



Western Washington University Associated Students

AS Board of Directors

[09-27-2019] [VU
567]

Board Members: *Present:* Lani DeFiesta (President), Adah Barenburg (Senate Pro- Tempore), Yesugen Battsengel (VP for Diversity), Grace Drechsel (VP for Governmental Affairs), Emily Gerhardt (VP for Student Services), and Trever Mullins (VP for Sustainability), Selome Zerai (VP for Activities)

Absent:

Advisor: Leti Romo (Assistant Director for Student Representation & Governance)
Annie Byers (AS Board Program Coordinator)

Secretary:

Guest(s): Michaela Budde (Students for Ethnic Studies)

Motions:

ASB-19-F-5 Approval of the meeting minutes from September 13th with clarifications and spelling changes made. *Passed.*

ASB-19-F-6 Extend discussion by 10 minutes (Information Items – A). *Passed.*

ASB-19-F-7 Extend discussion by 10 minutes (Information Items – A). *Passed.*

Lani Defiesta, AS President, called the meeting to order at 3:03pm.

I. Approval of Minutes

The minutes were approved after the following revisions were made: DeFiesta clarified that it is Sabah's agenda that would be presented at a Board meeting. Barenburg added that Nate Jo welcomed the Board and that there is a form on WIN for those running for Senate. Gerhardt added that she was the one to second the carry forward request for Fall Info Fair and that she is looking to put together a meeting with the RA's. Battsengel asked for the spelling of her name to be corrected. Grace clarified that she only received suggested revisions for the Board Bylaws from Melynda.

MOTION ASB-19-F-5 by Barenburg

To approve the minutes.

Second: DeFiesta

Vote: 7-0-0

Action: passed

II. Revisions to the Agenda

III. Public Forum (*comments from students and the community*)

The Students for Ethnic Studies Club, represented by Michaela Budde and Daniella, attended the meeting to ask the Board for a formal letter in support of the adoption of an ethnic studies program at WWU, adding that they would be happy to collaborate with the Board. Budde defined ethnic studies as the critical and interdisciplinary study of race, ethnicity, and indigeneity. Battsengel asked Budde what their plans were for the upcoming year and Budde replied that the club is continuing their internal work, consisting of working with legislators in Olympia, hosting events to gather support and spread awareness, and creating a working relationship with the AS Executive Board. Drechsel asked what the nature of the letter they are asking for would be and Budde replied that broader support for an ethnic studies program would allow for flexibility in considering various options for the program. Drechsel will be the contact person.

V. Action Items – Guests

IV. Information Items - Guests

A. Food and Housing Insecurity Committee C&C – Trever Mullins

Mullins presented the Food and Housing Insecurity Committee's Charge and Charter with revisions made on voting membership, with the help of Alberto. The additions included the AS Disability Outreach Coordinator, the Off-Campus Living Representative, the Career Services Representative, the OC Sustainability Representative, and a Supervising Resident Director.

Gerhardt asked on the reasoning for changing from one graduate senator to one student senator. Barenburg replied that from her understanding, graduate senators currently had a lot on their plate and that the GSAC had preferred for the membership to remain listed as a student senator rather than a graduate senator, however, it would most likely be a graduate senator depending on their availability and schedule.

Romo pointed out that the VISTA Coordinator was listed as a voting member although they are not a student. Mullins and Alberto said that was an error. The Feeding Western Coordinator/Americorps VISTA and the Student Advocacy & Identity Resource Center Outreach & Representation Coordinator both should be listed as non-voting due to them being staff positions and this mistake will be corrected.

Mullins stated that he would edit the document and present it as an action item at the next meeting.

VI. Personnel Items *(subject to immediate action)*

VII. Action Items - Board

VIII. Information Items – Board

A. AS Executive Board Bylaws – Lani DeFiesta

DeFiesta and Drechsel brought forward the edited bylaws, seeking the Board's input. Drechsel believes the objectives section should state something more powerful about the AS Board being a service for the student body, preferably within the first few sentences.

DeFiesta mentions that with the loss of a VP for Business and Operations, a decision had to be made on who would fill the role of Vice Chair. It was decided after speaking with multiple sources that the best fit would be the VP for Governmental Affairs due to the job descriptions of the AS President and the VP for Governmental Affairs both focusing to a large extent on external matters. Mullins voiced support, adding that both positions are largely outward in terms of their interactions and tasks, leading to the opinion that it would be appropriate for the VP of Governmental Affairs to fill the role of Vice Chair. Mullins asked if the title of *Vice Chair of the Executive Board* should be added next to the title of VP for Governmental Affairs in Article IV Section A and the Board agreed.

