



Western Washington University Associated Students

AS Structural Review Committee

Thursday, September 29, 2016

4:00 PM YU 567

Members: *Present: Bryce Hammer (ASVP for Governmental Affairs), Aleyda Cervantes (ASVP for Diversity), Mary Moeller (ASVP for Business and Operations), Eric Alexander (Facilitator), Lisa Rosenberg (Assistant Director of Student Activities), Hannah Van Amen (Student at Large), and Bill Martin (Student at Large).*

Absent: *Casey Hayden (Program Advisor)*

Advisor:

Secretary: Cora Cole

Guests: None

Bryce Hammer, Chair of the Structural Review Committee, called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM

I. Call to Order

- a. **Introductions:** Members of the board went around the table introducing themselves with name, position, pronouns, and Halloween costume plans. Aleyda Cervantes entered at 4:10 pm.
- b. **Inclusive language:** Bryce Hammer talked about the importance of respecting pronouns and not using ableist language.
- c. **SRC Overview (Charge and Charter):** Bryce introduced changes to the Charge and charter reflect this year's goals including: considering student body input on the VU board and on the Student Senate, possibly by referendum, and the functional purpose of the offices. They will continue to keep in mind the AS goals of inclusivity and transparency.

II. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Secretary Friendly Techniques- Cora Cole.

- a. Cora requested that committee members say their names before they talk for the first couple meetings and gave tablets and passwords to the members who needed them.

B. Proposed Structure (Packet)- Bryce Hammer

- a. Bryce began discussion of next steps for what the referendum would look like and what the VSU board would do. Bill asked when exactly referendums were necessary, and Bryce clarified that the AS is a not-for-profit organization, so in order to change the AS board without changing that status it is necessary to alter the bylaws that regulate it. Tisa then talked about how bylaws outline the board duties and changes to those must be put to a student body vote. Things that aren't a part of the bylaws, like the discontinuation of the Sexual Awareness Center don't have to be put to a vote. Because the senate described in the bylaws is very different from the senate described in the AS Structural Review Committee's proposal at the end of last year that would have to be voted on by the student body. Bryce then addressed the structure as it was proposed last year and some of the issues people are seeing with it, particularly

the issue of hiring the Business and Operations Director. The Board last year expressed concern with the way that certain people are privileged in that selection process. Emma voiced agreement citing the organization's drive to be accessible, Bryce countered that the diverse student members would be able to direct the Business and Operations Director. Eric mentioned that the Director wouldn't necessarily have oversight because they might not end up being on many boards as a voting member. Mary agreed that the hired position voting on committees would be concerning as there would only be one hired position. Bryce offered the suggestion that the budget process isn't value based in the same way that the Board is, making the business position a practical one and not necessarily as tied to student opinion. Aleyda asked if it would be possible to split the position and have a hired Business Director oversee the VSU board and keep a student elected VP of Operations overlooking the VSU to sit on the AS Board. Bryce talked about the current S and A fee and explained that this structure might split the handling of that creating intra-AS completion for funds. Allowing two separate budgeting processes might be advantageous, but once they exist if the Senate becomes dysfunctional stopping it from wasting funds might be a concern. Eric said that Board of Trustees members sitting on both would be a potential check. Aleyda asked if the people on the Senate and Bryce said they would get a stipend, because they would be replacing the VP for activities but wouldn't get paid as much, or alternatively would get some credit for their major. Eric reminded the members that the original intent of the model was to have a representative government for student with checks and balances making it accessible to students. Furthermore, it is necessary to take some things off the plate of the Board of Directors who are constantly overworked. People want to avoid throwing off the clubs' organization which is very effective currently but we still need to let go of ownership of student activities by the student government. There also needs to be more advisory power in the VSU Board and less in the legislative and executive branches. Emma expressed concern with accountability in all of the branches of the new structure both for hired and non-hired positions. Lisa mentions that the members wouldn't be able to devote as much time to the governance because they already have jobs and classes full time. Bryce expressed a concern of Casey's that changing the election system for Board members would be a little bit weird. The VSU Board is the one that we know the least about, making it a focus for the upcoming year. Aleyda brought up the question of whether the structure change will really add more engagement or if it will just be more people who already work in the AS. And if the VSU Board is going to be going over the head of elected Board officials. Mary addressed Casey's concern saying that the VU Board is very similar to the management council making that non-unique, Bryce clarified that the Board would have less oversight of the VSU than they do over management council. Mary and Emma, who sit on management council also don't vote there which sets a helpful precedent. Hannah offered that pulling senators from every college might not solve Aleyda's concern but it would certainly help. Alexander then returned to the payment issue, reminding the committee that the VSU board would be providing checks via funding, which would then be approved by the executive branch. Everyone is using Western's existing AS model as a baseline for this

project and so it's important to allow ourselves to use new lenses. Eric then asked what the roll of the Student Union would be for the campus, which would be a crucial question for the committee.

- b. At 4:49 PM Bill Martin left the meeting.
 - c. Alexander mentioned the possibility of the Committee looking at the daily management of other AS models around the state/region. Aleyda asked how many hours the Student Senate would work, because working less hours could lead to less influence. Bryce answered that they would be dividing the influence and hours of the VP for activities, but would not maintain an office. Hannah thought that visiting other schools and interviewing them about their transition process would be helpful, including UW, Washington State, and Evergreen (although Evergreen's structure is very different).
 - d. Eric Alexander left at 4:55 PM
 - e. Mary offered to double up by talking to AS while doing other business travels to schools.
- C. **Next Steps- Bryce Hammer** Bryce asked if anyone had anything specific they wanted to add to the next meeting, no one commented. She thanked Emma and Aleyda for being involved because their positions are extremely relevant to the VSU board which will be taking much of the committee's time this quarter. Lisa mentioned a concern with the schedule, particularly how reasonable the Senate timeline is. Bryce agreed that the schedule is a work in progress. Emma said that additionally the shifting membership of the AS and committee means that the interests of members may change. Bryce said that the referendum is going to tie future boards and AS committees to the plan.

Bryce Hammer adjourned the meeting at 5:00 PM.