

Western Washington University Associated Students
Student Senate
Tuesday, October 23, 2012 **VU 567**

Present: Christian Correa (Chair); Victor Celis (AS VP for Academic Affairs); Bill Campbell; Sarah Kohout; Alex Holland; Evan Fowler; Joseph Levy; Chris Brown; Neil Christenson; Brian Toews; Marc Oomen; Paige Robins;
Absent: Amanda Squires
Advisor: Lisa Rosenberg
Secretary: Madeline Espeseth
Guest: Matt Hilliard

MOTIONS

SS-12-F-1 Creation of Ad-hoc committee will be an Action Item next meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Christian Correa, Chair at 6:48 pm

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

II. REVISIONS TO THE AGENDA

III. PUBLIC FORUM

IV. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Vice Chair Nominations

Campbell nominated Fowler to be a Vice Chair, Christenson seconded, Fowler accepted. Levy nominated Campbell, Robins seconded, Campbell accepted.

B. Parliamentary Nominations

Toews nominated Christenson, Robins seconded, Christenson accepted. Celis reminded those who were nominated to have something prepared to say at the next meeting.

VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. By Laws

Correa noted that the bylaws are under the control of the Senate. Celis said if anyone wanted to draft the language the bylaws can be changed. Fowler volunteered. Campbell made note of the fact that Senate Chair is an employee of the AS, and the job description is different than what it says in the by-laws.

B. Issue of the Quarter

Correa wants to have an event that reaches students so they are more aware of the Student Senate and what they do. Fowler noted that the Issue of the Quarter has historically taken a long time to come up with and suggested that it be started now. Fowler and Celis said some topics from last year were: Higher One issues, the coal train, and the Student Technology Fee. Levy had been thinking about littering and cigarette butts as a possible idea. Campbell thinks Senate is representative of the student body and should focus on political things that affect campus. Campbell suggested the food situation on campus since campus dining options have become more commercial and less local focused. Levy brought up the Whatcom Lake and it being fenced. Celis brought up that our charge from the BoD is to focus on campus and community issues. Brown wants to stay focused on things that directly affect our campus. Fowler dittoed. Campbell suggested taking a stance on national or community issues and

presenting a resolution to the Board. Ooman talked about the water bottle initiative because it is something the students are passionate and interested in, and possibly talking about the broader issue of sustainability. Celis suggested that the Senate work with Katie Savinski, AS VP for Student Life on this. Christenson does not believe that it is Western Washington University's place or the AS' to take a formal stance on larger issues. He believes that it is something the Senate could encourage students to take a stance rather than telling students what the Senate believes. Toews questioned as to why it would be inappropriate for Western to take a stance. Christenson thinks it is more important for students to get involved and not to tell them what the AS thinks. The Senate and the AS should encourage critical thinking from students. Campbell agrees with what Christenson said, but said that the University has taken stances before. Campbell feels AS has the responsibility to engage the world, and as elected and appointed representatives it is necessary that the Senate take a stance for students. Fowler thought Christenson brought up a good point, but Fowler believes Western is too political. Brown and Christenson dittoed. Fowler believes the Senate needs to focus more on Western. Fowler would like to focus more on Senate outreach. He feels it would be beneficial because it is an issue that students do not know what the Senate is; the Senate cannot have a discussion about what issue it wants to take on until the Senate represents the student body. Toews, Christenson and Levy dittoed. Fowler suggested general outreach and advertising to the students as well as the presidents of the colleges. Ooman agrees with what Fowler said, but feels the Senate should not limit itself to internal university issues but the Senate should engage in the broader community. Ooman suggests that the Senate look at how effective our student government is now, and look at the structure of it to see how it affects our governance. Ooman suggested the university have a student run pub. Christenson thinks that there should be a senator from every college and that the Senate needs to educate students on who to approach if they have an issue. There was a lot of support and dittoing for this idea. Christenson suggested that Senators and introduce themselves at classes etc. so students are aware of who is representing them. Toews agreed with enthusiasm, and said that the Senate needs to be more transparent and approachable. Toews suggested having something in the Viking Union so that students were aware of whom their Senators are. He believes that the Senate should utilize social media more. Robins thinks that the Senate should let people know who the Senate are and how to get in touch with Senators. Robins also believes that it is important for people to know that everyone is welcome. Campbell suggested that those who are new to campus go back through past minutes to get a better idea of what the Senate has done. Campbell wants to take a better look at the makeup of the senate and how fully representative Senators are of campus. Campbell also suggested that everyone go and introduce themselves to the dean of the college they represent. Celis would be more than happy to help start those conversations. Celis is looking at ways to help everyone be more interactive with their constituents. Christenson said that the Senate should update the website to reflect the Senate for this year and their contact information. Correa encourages anyone who thinks there should be reform, should start on it now. Ooman brought up the "opinion poll" portion of the Senate website, and he thinks the Senate should utilize it more. Ooman also thinks the Senate should be directly elected to create accountability; this is something the Senate needs to start talking about now, and should include the AS Board in that conversation. Ooman also suggested that Senators set up a coffee hour. Squires suggested that the Senate do tabling in Red Square. Toews and Robins dittoed. Fowler said that many of these ideas have been done before, and they should continue to be done. He said the Senate need to pinpoint what needs to change so the Senate can take a more direct path. Fowler also said the Senate should utilize our best resource: Victor Celis. Fowler also suggested that there be a subcommittee of Senators who does brainstorming to remove some of the unnecessary conversations. Fowler also addressed the word "appointed" and said that the Senate is a committee that was chosen to represent Western