Mullins referred to Article III Section C, asking if there had been a mistake with not listing the terms of office for the AS Senate Pro-Tempore. Drechsel answered that this was an intentional decision meant to further solidify the bicameral structure of the AS Executive Board and the Student Senate in an attempt to avoid the Board having direct influence over the Senate. As such, the AS Senate Pro-Tempore's terms of office would be listed in the Senate bylaws.

Zerai brought up the possibility of the VP for Diversity or the VP for Governmental Affairs not being able to work over the summer, since their positions are listed with the start date of the Saturday of Spring Commencement. Battsengel answered that the time commitment for the positions would be listed beforehand so the nominees would be made aware of the time commitment before choosing to run for office.

Barenburg asked whether it was correct for both the Board bylaws and the Senate bylaws to describe themselves as legislative bodies and whether the Election Code should be included in the bylaws or just be cross-referenced. Drechsel stated the need for having the process for being elected being explicit in the bylaws, but more discussion will be had on whether any of the Election Code can be taken out and referenced.

Barenburg also stated that Article IV Section B outlines 19 hours as the weekly commitment for the VP's and she would like the AS Senate Pro-Tempore to also be listed for 19 hours.

Barenburg also referred to Article VIII Section B regarding grievances being taken from one body to another and the absence of this from the bylaws, asking whether this process should be included in the Election Code or the Board bylaws. Battsengel and Mullins expressed support for including this in the Election Code.

DeFiesta brought up the Senate Pro-Tempore's hours again, asking whether it would be more consistent to have this information in the Senate bylaws. Barenburg stated that it might be easier to maintain the Pro-Tempore's information in the Board's bylaws and once the Senate bylaws are created, consideration can be given to removing the Senate Pro-Tempore from the Board's bylaws.

Romo recommended that the Election Code be immediately referenced with important information also explicitly in the bylaws. She also recommended having the listening of grievances from the Student Senate being added to under the Board's responsibilities. Mullins also recommended seeking the input of the Elections Grievance Council on how to best phrase the Board's responsibility in the bylaws.

MOTION ASB-19-F-6 by Drechsel

To extend discussion by 10 minutes.

Second: Mullins Vote: 7-0-0 Action: passed

Drechsel brought up the process for filling a Board vacancy due to a recall, saying that instead of filling the vacancy based on the position, it should be filled based on the time it happens during the school year. In the case of a vacancy in the President position, the Vice Chair will assume the position until the position is filled through a special election or appointment proceedings. In the event of both the President and Vice Chair positions being vacant, the VP for Diversity will assume the President's position until it is filled through a special election or appointment proceedings. If a vacancy exists in the Executive Board during fall quarter, a special election would take place. If a vacancy exists during Spring Quarter, the President will hold a filing period of at least 10 days for potential applications and form a committee with the VP for Governmental Affairs and the Personnel Director. This committee will then present at least two names to the Board for selection and ratification. Notice of the vacancy will be widely posted on campus and the President will wait at least 5 working days before making an appointment.

Drechsel continued with the process for filling a vacancy during Winter Quarter, which will be voted on at the discretion of the Executive Board on whether to hold a special election or follow appointment proceedings. By a majority vote, the Executive Board may also choose to hold a special election to fill a vacancy.

Drechsel stated that recall for any elected member of the Executive Board may be initiated by a 3/4 majority vote of the Student Senate or by petition containing the verified signatures of no less than 40% of the number of votes cast in the last respective election. The Executive Board cannot initiate a recall, but may present the issue to the Student Senate. If the recall is initiated by the Student Senate, the Senate Pro-Tempore must recuse themselves of the formal chairing of the senate meeting and the Vice Chair of the Student Senate will chair. Removal will be decided based on the results of the WWU Recall Election with a majority being needed for removal.

Zerai had a question regarding the specification for 40% in initiating a recall, citing a concern with 40% potentially being a low number of people if voter turnout is low in the last respective election. Zerai recommended having the number possibly be of the entire student body. Battsengel expressed concern in the case that the number required

might not be reached, but recommended possibly having both suggestions be in the bylaws and adding that whichever of the two percentages is higher would be the required one to start a recall (either the 40% of the last respective election or a to be determined percentage of the student body, whichever is higher). Mullins recommend having the Student Senate also provide input once they are elected.

MOTION ASB-19-F-7 by DeFiesta

To extend discussion by 10 minutes.

