



Western Washington University Associated Students
Legislative Action Council

Tuesday, November 14th, 2017 6:00 PM VU 567

Members: *Present: Ana Ramirez (ASVP for Governmental Affairs), Rosa Rice-Pelepko (AS Legislative Liaison), Emma Scalzo (AS REP Organizing and Outreach Coordinator), Anna Kemper (AS Local Issues Coordinator), Giovanna Oricchio (Student at Large), Nicholas Hovarth (Graduate Student), Victoria Matey (ESC Rep), Zoe Evans-Agnew (Student at Large), Casey Hayden (Coordinator of Student Activities) and Natasha Hessami (Student at Large).*

Absent:

Advisor: Casey Hayden

Secretary: Chloe Callahan

Ana Ramirez called the meeting to order at 6:20 PM.

I. Introductions

II. Approval of Minutes

The committee decided to approve the minutes at the following meeting.

III. Discussion Items

A. WSA General Assembly Update

Ramirez stated that the student trustee election and student trustee voting rights did not get passed. She mentioned that the vote, student unionization and support for undocumented students proposals passed. Rice-Pelepko stated that everything the committee had reviewed the previous meeting was passed. Hovarth mentioned that the proposals on a stipend for childcare for students passed as well as the higher education for state need fund both passed. Rice-Pelepko brought up that there were two agenda items by University of Washington Tacoma that were added at the assembly, both of which got voted down due to the proposal being confusing. Hovarth asked what the issue was with Guillermo's funding request at the general assembly. Rice-Pelepko said that Guillermo had been requesting funds for communication efforts and someone at the WSA table had an issue with the way it was brought up because it did not follow the budgetary process. The vote ended up passing but it was a tense part of the meeting. Rice-Pelepko also stated that the University of Washington had not yet paid their dues that year due to not having stable funding. The decision on what to do for this situation had been postponed until the following January. Based on the by-laws at that time the WSA can only vote to kick someone out. The WSA was looking to create an amendment to the constitution in order to discuss other options.

B. Support for Survivors of Sexual Assault Agenda Item

The committee took a few minutes to review the proposals. Rice-Pelepko started the discussion by stating that the Council presidents and WSA are looking to make a recommendation to the legislature to make educational model to make a better procedures for college campuses. The administrative procedures act was not what college campuses wanted to see. She said they were looking at decreasing the time for procedures to 60 days and being more survivor centered. The problem was that Washington Statute Administrative Procedures Act, also known as the APA, which was RCW 3.405, was not designed for universities to address conduct violations in a timely manner and prevents them from having a more educational model in conduct proceedings. Rice-Pelepko stated their group was looking to create legislation for an educational model that includes a fair and just process and make amendments to the APA. She said they were looking into whether or not the conduct process should be an investigative or hearing approach. One of the big issues was making sure there was enough due process for students on both sides and deciding who will be involved with this process. Rice-Pelepko said the team was leaning toward an investigative model. The group of council presidents, WSA and Rice-Pelepko had planned to talk in the near future to make a final decision and gather more feedback. Evans-Agnew asked if this item was proposed to WSA or if Western just lobbied on their own. Rice-Pelepko said in the past the WSA had done a lot of work on proposals for survivors for sexual assault and this committee was continuing that work. However, she said this was not an agenda item for WSA the upcoming year, but would continue to support. Kemper stated that when she was looking through the survey responses, there were a few responses around feeling the emergency alert system was not as up to speed as it could have been, which was making students feel unsafe. Orecchio asked if there had been discussion or changes made after the new department of education guidelines came out the past September by Betsy Devos. It was concluded by the committee that it had not been officially passed, so no change was made. Rice-Pelepko asked what the committee thought about the process she had proposed. Evans-Agnew asked how it was being done currently. Rice-Pelepko said it depended on the campus, based on a discussion with Sue Guenter-Schlesinger, the Western campus was a more investigative model. She asked if the committee felt comfortable having this agenda item on the Western agenda, stating they would support recommendations on the new educational model. The committee said yes. Rice-Pelepko felt that it could be added to the support for survivors of sexual assault agenda item that was already in place.

