

Western Washington University Associated Students
Student Senate
Tuesday, February 26, 2013 **VU 567**

Senators: Christian Correa (Chair) *Present:* Bill Campbell, Sarah Kohout, Evan Fowler, Joseph Levy, Neil Christenson, Marc Oommen, Matthew Hilliard, and Andrew Entrikin. *Absent:* Chris Brown, Brian Toews, and Amanda Squires
Advisors: Lisa Rosenberg, Assistant Director of Student Activities;
Victor Celis (AS VP for Academic Affairs)
Secretary: Kaylee Galloway
Guests: John von Volkli

MOTIONS

S-13-W-11 Approve the minutes of Tuesday, February 19, 2013. *Passed*
S-13-W-12 Adopt the WA State Dream Act Resolution. *Passed*

The meeting was called to order by Christian Correa, Chair at 6:04 pm

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION S-13-W-11 by Christenson
Approve the minutes of Tuesday, February 19, 2013.
Second: Fowler Vote: no dissent Action: Passed

II. REVISIONS TO THE AGENDA

Oommen would like a unanimous consent to have the DREAM Act under action items. Seconded by Levy. Christenson objected to the unanimous consent. He said that the chair did not make it an action item. Correa said that he just brought it back as an information item. Fowler said that this would be so the Student Senate could make a decision and recommend to the Board. Oommen said it should be a discussion at least. Christenson withdrew his objection. Motion passed 4-0-3.

III. PUBLIC FORUM

IV. INFORMATION ITEMS

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. WA State Dream Act Resolution

Oommen said it a great resolution and provides the opportunity for the Student Senate to have a call to action to encourage legislators. He said that it is another tool to contribute to the discussion. Christenson said that he liked the resolution. He offered a friendly amendment for the last whereas clause to change request to urges. Hilliard said that he and Entrikin talked about the resolution. He said they thought the representatives would be more receptive if there were more ideas regarding revenue and what the DREAM Act would cost. Entrikin wondered about the \$5.7 billion figure in line 30. Oommen said that undocumented people have been contributing to revenue by paying taxes such as sales tax. He said that the Washington State DREAM Act will positively contribute to the economy. He said that there was a study done to get that information. Hilliard wondered if the Student Senate would be open to come up with possible sources of revenue to fund it. Oommen said he would encourage people to explore the idea. He said that this resolution is more of a broad support. He said that the Student Senate should not be making the political arguments. He said that it is an important conversation, but

that it is not as important in this context. Christenson noted that this resolution would be going to the Board next. Hilliard said that many of the Republican Legislators expressed at Viking Lobby Day that they were not fully behind supporting the measure. He said it would mean more to provide fiscal information. Oommen said that all education in Washington State has a revenue problem and the costs of adding more people to eligibility do not outweigh the benefits. He said that there would not be much upfront cost to the system. Correa emphasized that this would be the Student Senate taking a stance. Celis said that the State Need Grant is funded by the sales tax. He said that students who are undocumented pay into a program they do not have access to. He said that the Board and the AS has already taken a stance on the Washington State DREAM Act. He said he would encourage the Student Senate to start the action aspect of this resolution. Oommen said that this resolution focuses more on the action. He said that it would help in sending letters to legislators. Celis agreed that the letters should be sent to legislators. He said that this resolution is not necessary to do that because it seems more like a plan of action rather than the action itself. He recommended that the Senate move past this resolution because the stance has already been taken. He said that if it was passed, he would bring it to the Board. Campbell said that the LAC has already taken a stance on this issue. He said that the Federal Agenda will be passed with the DREAM Act in it. He voiced concern that sending in the resolution would not help strengthen the argument. He said that resolutions normally do not have citations. He said that the Student Senate should go to the Legislative Liaison to see what resources can be provided to help. He wanted to make sure that time was being well spent. Celis said that the Student Senate could draft a letter to be sent out.

MOTION S-13-W-12

by Oommen

Adopt the WA State Dream Act Resolution.

Second: Levy

Vote: 3-1-4

Action: Passed

VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Legacy/Senate Reform

Correa said that there are a few reform ideas. He said that one is creating a legacy document and the other is suspending the Student Senate for a year and taking that time to reform it. Von Volkli said that the REP went through the assessment process this year. He said that it was recommended to continue to develop the Student Senate. He said that after talking with different people, the idea was to take an administrative year off and hire someone who can work with the VP for Governmental Affairs to help reform the Student Senate. He said that it will be focused on the gains that were made this year. He said the goal is to find where the Student Senate fits in the overall AS structure. He said senate helps with getting student collaboration with the faculty. He said that the Student Senate should serve as an advisory group to the Board. He said that workshopping with a different model can help in determining where the Student Senate would fit. He said developing and refining the model has been discussed over many years and that there has been a break through. He said that he would like to see the Student Senate prepare a legacy document that goes over the history of the office and the practices. He said that it will be a good model to turn over to the Student Senate and focus on getting input for the employee next year. He said getting written input will be very beneficial and helpful. Celis said that this process has been discussed at the Board with regards to the Board job descriptions. Campbell said that he is disturbed by the process and that the Student Senate reform subcommittee was never included in this discussion. He said that he respects the assessment process, but that there can be more that is done in this process. He acknowledged that this is a very important issue and that it should have been brought to the Student Senate earlier. He was also worried about the Student Senate falling under the purview of the VP for Governmental Affairs. He thought that the tendency would be to have the

