



AS Communications Committee

Date: October 10, 2018 Location: VU 460

Members: Present Sam Frost (Communications Director), Ama Monkah (ASVP for Activities), Mia Steben (Communications Coordinator), Lucas Van Dyke (Videographer), Abbie Chacon (Video Production Coordinator), Isabella Jones (OC Marketing Resource Coordinator), Mikayla Saechao (Publicity Center Project Manager), Erasmus Baxter (AS Review Representative), Christina Ngo (SAIRC Representative), Katie Winkelman (ESP Representative), Luke Bridges (AS Productions Assistant Director for Marketing & Assessment), Brennan Commons (AS Lead Graphic Designer)

Absent: Sofian Mahmoud (ESC Coordinator for Marketing)

Advisor: Jeff Bates (Publicity Center Coordinator)

Secretary: Nate Jo (Board Assistant for Internal Committees)

Motions: *No action items.*

Sam Frost called this meeting to order at 9:05am.

I. Approval of Minutes

No minutes to approve.

II. Revisions to the Agenda

No revisions to the agenda.

III. Action Items

No action items.

IV. Information Items

A. Introduction to the Communications Committee

Sam Frost read and explained the charge of the Communications Committee and explained that this committee was an opportunity to learn from each other and grow as an organization. Frost referenced the ASWWU Strategic Plan which can be found in the Q Drive. Frost read the section on collaboration and addressed open communication in the AS. Frost emphasized strengthening partnerships across campus and said that we should strive to make connections between students and faculty. Frost also reviewed the section on inclusion and diversity. Frost mentioned that it was important for AS employees to go above and beyond in inclusion, since they represent the AS.

She addressed the strategic objectives and highlighted the importance of increasing understanding and student ownership of the AS. Frost also mentioned developing new methods for reaching out to students.

B. Introductions and Office Updates

Frost invited each member to share events that they are working and get positive feedback or ask for help. Frost said that the Communications Office has been primarily working on social media.

Frost has started a newsletter that will go out to all students on Thursday mornings. Any updates that people want to go in the newsletter should be emailed to Frost. She also said to add events to WIN, which serves as the main platform for information on events.

Lucas Van Dyke said that people should contact him to ask for an event video promo and asked for a checklist of what the project should include. Frost mentioned that Van Dyke has been working on a student senate video which will be shown later in the meeting. Van Dyke also mentioned working on the Ultra-Modern promotion video for next quarter.

Luke Bridges recapped the Princess Nokia/Cherry Glazer concert and said that the event turned out great. They have a bigger budget since Princess Nokia cancelled. He is also working on performance markers and surveys to reach a broader group of Western students and find out what kind of event they want.

Ama Monkah said that the board established goals at Channon Point. She said that the board had passed the student senate and elections may be in November. Monkah also mentioned working with the alumni association to help students be more engaged. Monkah said that Camilla Mejia (VP for Diversity) had the idea of connecting ESC alumni to current ESC students. Monkah is also working on increasing school spirit.

Jacob Carver (representing Erasmus Baxter) said that any stories or requests to cover events in the AS Review could be emailed to him. Frost complimented him on the vape word search in the last issue of the AS Review.

Jeff Bates introduced himself and thanked the committee members for showing up and said that he was excited for the energy around the AS this year.

Brennan Commons said that he was working on improving turnaround time for publicity center projects and asked for ideas to be emailed to him.

Mikayla Saechao said that she was working on shuffling projects out. She asked that good communications on projects be kept up with herself and Micah Smith.

Abbie Chacon explained that she was working on a project of interviewing SAIRC offices and posting about them on Instagram. She stated that she hoped to get to other AS offices as well.

Mia Steben said that she was working on goal setting and communicating with Brennan Commons and Sophia. She said that social media is important because it shapes how students view the AS.

Chistina Ngo said that the SAIRC Instagram just went live (www.as.sairc). Ngo mentioned the SAIR event for national coming out day and said that Memoir Info Sessions had also started.

Ngo expressed interest in working with the publicity center to get swag items. Ngo also mentioned rebranding, as students still refer to the SAIRC as the ROP. Frost complimented the design of the Memoir posters.

