



# AS Structural Review Committee

Friday, January 29th, 2016

2:30pm

VU460

- Members:** *Present:* Hannah Brock (AS VP for Business and Operations, Chair); Mason Hawk (Student-At-Large); Kevin Recto (Residence Hall Association Representative); Emma Palumbo (AS VP for Student Life); Patrick Eckroth (AS VP for Governmental Affairs); Daniel Edgel (Student-At-Large); Hannah van Amen (Student-At-Large)  
*Absent:* Luciane DeAlmeida (AS Queer Resource Center Assistant Coordinator); BreAnn Sherrill (Student-At-Large); Jordan Walley (Athletics Representative); Samantha Goldblatt (Student-At-Large)
- Advisors:** Lisa Rosenberg (Assistant Director for Student Activities); Eric Alexander (Associate Dean of Students and Director of the Viking Union, Lacistator); Casey Hayden (Coordinator of Student Activities)
- Secretary:** Octavia Schultz (AS Board Assistant for Internal Committees)
- Guests:** Bill Martin (Student-At-Large)

## Motions:

**SRC-16-W-2** To approve the minutes from January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016. **Passed.**

*Brock called the meeting to order at 2:35pm.*

## I. Approval of Minutes

*MOTION SRC-16-W-2 by Palumbo*

*To approve the minutes from January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016.*

Second: van Amen Vote: 5 - 0 - 0

Action: Passed

## II. Discussion Item

- a. Eckroth entered. Brock stated for the following meetings she wanted each committee member to research the student government structure of a different university to present to the committee.

## III. Information Item

- a. Oregon State University Associated Students Structure

Rosenberg entered. Alexander stated there were two primary student government models; corporate and representative. He stated the AS of Oregon State University was structure similar to a state government; made up of judicial, legislative, and executive branches. He stated candidates for President and Vice President ran together on combined tickets. He noted that at one time, candidates ran individually for President and the runner up in the election became Vice President. He stated once the positions were elected they constructed their Cabinet. The Cabinet members were hired to oversee different areas of representation. He compared the six AS Vice Presidents of WWU to the Cabinet members of the AS of OSU. He stated the Cabinet members oversaw task forces, and hired directors to lead specific task forces and acquire members for the committees. He stated with that system, the workload of the

organization was spread out among more people than at WWU. He stated the legislative branch of the AS of OSU consisted of a House of Representatives and a Senate. He noted the Speaker of the House was an elected position, and that House members were intended to be a representative sample of students from across the campus. He stated the membership had changed over the years but that at the time the House of Representatives consisted of 25 student members; 20 undergraduate students and 5 graduate students. He noted the Houses' primary focus was budgeting and finance. Hayden entered. Alexander stated that Senators were meant to come from each colleges of the university, but had been changed to an at-large system. He noted the Senate's main focus was policy making. Eckroth inquired if the Senate was comparable to the AS Management Council of WWU. Alexander stated the Senate created AS policies and interfaced with university policies, noting that the Senate had been in existence for over 75 years. He expressed his concern that both the Senate and the House of Representatives consisted of at-large representation, and that model was not truly representative. He stated it may have been just as effective to have one group making decisions. He noted that the AS of OSU was its own entity and did not have the support of advisors. He stated there was a singular "Student Advocate" position that supported elected members in understanding the AS and provided trainings for them. He stated the AS acted as a check and balance system for faculty and administrative bodies. He noted that model was tough on the person in the Student Advocate position, as they were the sole source of information for the incoming elected members, and had no permanent colleagues to work with. Palumbo inquired if the Student Advocate position played a similar advisory role to the elected members as the Associate Dean of Student Engagement or the AS Board Program Assistant positions did to the AS Board of Directors at WWU. Alexander noted there were some student staff support positions as well. He stated the AS of OSU did not plan many events or programs, but offered services and resources. He stated the organization hired two full time attorneys to assist students with legal concerns and offer advice. He stated the Office of Advocacy supported students in attaining fair and equitable access, and the Student Legal Services helped students with off campus concerns. He stated the organization used to have a Social Services Office but it was moved to its own department. He stated the office supported homeless students through a food stamps program and food pantry, as well as providing campus housing options for homeless students. He noted the office had started as an AS resource but had become its own department because it had gotten so large. Brock inquired how the legislative branch interacted with the other branches of the student government. Alexander stated that policies or decisions passed by the Senate or the House of Representatives could have been vetoed by the executive branch, and that the legislative branch also acted as a check and balance system to the executive branch. Edgel entered. Brock inquired what the judicial branch did. Alexander stated that branch had never been fully actualized, but could have been compared to the AS Personnel Office at WWU that ran the Elections Board and handled the Employment Policy. Brock inquired how often the judicial branch was utilized. Alexander stated it was utilized a few times per term. Brock inquired if the positions were paid. Alexander stated a couple of positions received a small stipend. Hayden inquired who received pay for their positions. Alexander stated all executive members, the Speaker of the House, and all chairs of task forces were paid positions. He stated he was unsure if the Senators were volunteers or received stipends. He noted that there was a class associated with task forces so