Student Senate focus more on legislative issues, and that LAC already serves that purpose. Campbell said that suspending the Student Senate for a year has great potential, but was concerned that it would not be allowed per the Bylaws. Christenson dittoed. Oommen wondered about the timeline and making the decision. Celis said that is a good question. He said that the Board is hoping to get it done as soon as possible and that the Board will be taking a stance. He said that it can be an action item as soon as next meeting and that the Board is currently working on their job description. Celis further noted that there is much more to be done with this process. He said that the Student Senate could propose ideas and establish a framework based on what has been done in the past. With regards to the job description change, Celis said that the Student Senate does not really fit with the AS VP for Academic Affairs. He said that the Student Senate chair is in the REP office, which the VP for Governmental Affairs oversees that office. Oommen thought that changing the Student Senate to Governmental Affairs is appropriate because the purpose is to represent students. Christenson dittoed. Oommen suggested having the Student Senators being directly elected. Celis said that an idea like that should be included in the legacy document. Levy agreed that putting it under the VP for Governmental Affairs is a great idea. Celis said that it will help increase student representation. Christenson wondered if a chair could be hired to serve as a chair and also help with reform. Celis said that the Student Senate cannot continue to operate under the same procedure and that the break should be taken and then come back under the new system. Von Volkli said that the idea tonight was to introduce the process. He said that the Student Senate deserves more time than what was suggested by the REP office. He said that Senators can each draft a section of the legacy document and then collaborate. He said that the process the Senate take can be flexible because a group legacy document has never been done before. Celis said that Senate feedback is needed and that that more perspectives the better. Campbell said that he still has many concerns. He said that he has an issue with the chair being someone who also serves on the Board because the Student Senate serves as an advisory to the Board. He said that he is concerned about how far the process will go. Campbell said that this has been a five year process and not everything that needs to be done has been done. He said that he is not sure the process is going far enough. He said that there have been legacy documents for the Student Senate in the past. Campbell said that he has a lot of reservations moving forward. He said that he is concerned that the Senate has problems and has been pretty useless so far. He said that the Student Senate has done many great things in the past. He said that he is concerned about the Student Senate going on hiatus. Hilliard agreed with much of what Campbell said. He said that he was concerned that the reform process would be held to one person's responsibility. He said that he doesn't think that the Student Senate needs to be put on hiatus. He said that the Senate would just need to reserve a lot of time to the reform process and to try to figure it all out. He is worried that it might not be inclusive enough. Kohout said that senate reform does need to be really focused on and that hiring someone is a great idea. Entrikin said that he is also concerned about putting the Student Senate on hiatus. He said that many people would benefit from more information about the process and the issues with the Senate. Celis said that discussion on effect and purpose has been occurring for several years. He said that there has been no position specifically designated to help with the process. He said that hiring someone would allow for them to focus on Senate reform. Celis also noted that election of Senators would also change the process and that there has been discussion about that. He said that there is no set plan on how this reform and how hired individual(s) would be implemented. He said that regardless, people involved would be focused on Senate reform and would not be representing students, which is why the body would not be called Student Senate. He said the idea of a referendum has also been an idea considered. He said that there would be the fall and the winter to create that and then have it voted on in the spring. Von Volkli said that in the draft of the job description, that position would be

responsible for facilitating student forums. He said that there would still be an organized forum for students who are interested. He said that there would be administration perspective that could help with the Senate focusing on the tasks at hand and to implement the new Student Senate model. Fowler said that it makes sense to set aside a year and resources to help reform the Student Senate. He said that there have been past interest in reforming the Student Senate, but that the chair cannot focus on chair duties and reform. Oommen agreed with Fowler. He said that it would be difficult to participate in the Senate and try to reform it. Hilliard said that he felt a lot better after hearing more information. Von Volkli said that many perspectives can be incorporated into the process. He said that the senate legacy document will help with the process. Campbell brought up the cost benefit analysis. He said that there have been a lot of benefits. He said that he has substantial reservations with the current process. Levy said that the Student Senate needs to be reformed to be a stronger body. Christenson said that Senators should think about this and bring it back.

VII. SENATOR REPORTS/CONCERNS

A. Matthew Hilliard

Nothing to report.

B. Marc Oommen

Nothing to Report

C. Joseph Levy

Nothing to report.

D. Evan Fowler

Fowler reported that the LAC passed a funding request for the Backbone Campaign who will be helping put on the rally in March.

E. Sarah Kohout

Kohout reported that she has been collecting feedback regarding the STF. She said that students like the idea of being able to have access to the U drive at home.

F. Neil Christenson

Christenson reported that SPAC has wrapped up business and has many great recommendations. He emphasized that senators should come to Senate Outreach Committee. Kohout dittoed. He said that T-val committee met for the first time. Kohout dittoed.

G. Andrew EntriKin

Nothing to report.

H. Bill Campbell

Campbell reported that the Student Technology Fee Renewal committee is meeting Friday to put together a referendum.

VIII. BOARD REPORT/CONCERNS

Celis reported that there was a really productive six-hour meeting on student fees. He said that the board has been working on job descriptions and that the Board is hoping to have those done soon. He said that there is some restructuring of the Board that is being worked on. He said that he and four other Board members went to a reception in Olympia. He said that Elect Her was held this last weekend. He also said that there will be an info meeting regarding the elections this Thursday.

IX. OTHER BUSNIESS

Correa reminded the Senators that if they want an item on the agenda, to send it to Correa and Galloway by Thursday at 12pm.

The Meeting was adjourned at 7:13 p.m.