



Western Washington University Associated Students

Structural Review Committee

Thursday, October 20, 2016 4:00 PM VU 567

Members: *Present: Bryce Hammer (ASVP for Governmental Affairs), Mary Moeller (ASVP for Business and Operations), Bill Martin (Student at Large), Hannah Van Amen (Student at Large), Griffin Crisp (Student at Large), Eric Alexander (Facilitator), Casey Hayden (Program Advisor), and Lisa Rosenberg.*

Absent: Emma J Ospal (AS Assessment Coordinator) and Aleyda Cervantes (ASVP for Diversity).

Advisor: *Casey Hayden*

Secretary: *Cora Cole (Board Assistant for Representation Committees)*

Guests:

Bryce Hammer called the meeting to order at 4:10 PM

I. AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

I. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Feedback from Small Groups:

Bryce introduced some of the common issues of the subcommittee meetings and then asked Casey and Mary to talk about their group. Figuring out the number of senators, and the stipend that they would be paid, what the makeup of the seats would be. Colleges need to be included but representation also needs to go beyond that, perhaps including where students live (on and off campus). We want to get involvement from co-curricular areas but that would be really hard to practically deal with. They had no final answer about what the appropriate size would be. A large senate would look like 25 senators. Casey said the ideal would be 12-16 senators. Bryce added that 15-22 would be comfortably sized. Bill said one way to get younger students and older students involved would be getting students from Res Hall organizations. Casey added that parts of the campus that aren't represented could have senate outreach in the form of committees, then maybe lead up to representation in the senate. Bryce mentioned that was also true of graduate students and they are one of the 8 colleges so that lined up. Casey said that additionally they had talked about vote-net software including who would be able to vote and how they would practically be able to get the right ballots to all

the separate folks who need to be represented. Hannah added that having a base pay that gets increased on would be key.

Eric Alexander entered at 4:19 PM

Bryce said that having an upper and lower limit on hours would also be vital for the senate, Casey said that the compensation would check back for that some.

The AS Board sub-committee had notes taken by Lisa so Griffin nominated her to do the talking. They in their first meeting looked through old agendas of the groups the past, including what the roles of the Board members had been. Looked at referendums, charge and charters, and old student fees. Input to administration about fees and policies, last year related to title IX inquiries. Next steps are looking at current job descriptions of Board Members and looking at the new openings after the restructure. Bryce added that there are some things that there are some agenda items that it doesn't necessarily make sense for the Board to see under the new structure because it could be better handled by the Senate.

The VU Board sub-committee didn't formally meet but Eric had talked to Aleyda about the ultimate responsibility question. The shift to more personal advising will be very different from the current advising and the VU Board will look massively different, he asked if we were comfortable with that. Mentioned again that we need to talk to other Universities with Union Boards. Casey mentioned that we don't know who would chair that board, he is concerned that someone could have too many oversight positions in this system. It also shouldn't be a staff member sitting at the head of that board. Eric said that some Universities have election tickets with President and Vice Presidents running together where then the VP would sit at the head of the Union Board. The other models are a hired board chair or a separately elected Union President. Bryce interjected that one of her groups questions is how connected should the VU and AS board be, and having the AS be a part of the selection process for the chair would be one way to have that happen. Additionally, a similar concern exists about Activities Council. Casey added that the VP for Activities now is leading on both the Activities Council and the Management Council. Mary responded that whoever chairs Activities Council should not also vote on Management Council, or its equivalent, because of the centralized power there. Bryce agreed that the concentration of power was a real and valid concern but also, there does need to be some centralization and that would be limited by the division of the Boards. Activities Council is already long and many other colleges have club approval done by administration instead of student Council. Eric said that the question Bryce is answering is a very important one, student government lives in the VU but it would have less to do with the management of the VU than it currently does. A couple people voiced concern about the confusion of the names of the new boards. Eric responded that he isn't very concerned about

that as we have lots of things that still have AS in the name that are not connected to the AS anymore.

On that note Bryce asked what people's feelings were about having the two branches being totally separate. She likes having the programming offices tied to representation so that activism is done by the elected students and less tied to hired staff, although she recognizes the downfalls of that as well. Casey said that he doesn't want the AS to be weakened or made into puppetry. Bryce and him both agree that competing over the S and A fee would be bad, even now she finds the competition between the AS and Athletics to be counterproductive. The S and A fee is to serve all students and the different programs are not unequally important. Mary said that competing for resources might be helpful, because it makes them more effective in discussing student needs. Bryce responded that in SQ they go through an elected board and that without that process the fee use might be less tied to what we owe the students. Casey said it is strange that the S and A fee is above the elected governing bodies and he would like to see more cooperation with the athletics not their coaches getting more money for them from the committee because they have more practice interacting with the administration. Mary said that the danger of advisors playing a strong role in budgeting isn't unique to the AS. The S and A fee is a university fee so will always go higher up above the AS anyway, having the AS Board as the approver of athletics' budgets would be less equitable in term of budgets. Bryce mentioned that the AS is fundamentally different from the athletics because we represent the elected students and aren't accountable to anyone but the student body and the Board, making us more capable to act without intervention from staff/coaches. Eric said the S and A fee chair could be elected, or perhaps be a senate member who focuses on that process. Additionally, looking back at the "hopes and fears" from last year, there is a concern about losing control of the representation of students, and a lot of that fear stems from this system being the only one with which we are familiar. Mary said that she had been talking to people about making the S and A fee chair elected and she could make that process available to the committee