C. Support for Undocumented Students Agenda Item

Ramirez reviewed what the committee had covered the previous meeting. She said the proposal included providing legal counsel for undocumented students, create a protocol for when ICE comes to campuses, finding a way to pay students that don't have DACA and getting rid of detention centers. Ramirez also found that the money students paid back for the loans went back into the loan fund, to create a sustainable loan. Rice-Pelepko said that the proposal was passed by the WSA. She said when talking to Guillermo they came to the

conclusion that the interest the students paid back to the university would offset inflation for future loan recipients. Ramirez said the California bill states that all the money goes back to the university for undocumented students and future loans. Hayden asked how the committee wanted to frame the detention centers piece of the proposal. Matey said that they wanted to include something for people without DACA and that were affected by the detention centers. She said that although it sounded extreme to ask legislators to remove detention centers, Tacoma had many city council meetings to remove business license for detention centers. She mention that there are people already providing their time for free to help individuals in detention centers and our added advocacy could help keep the conversation going. Hessami asked if the committee would propose this to city council or advocating as a University against it. Matey said she did not think that could be done in Bellingham because the town already decided they would not pass a vote for a sanctuary city, so she didn't feel it would be worth the effort. Kemper said the committee could still push for it at the local level, even if the town didn't agree with being a sanctuary city. Hayden asked if there was a resource the committee could look at to see what Tacoma has done for the detention centers. Matey said they would look into providing more resources and details. Hayden stated that the committee need to provide the legislators with concrete actions in order to see more action. For example, defunding budgets for border patrol and ICE or removing business licenses. Orecchio asked if Oregon had a law on being a sanctuary state. Matey said that sanctuary were a lot of empty promises without accountability and action. Hayden there was limitation to what a state can do to be a sanctuary, but at a local level there was more that could be done. A state can't be a sanctuary state if they still have a detention center. Hayden said that ICE followed its own rules about sensitive locations and they have seen them breaking the rules and not notifying the university before they come to campus. The sensitive location rule means they cannot take enforcement actions at those locations unless they have a warrant, but even that had limitations. Rice-Pelepko asked what the committee though about requiring legal teams to support undocumented students. She asked if the university would have to budget themselves, or would it need to be a new budget they would be asking for it from the state by creating a new program. Matey said they should go for a whole new program. Hessami said Student Outreach Services provided help to students. The office was already in place so they could expand the Student Outreach Services to include legal advisors. Rice-Pelepko asked where the funding came from. Hayden said it was from state appropriation money. Hessami asked whether they could get help from the legal information center on campus. Matey said they felt it was more appropriate to bring in someone new with a focus in immigration law. Ramirez stated that Washington State University had recently got one. Hayden stated there was new funding available to the Tegal Information Center to secure a local low-bono lawyer to work with a local legal group or particular person to have office hours on campus. He said this almost went out to students as an additional fee, but instead the AS is providing a pilot grant and could turn into a fee later one.

D. Sex Education Agenda Item

Rice-Pelepko mentioned how inadequate sexual education affects students. Scalzo went through and read the Sex Education proposal rough draft for the committee, stating there were issues that needed to be addressed. Hessami asked if the proposal would continue to separate boys and girls for sex education. Scalzo said they were still looking into that aspect. Rice-Pelepko said they had just noted that fact because it was binary and needed to look more into why that was put in place originally. Hessami said she had received sex education in Canada where the genders were not separate and they thought it went fine. She said the sex education was introduced during fourth grade. Hovarth said it was introduced in Vancouver Island, Canada about fifth or sixth grade and the more detailed education was during high school. Hessami suggested the committee talk to someone in Prevention and Wellness Services.

E. Agenda Items Timeline

The committee came to the conclusion that the agenda items would need to be presented to the committee by the following week, Monday the 20th. Then the items would be voted on by the committee Monday the 27th. The proposals would then go to the Board of Directors for review and approval. The hope was to have the agenda done before Winter break.

IV. Reports

A. AS Legislative Liaison

Rice-Pelepko said the Executive Director and President from WSA would be at Western the following day for a campus visit.

B. Other

Matey said they met with the Disability Outreach Center and the Environmental and Sustainability Programs and discussed what they wanted for Lobby Day.

Ana Ramirez adjourned the meeting at 7:34 PM.