Second: Gerhardt

Vote: 7-0-0

Action: passed

Mullins brought up that the percentage required of the entire student body to initiate a recall should be lower than what voter turnout was.

DeFiesta clarified that the Senate Pro-Tempore needing to recuse themselves from chairing the Student Senate meeting in the event of a recall of an Executive Board member would serve to prevent any conflict of interest.

Drechsel stated the item would be brought back as an action item at the next meeting.

B. Sustainability Equity and Justice Fund C & C – Trever Mullins

Mullins introduced the document of the committee he chairs and explained that the edits come from changes in the committee's name and from changes in the chairing of the committee. There were also changes made in labelling items as grants instead of projects and an emphasis on the committee's membership having the diverse viewpoints present.

Drechsel asked on how "special interest in equity and justice" would be measured to assess applicants. Mullins answered that their applications would be carefully read to check for an openness in ideas and for different lenses on equity. Drechsel expressed concern with this phrase being interpreted differently depending on who the VP for Sustainability is in the future and recommended having a more detailed description on what these special interests are. Mullins mentions that having this language allows for flexibility each year to bring various opinions. Battsengel recommends a shift in wording along the lines of "including but not limited to..." in reference to qualities sought for in the applicants that is not restrictive and still allowing of new views.

Drechsel recommended requiring all 3 students at large to have special interests in equity and justice. Mullins mentioned that the reason for only specifying 2 of 3 is to provide a learning opportunity and to diversify the dialogue going on in the committee, but that more discussion could be had on the wording. Drechsel added that it should be important for the other student at large to still uphold the values of equity and justice, even if they don't have the experience.

X. Board Reports

Lani Defiesta, AS President stated that she is meeting with Melynda about employment with the bookstore. She is also working with the ESC Committee. She will be meeting

with Sabah and Melynda to discuss the follow up plan from last year's sit-in and forum. Board meetings will also now be live-streamed and she will meet with Hunter to reassess the livestreaming and make sure it is efficient.

Yesugen Battsengel, VP for Diversity- she is working on the ESC Conference and the MCC Opening that all need to done this next week. She will be meeting with the ESC educational coordinator about implementing caucus lunches. The LAF meeting got finalized and will be from 4 to 5 on Tuesdays. Next week, she will bring her portions of the charters as she is seeking clarification on what she will be chairing. She is also setting meetings about merging Residence Life with the AS Board so international students are more aware on the Board.

Grace Drechsel, VP for Governmental Affairs- stated that she talked with someone from Counseling Services about mental health assistance gaps at WWU. The university is currently understaffed (currently only 9 talk-therapists when 16 are needed) and the buildings are far apart from each other. She is also planning the Washington Student Association General Assembly, figuring out the logistics for what will be presented. Drechsel is also working on off-campus housing with a project to create an online directory. Senator Emily Randall will be on campus on October 28th. Drechsel added that she and DeFiesta had written a letter to the OSPI Committee in support of comprehensive sex-ed in K-12 that emphasizes consent.

Adah Barenburg- Senate Pro- Tempore- stated that she met with the Deans of CHSS and CSE who had two asks: wanting to be in the group for inclusion and regarding scholarships. She also met with the Assistant Police Chief and was informed about an event where the police will simulate how they would respond to several emergencies. She is also working with Hunter to send out an email about the Student Senate. Senate forms are available online through WIN. Barenburg is also meeting with Jeff Young to talk about the use of the n-word in the classroom.

Trever Mullins- VP for Sustainability- stated that he will be meeting with a few more individuals for the goals of the Office of Sustainability. He is also in the works to put on a sustainability town hall event to discuss and share ideas/concerns. He is also working on what Western's sustainability plan will be for the next 20 years.

Emily Gerhardt- VP for Student Services- stated that she is currently working on the Commuter Student Dinner. She also met with Michael Sledge to coordinate resources and form a mutually beneficial relationship. Gerhardt also is working on a time to meet with the RA's next Tuesday to discuss the new U-Rise Program to base their programming around. She is also meeting with Melynda on Monday about bookstore employment.

Selome Zerai- VP for Activities- stated that she will be meeting to select student ambassadors from the CSE department to work on diversity and inclusion. Applications are online and available until October 11. Zerai is also working on club kickoff next week and she will be talking with Melynda about a student mentoring program that goes beyond just academics, however, this would require a Multicultural Director who has yet to be hired.

XI. Other Business

Lani DeFiesta, AS President, adjourned this meeting at 4:37pm.

DRAFT