Isabella Jones recapped the event "Tie Die and Tunes". She mentioned that over 100 people showed up and that more materials would be needed for next time. She also mentioned the Women Inclusive Mountain Biking Trip on Saturday and asked for people to share info. Jones also mentioned that the Real Rock event will need publicity in the future.

Nate Jo introduced himself and said that he was working on getting the AS website updated and working on a strategic plan for improving the website. Jo asked for input as he puts together a task force and may eventually issue recommendations to the board of directors to hire a student position focused on front-end development.

Frost mentioned that Fall Family Weekend is next weekend and said that she made a deal to share this info and that Western would share AS events in return.

C. Increasing Social Media Presence

Frost mentioned reviewing social media presence and asked the committee to look over their social media statistics and study who was using them. Frost also asked the committee members to bring a report of social media statistics to the next meeting as well their goals for increasing the social media presence of their office. Frost said that this would be a safe space to share goals and

discuss how to improve social media presence as well as learn from each other. Frost asked if anyone brought in their social media statistics.

Bridges talked about the publicity center social media goals and performance indicators. He said that he was focusing on reach and the correlation to how many people show up to the events. Frost said that one of her main goals was bringing the social media accounts up to the level of the email newsletter's reach.

Jones said that she was interested in knowing the correlation between Facebook interest and the number of people that actually show up to events. Frost asked if there was a way to access WIN analytics. Bates suggested talking to Jen Cook and Bridges suggested getting a physical head count and comparing it to social media data. Jones said that word of mouth will always make event attendance somewhat unpredictable. Frost mentioned linking WIN to the email newsletter to give better insights on attendance.

Monkah mentioned the board of directors having a social media page to increase student access. Sometimes people message the board members on their personal pages and this could mitigate the problem. Frost asked who would run it and how we would build the presence on social media. She said that she would put this on the agenda for the next meeting. Bates asked if each board member would have a social media page and Monkah responded that there would be one for all of the board members.

Steben shared social media statistics for the AS page. For Instagram: age range 18-24 for 72% of users, 26% male identifying, 74% female identifying. 43% in Bellingham, 7% from Seattle, and the rest from other places. The Facebook page has 3800 followers but interactions are low and Steben wants to increase this by posting at better times in the day. The Twitter page has over 3000 followers with many people looking at posts every day. Steben mentioned working on Snapchat and asked for advice as well as working on the social media plan.

Frost mentioned that she was working on the social media plan for the AS and would share this at the next meeting of the Communications Committee. Frost encouraged the committee to research social media algorithms to understand how it works.

Commons talked about digital media and suggested keeping media as graphically clean as possible. Commons mentioned cropped out social media posts. He suggested looking at the templates that already exist and keeping in mind the aesthetics of social media to make sure that people scrolling through their feed like what they see.

Frost said that because Instagram was so aesthetically based, only high quality photos should be posted. She also said to keep in mind best practices for each social media page.

Bates mentioned social.wvu.edu which is an aggregator for all of Western social media sites. This is a good way to see how AS social media posts are comparing to other Western social posts. Frost mentioned that when Western shared an AS event, it got a lot of comments and tags. Frost encouraged people to tag their friends in AS posts and set a goal of making AS posts appear on the western social page.

D. Inclusive Language

Frost explained the importance of inclusive language and said that the AS social media needs to reflect its values on inclusivity. Frost read the AS inclusive language guide. Frost said that it was common for people to use "you guys" in social media post but suggested that this be avoided on AS social media. She said to check the inclusive language guide if anyone was unsure. Quynh Trinh in the club hub suggested to Frost to make inclusive language posters similar to the scent free zone posters. The posters should have the inclusive language words and examples instead of the words not to use. Jones agreed that it was better to tell people what to say instead of telling what not to say. Frost said that this was a worthy use of the Communications Office's budget.

E. AS Video

Frost said that she wanted video coming out of the AS to be high quality and consistent. Frost asked that people would work with the Communications office for consistency and quality,

instead of making your own video. She asked that requests be placed as far in advance as possible. The Communications office has specific deadlines for important projects and “back-burner” projects. They will try their best to get to all of the video projects but sometimes a video will not get made.

