



Overview of the A.S. Student Senate

The WWU Associated Students Student Senate was created during the 2000-01 academic year. However, the history of the Student Senate goes back a number of years prior to its founding.

In the early 1990s, the A.S. Board of Directors created a committee called the A.S. Student Representative Council. The SRC was charged with acting as the voice of the students and advising the A.S. Board of Directors in their decision-making process. Due to internal issues and questions concerning their role, the SRC membership lost interest and the organization ceased to function.

In the late 1990s, the A.S. Board addressed the concern of increasing the student voice in the university decision-making process and the need for another governing/advising body of students. In 1997, the Board created the A.S. Governance Commission. It was approved by a student vote in the A.S. general election and was incorporated into the AS Bylaws.

The A.S. Governance Commission consisted of 33 student Commissioners. Most of the Commissioners were recommended by the Deans of the university's six colleges. Three Freshmen, two Sophomores and four at-large students were also appointed by the A.S. Board of Directors. The ASGC was initially created to advise the A.S. Board and fill the void left by the A.S. Student Representative Council. The Commission was charged with campus-wide communication on behalf of the students of the university.

Due to the lack of student interest and a difficult selection process, the A.S. Governance Commission was not able to fulfill its mission. "The Commission never got off the ground; it died before it was ever started," stated Jason Adams, A.S. Vice President for Academic Affairs, 2000-2001.

In October of 2000, Bill Heming, AS VP for Business and Operations, founded the A.S. Student Senate. The Senate was created to increase student participation in both the student and university government systems and was established to complete what the Governance Commission started.

In November of 2000, the A.S. Student Senate ratified its first Charge and Charter, as well as established its Bylaws. Though the Governance Commission still existed at this time, it was not a functioning assembly. In winter quarter 2001, VP Heming brought the issue to the A.S. Board and requested a referendum on the spring A.S. election ballot that would effectively replace the A.S. Governance Commission with the Student Senate. In a 4-2-1 vote, the A.S. Board of Directors approved the measure and the referendum passed by a 77.82% margin that spring. The A.S. Student Senate had been created and was established as the primary advising body to the A.S. Board of Directors and one of the deliberative bodies of WWU's student government.

Past A.S. Student Senate Chairs

Jake Barry, 2000-01

Eric Masten, 2001-02 (Chair Julie Schmeichel resigned January 8, 2002)

Kevin Stock, 2002-03

James Sanders, 2003-04

Karl Geisler, 2004-05

Chiho Lai, 2005-06

A.S. Student Senate & Historical Highlights

May 1997 – A.S. Student Governance Commission is created by the A.S. Board of Directors

October 30, 2000 – A.S. Student Senate is founded

May 9, 2001 – The Senate is made an official AS Organization by a 77.82% majority in the general elections. The A.S. Student Senate replaces the A.S. Student Governance Commission as the primary advisory board to the A.S. Board of Directors

August, 2005 – First A.S. Senate Chair office in VU 527

October 18, 2005 – Student Senate votes and approves a Senate Logo

October 19, 2005 – A.S. Board of Directors approves a paid Student Senate chair position