Tisa read out the one of the Washington State University Regulations which provides some amount of legal guidelines for Student Union Boards. Eric said that the Senate could also function as a check or mediator for the VU and AS boards because the Senate would approve all of the budgets, including potentially S and A fee requests. Casey said that it is important to chart the money path, as Mary mentioned, because any excessive competition would be counterproductive. Mary said that Business Committee could help with questions to answer about structure, Bryce didn't want to get in the weeds about that without the governing structure but it could be helpful eventually to see what questions they would have. Griffin voiced concern that the committee would recreate the same situation year after

year without any outside view on what needs to be changed in the AS. Casey said that folks can do it bit by bit and that had been decided for a while, the senate is the biggest issue that is facing us right now, we need to solve that first. Griffin responded that he would like to have an outside eye so that we have more memory of the process. Bryce agreed that going to either extreme of too fast or too slow would make the progress less responsive to students and we are all too entrenched in the system that it's hard to change it with that level of attachment. Hannah added that being in the system and being entrenched is why we need a student senate because of the way that representation is limited when there are only seven Board members to represent all student interests. Before this year Eric was an outsider and he had observations on the way the Western AS functions that were very insightful. He mentioned specifically that even now it's not clear who works on what issues unless you are at the heart of the issue and playing that out in the separation of representation and advocacy becomes more complicated. There might also be a fourth option where we commit to year by year agendas which makes sure that we don't fall into a self-replicating pattern. He added that it is necessary to dedicate to a program structure sooner rather than later, that means accepting the model and then filling out the programming details along the way.

Casey left at 5:05 PM

Eric then sent around the "Hopes and Fears" sheets from last year's committee and talked about the student survey from two years ago and the need to be clear so that the students understand what the AS does. We also need to make sure that work in the AS is balanced out among all of the members. Bryce voiced a new concern about the validity of AS Board and the VU Board. The AS Board has a significant amount of power right now because they are elected and she is concerned that the election of multiple branches of the AS would dilute that. She wants the AS Board and the Senate to be able to maintain difference of opinion without getting disagreements broken up by admin.

Eric Alexander left at 5:09 PM.

Bryce gave an example of S and A fee recommendations being taken very seriously by Board of Trustees when they are recommended by the elected Board of the AS. That is a serious advantage for the current student representatives that she doesn't want to lose. Griffin added that salary structure isn't super trackable in terms of whether directors/other salaried positions are doing the amount of work that they are being paid for. One possible solution in the new structure would be fine tuning job descriptions and the achievement of positions so that when there is an overworked member their workload can be shared by the folks who work for them. Hannah added that Hannah from last year had said that more equal work distribution with the division of roles would equate to more focus by the positions. Griffin responded that if he asked student what he does to earn their money, he

might not be able to track the work for the students, who are effectively the employers. Lisa said that the Board member and Advisor should be able to track that information in their areas. Griffm said that students are salaried for office hours, and maybe there should be hourly pay too to counter balance that. Lisa explained that the pay is for the weeks during the school year that you work and then its divided. Mary and Bryce interjected that they both will be working during breaks because their jobs are hard. Bryce asked the committee what would happen if one of the VU directors isn't doing their job and needs to be fired? Because currently, she oversees people and can fire the employees who are in her wheel-house, so what would happen in the new structure? Lisa said that the supervisors would be able to recommend determination to the Personnel Committee. After some discussion, Bryce expanded that fear to include all the new positons.

For next week's meeting, Bryce wanted people to take the core questions to small groups and boil them down to what absolutely needs to be answered to proceed. Hannah said that the end of the quarter would be a good time to have a goal for the senate implementation timeline.

Lisa and Bryce talked about meeting with Board members and decided that the members on this committee would talk about it in their Board Reports at the next meeting. Mary added that they should talk to Management Council once we have more answers to our question. Bryce offered that the first hour could be small groups and the second hour could be the large group.

II. OTHER BUSINESS

Bryce Hammer adjourned the meeting at 5:29 PM on October 20th, 2016.