Frost introduced the student senate video which was made by Van Dyke in collaboration with Levi Eckman. Frost asked the committee to look for font inconsistencies, typos, and any other problems with the video. After watching the video, Frost asked for recommendations. Baxter suggested switching the logo and the credits. He also suggested making “are you ready?” bigger and commented that the anticipation and sarcastic tone was good.

Frost played the video again. Chacon pointed out a grammar problem in the first few introduction slides. Frost said that this was the language used by the university communications office. Carver said that “so to better reflect this” could be simply cut from the video. Bridges suggested changing “is making a change”. Frost expressed concern with cutting slides from the video due to fixing the timing in the music and suggested slipping the “for students run by students” slide into too. Jo suggested changing it to “to magnify student voices”. Bridges suggested changing “control” to “govern”. Carver asked about the use of punctuation and Frost explained that this was a conscious branding decision. Baxter disagreed. Ngo said that the video appeared as a run on sentence. Frost asked for a thumbs up or thumbs down for periods at the ends of sentences. Bates asked if periods could stop the flow. Van Dyke said the video was fast paced and adding periods may take extra time to process.

Frost asked for addition comments. Commons mentioned the spinning dots at 0:37 which touch the bottom of the screen. He also said that the student senate org chart was difficult to read and mentioned the use of black lettering which should be switched to blue or white. Jo suggested just using the name of the college or an abbreviation and get rid of the word senator. Commons said that the letters and lines should be white. Bridges asked if this video was supposed to be presented from the Board of Directors.

F. Weekly Newsletter

Frost talked about the weekly newsletter. She asked that info be posted on WIN frequently because the newsletter pulls from WIN. Frost asked when the best time to send the email newsletter was. The consensus was between 10:00am and 11:00am.

G. Rebranding the Associated Students

Frost said that she would like to rebrand the AS and address the issue of every office having their own logo with random colors and design elements. Rebranding will be a longer conversation and this meeting would just serve as the starting point. Ngo mentioned catering to the specific identities of the SAIRC offices and honoring the history of the ESC which could be erased by a rebrand. Frost said that this is a good time to ask these questions.

Commons mentioned incorporating these questions into the conversation of rebranding. What values do you have? How can we transform them? He mentioned that the AS brand wasn’t made for the Student Senate and that the current look cannot address these issues.

Frost said that the university had a similar problem with the separate colleges. Frost said that she wanted to lay out the ground work for rebranding so that it could be implemented next year.

Bridges stated that it would be easier for some offices than others but that it would be nice to have one umbrella brand to work under. Frost stated that it is important for students to know where there money is going and that having one thematic design would help students identify the AS. Ngo mentioned that people who feel alienated by the AS but are part of the AS through a club or a SAIRC office should be brought into this conversation.

Frost mentioned she was just trying to get this conversation on people’s radar.

Van Dyke said that as a first year student he viewed the Associated Students as only student government and wasn’t interested. The AS is not viewed as a resource center and has an invisible

wall to students. He said that the rebrand wasn't just a logo rebrand but also lowering the AS to the level of students.

Frost said that she didn't know that the SAIRC existed before she worked in the AS. The underrepresented offices and little know programs, like the student enhancement fund, could get a boost from the rebrand. She posed the question of transferring the popularity of the outdoor center to the other offices.

Monkah mentioned receiving a lot of information in email newsletters and that this might not be an effective way to communicate with students. Jones mentioned featuring individual students in publicity. Steben said she was doing AS employee spotlights on Instagram throughout the year. Frost asked what the best way to have this conversation was.

Ngo mentioned that some offices might not want a rebrand and asked how these conversations should be conducted. Frost mentioned using a survey monkey poll to gauge opinions. She asked the committee to look at the branding guide and bring back suggestions and comments for next time. Ngo said that she would take this conversation back to the SAIRC offices to get their feedback. Bates mentioned that the communications office could develop a survey.

Steben mentioned that small adjustments could be made to make the brand look more modern. Frost said that a definitive decision on a rebrand needed to be made on specific colors and other issues and asked the committee to actively think about changes that need to be made.

Commons mentioned that certain elements of the current brand are failing, such as a yellow in the color palate that isn't being used. He said that we don't have to start from scratch and maybe only need to tweak the current brand instead of wiping the slate clean.

V. Other Business

No other business.

Frost adjourned the meeting at 10:15am.