Washington University but it was something everyone had to apply for and it is not a guarantee that all people who apply will be in the Senate. Celis brought up the AS by-laws and that in order to change the Student Senate to elected positions, the change has to be voted on by the students. Celis suggested that the Senate set aside a meeting to discuss senate reform. Christenson dittoed. Celis said that Senate cannot be changed overnight; he appreciated the discussion the Senators were having, and agreed with Correa that Senate should make outreach the issue of the quarter. Hilliard suggested having the Senate do live opinion polls where students can meet the Senators face to face and learn more about what concerns the students have. Many senators dittoed. Campbell suggested that the Senate outreach by doing an event that students will care about. Campbell wanted to remind the Senate that it needs to think realistically.. Correa said that it is very easy to get ahold of listservs; all you need to do is talk to professors, deans, administrative assistance, and presidents. Correa also said that there were only 11 people who applied to be senators, and there are 15 spots on the Senate, and in the future he would like to see more people applying. Correa's idea for outreach is a tabling event where the Senators ask students "What is Your Issue?" in order to get students interested and engaged. Fowler said that the Senate could reserve seats for colleges and then let the college determine who fills those seats. Fowler also said that based on research done last year opinion polls are not going to be statistically relevant. Ooman asked Christenson if an ad hoc committee could be created. Celis said that the Senate has not set up ad hoc committees traditionally. Last year a work session was set up to work on Senate reform. Rosenberg said that there have been opportunities for small groups of Senators to get together. Campbell said that the Senate needs to set more precedent.

MOTION SS-12-F-01 by Fowler

Make the creation of an ad hoc committee an action next week.

Second: Christenson Vote: 8-0-0 Action: Passed

VII. BOARD REPORTS/CONCERNS

VIII. SENATOR REPORTS/CONCERNS

A. Ooman

Ooman is planning on doing a coffee meeting with his constituents and there is a big concern among them with there not being a pub on campus.

B. Christenson

SPAC started and is getting underway

C. Campbell

None of Campbell's committees have started yet. One of Campbell's constituents brought up the issue of why sexual orientation is a factor for who can donate blood.

D. Correa

Is going to compile all the ideas discussed today.

E. Levy

Nothing to report

F. Squires

There are not enough lampposts by bus stops.

G. Robins

Has nothing to report

H. Brown

PTAC is talking about the possibility of drawing bike lanes on the bricks in Red Square, and changing around parking passes. There may also be a fee for after-hours parking.

I. Celis

The BoD looked at a lot of charger and charters, as well as approved funding for the

Committee training this Thursday at 6pm. Celis needs 19 more students for committees.

J. Fowler

LAC reviewed a lot of information that the Student Senate would be interested in because it pertains to the WA state higher education. The pdf is online and Fowler recommends all Senators read it.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

- A.** Correa wants to remind all Senators that some people are new here and to please be kind to fellow senators. Correa also asks that everyone speak up and ask questions if they have any. He also encouraged people to attend AS Board meetings if they have time.

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.