that they are not rules and that there is no solid explanation for employing them. They continued explaining many other intimidating policies that Aramark employs. Harrod said that Aramark has demonstrated cookie cutter anti-union propaganda, and that it is not going to stop until someone like President Shepard makes a strong statement that employees need to be given the opportunity to organize free of coercion and intimidation, and that is what they are asking the Senate to help with. Borden said that employees cannot bring up the union because of the fear of being fired. Savage asked if there was evidence of that because firing for unionizing is illegal. Borden responded that Aramark has been very smart with not writing things down or if there are witnesses present, they will be other managers. They find this a classic example of management trying to confuse employees with intimidating tactics. Harrod explained that there has been some "carrots" being handed out, which were basically small promises management would make to sway people from wanting to unionize. Brown spoke saying that he supports this and does not see any reason why senate should not pass it. Chair asked what Aramark's response was to other university dining services being unionized. Tracey Whitton responded saying that Aramark was 17% unionized in this country. She said that the SEIU had been working with other SEIUs about this issue, and apparently the same letter had been issued in other areas around the country. Stift said that he would really like the student senate's support on this issue and also hopes President Shepard will make a statement. Chair explained that Student Senate is an advisory to the board of directors and how it works is that senate would vote on this issue the following week and then it would go to the AS Board of Directors. Stickney suggested that there should be an added resolve statement to urge President Shepard to make a statement in addition to the resolve statement urging Aramark to remain neutral.

## V. Action Items

## VI. Discussion Items

### *MOTION S-12-S-07 by Celis*

Adding Senate Reform- Anna Ellermeier to Discussion Item A

Second: Brown Vote: 7- 0 - 2 Action: **Passed**

#### **A. Senate Reform- Anna Ellermeier**

Anna Ellermeier introduced herself as the AS President and said she had been working on many senate reform ideas but she really wanted to gauge senators on their opinions on senate reform. She feels that there is not a lot of clarity about the purpose of Student Senate and would like to find a purpose. McCardle thinks we really need to cement what needs to be done. He thinks the work session was very informative but thinks they need to look at the commitment and set goals to reach and go beyond just the talk. Anna replied saying that she wants to build a roadmap of that vision. Glemaker said his impression of the student senate was to serve as an advisory board and thinks senate really offers a lot of student input. He thinks that more diversity from different departments, clubs, and other organizations on campus could help improve the diversity of student input, and could then more effectively serve as a unique advisory board to the AS Board of Directors. He does think one downside that exists currently is that going through senate doubles the length of time to get an outcome and that most students do not want to go through all that bureaucracy. He thinks if we could reduce the bureaucracy by not having both bodies have a three week period, it would make senate a more approachable body. Yoo agrees with Glemaker and added that Senate does save the Board from less important resolutions. He also believed that you get what you put in and thinks reform will require more dedication in order to be successful. Celis said that to him Senate represents student voices and is something he values. Also on another note he believes Senate to be a good foot in the door to get more involved with the Associated Students (AS). He does agree with Glemaker in increasing the number of student voices that represent broader interests. Anna asked about what senators thought would be the added value of making Senate chair a voting member on the AS Board. McCardle thinks that would bring senate and the student voice to the board's decisions. Brown thinks that issue of the quarter could be more effective if senate chair were elected by students and it would create better awareness of the senate. He also thinks senate reports should be moved to the middle of Board meetings. He also agrees that senate needs more diversity, but worries about making the process more difficult because there is already difficulty getting senators. He also thinks that Senate could be the first stop for resolutions and take some work off the board's hands. McCardle thinks it would be beneficial for more involvement of senate chair on the board. Espinoza feels that there is a lack of representation and that at Western people should feel charged that they can have an impact. Anna clarified that there should be avenues for students to expand their passion and thinks senate could be established more as a resource for students. Yoo thought that diversifying the senate especially with representatives from majors could serve as an entry way into Senate and involvement. Celis thinks senate could offer an outside perspective from the board. Vainikka thinks that senators are ears around campus

and can bring back student input. Glemaker disagreed with Katie saying that the Board also serves as ears on campus. In terms of the bureaucracy involved, he wondered if the senate voted on an issue as an action item would it have to go to the board as an information item or could the process be shortened. He does think electing senate chair would increase awareness around campus and that diverse representatives other than Political Science majors would be a benefit. He also suggested removing from the bylaws the requirement to serve on one committee and instead say club or some other organization on campus to have a broader reach on campus. He suggested having a Residence Hall Association representative. McCardle thought that the AS was made up of a very closed loop and that senate gives the opportunity for people who are not involved with the AS to voice more of an opinion. Anna said that she would really like to see senate become more representative of student opinions and wants to validate the structure of senate so that it functions more effectively. She closed by thanking senators for their input and said that she will come back with more of a framework.

#### **B. Issue of the Quarter**

McCardle who volunteered to be chair of the student senate forum subcommittee, mentioned that he had made a Facebook event page for the Student Technology Fee Forum and encouraged all of the senators to invite people. He said the event would be May 17th in Communication Facility 120 at 5pm, and there would be free pizza. He said that it would be taking place of the senate meeting that week.

### **VII. Board Reports/Concerns**

#### **VIII. Senator Reports/Concerns**

**Espinoza** reported that ESC's President's Council is still discussing whether the Russian Club's should become part of the Ethnic Student Center.

**Celis** reported that Academic Coordinating Commission (ACC) was still discussing the Recruitment, Admissions, and Retention Committee.

**Vainikka** reported that AS Transportation Advisory Committee (ASTAC) took the top recommendations from their master plan and passed them on to the university.

**Savage** reported that Rec Center Advisory Committee got their bonds refinanced, approved the new student complex down by the health center, and discussed that there would be no rec center fee increase.

#### **IV. Other Business:**

**THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED BY ACCLAMATION AT 5:55P.M.**