chairs were able to learn about how to run committees and make them successful. He stated that programming was run through the student union, and that the department was called "Student Leadership and Involvement" instead of "Activities". He noted there was a Cultural Foods Program that allowed heritage groups to make their own dishes for heritage dinners rather than contracting a catering company, making it more cost effective for attendees and groups. He stated there was a specific office that organized events and concerts, as well as a Leadership Development office, a Civic Engagement office, and a Service Center. He noted the Service Center provided students with opportunities for volunteer work around the community, and organized alternative spring break trips to serve other communities. He noted the International Students Organization was comparable to the AS of WWU Presidents Council. Rosenberg noted that OSU had a high international student population. Alexander agreed. He stated the student union also had a Union Board of Directors, with an elected President and hired directors. He stressed that the AS of OSU kept advocacy and policy work separate from campus programs and services, but that the two departments were able to work together well and were housed in the same building. Edgel inquired how the Union Board of Directors and the executive branch of the Associated Students were different. Alexander stated the executive branch of the AS was more representative of students, and had many students working in focused areas that interested them. Rosenberg inquired if the student union budgets were also submitted to the House of Representatives. Alexander stated that similar to the Services and Activities Fee Committee of WWU, there was a Student and Incidental Fees Committee at OSU. He noted that budgets were submitted to the Union Board of Directors, and then on to the Student and Incidental Fees Committee. Once the committee passed the budgets, the entire Student and Incidental Fee was voted on by the Ways and Means committee of the House, and eventually through the full House of Representatives. He stated if the House of Representatives could not make a decision, a mediation process would take place. He stated once the fee passed through the House it was voted on by the AS President before moving on to the state government. Edgel stated he believed the model of separating the programming and advocacy pieces of the organization, noting that the AS of WWU was too muddled with employees trying to work on both sides of their selected issue or topic. Rosenberg inquired who the Student Advocate reported to. Alexander stated they reported to the Dean of Students, and worked with the President of the university. Edgel inquired how Representatives were elected. Alexander noted there had been discussion about how to create a truly representative body for the House, and that the elections had been changed to at-large. Hayden stated that when there was no structure about where representation comes from, the problem arose of those with privilege and power controlling things. He stated it was important to think about who was being franchised or disenfranchised by the system in place. He stressed the importance of being mindful about preserving the representation of marginalized communicates. Alexander stated the Senators at OSU served two year terms, and the Representatives served one year terms. Martin inquired what percentage of the student body usually voted. Alexander stated the rate was similar to that of WWU, and was about 8-12%. Brock stated that was standard for universities.

#### **IV. Discussion**

- a. Brock encouraged everyone select a different university to study. Hayden inquired if community colleges were an option. Brock stated they were. Martin chose Central Washington University. Hawk selected Washington State University, van Amen stated she would look for a university with unique model. Hayden encouraged the committee to look at universities in California. Edgel chose University of Wisconsin, Madison. Eckroth stated he would study Evergreen State College. Brock suggested reviewing the universities' websites and contacting representatives if more information was needed. Alexander suggested contacting advisors as well. Palumbo selected University of North Carolina. Recto chose San Diego State University. Brock stated the members could have selected different schools if their first choices did not work well. Rosenberg suggested looking at Colorado State University.

#### **V. Adjourn**

*Brock adjourned the Meeting at 3:32pm.*