



AS Structural Review Committee

Friday, March 11th, 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: Jordan Walley (Athletics Representative)
- Advisors:** Lisa Rosenberg (Assistant Director for Student Activities); Eric Alexander (Associate Dean of Students and Director of the Viking Union, Laciator)
- Secretary:** Octavia Schultz (AS Board Assistant for Internal Committees)
- Guests:** Casey Hayden (Coordinator of Student Activities)

Motions:

SRC-16-W-4 To approve the minutes from February 26th and March 4th, 2016. **Passed.**

Brock called the meeting to order at 2:32pm.

I. Approval of Minutes

MOTION SRC-16-W-4 By Palumbo

To approve the minutes from February 26th and March 4th, 2016.

Second: Eckroth

Vote: 7 - 0 - 0

Action: Passed

II. Discussion Item

a. Strengths and Challenges of the Current AS Model

Brock stated opportunities for student leadership and student supervisors was a strength of the current model. She stated a challenge of the model was the potential for students to be overworked and the high number of resignations, van Amen stated turnover was a both a challenge and a strength of the organization, noting that involving new employees was good, but that the rotation of staff each year made it difficult for the consistent legacies of positions. Hayden noted the current AS Board of Directors structure allowed the Board to make decisions quickly and not be slowed down by excessive bureaucracy. Brock stated that could have been both a good thing and a bad thing, noting that hasty decisions were not advantageous to the organization. Hawk stated a challenge of the organization was low student involvement and input. Hayden stated it was important for Board members to reach out to students. Eckroth noted there was very concentrated representation in the organization. Recto stated more transparency and student awareness of the organization was needed. Hayden stated a small Board of Directors allowed for a potential lack of diverse representation. Brock agreed. Rosenberg stated a strength of the organization was that representatives were elected by students-at-large, but that a challenge was that much of the organization was focused on internal issues rather than representation. Brock stated that accountability had been a challenge for the organization, specifically in the AS Board of Directors. Hayden stated student

engagement was challenging for the organization. It was noted that the current structure held multiple challenges. Brock stated the uniqueness of the structure was a strength at times. Alexander noted that some previous AS Board members often inquired how genuine the oversight of the programmatic structure was. He stated some Board members felt they didn't have value to add to the programmatic structure. Recto noted that the committee had expressed a desire to keep the organization efficient while maintaining accountable representation. Rosenberg noted that AS committees played an important role in working on things delegated by the AS Board of Directors. She stated committees also provided opportunities for students-at-large to be involved in the organization. Brock stated that the shift to a new model may have caused some students to feel their work was devalued but that it was important to separate emotional and logical responses to changes in the organization. She noted that the inconsistency of internships was a challenge of the organization. Recto stated that a yearly turnover of staff allowed for more varied perspectives of employees. There was discussion about the changes made to the AS VP for Business and Operations responsibilities and how the decentralization of power from that position was beneficial to the entire organization and the students serving in that position. There was discussion about shared governance and the distribution of power between students and administrators. Alexander noted that sometimes power was determined by who contributed the most money, van Amen inquired if the AS Board of Directors were too overworked to focus on goals or projects they wanted to accomplish. Eckroth noted that the Board of Directors had created a list of priorities at the beginning of the year and had not been able to focus on them because of the demand for day-to-day operational work. Brock noted that AS Board Assistants were helpful to Board members, but that Board members were still responsible for a lot of administrative responsibilities. Alexander stated that responsibility and power were different things, noting that the students were often given a lot of responsibility. He noted that much of the AS was created as a response to a lack of service from the university. He stated that was less a challenge of the AS and more a challenge of the institution. He noted the organization had grown and become more difficult to manage because it was responding to student needs not met by the university. Hayden noted that not only was the AS responding to the shortcomings of the university, but that students were often in the forefront of demanding and providing services for other students. He stated that there were times that the university saw a need was met by the Associated Students and instead of supporting that program, left it alone. He noted that student clubs were responsible for a lot of change on campus, and that student government was not the only outlet for student-driven change. He stated emulating the federal government structure would still not have included support for student-driven efforts like protests and activist groups. He noted students needed a structure that focused on accountability and support for those efforts, and that it would have allowed the AS to support programs rather than provide them. Alexander noted "channels for advocacy" were needed. There was discussion about how changes were made within the organization, including the Structure and Program Advisory Committee and Personnel Committee. Brock noted that Board members did not need committee support or approval before voting on items. Alexander noted that it was important for the AS to work with other bodies of leadership on campus to work towards interdependence. He stated that autonomous operations could have been a challenge of the organization. Rosenberg noted that within the AS, there was a lot of successful

collaborations between offices. There was discussion about setting goals for the committee's progress the following quarter.

III. Adjourn

Brock adjourned the Meeting at 3:25pm.