



AS Finance Council

February 12, 2020 2:30 p.m. VU 460

Members: *Present:* Nate Jo, Chair (AS Business Director), Adah Barenburg (AS Student Senate Pro Tempore), Selome Zerai (VP for Activities), Nicole Ballard (Student Senator), Corey Griffis (student at-large), Keenan Kaemingk (Activities Rep), Rachel Walsh (Central Services Rep) Christina Ngo (Resources Rep), *Absent:* Lani Defiesta (AS President)

Advisors: Leti Romo, Asst Director for Representation & Governance, Raquel Vigil, Business Manager

Secretary: Cindy Monger, Dean of Students Unit Fiscal Specialist

Guests: Stephen Magnuson, Outdoor Center Programs Coordinator

Nate Jo, chair, called the meeting to order at 2:35 p.m.

I. Call to Order

II. Revisions to the Agenda

III. Training Modules

AS Reserves Training- Vigil said that the Reserves are funded by any remaining funds from the AS Operating Budget that were unallocated and unspent. Last year there was a remaining amount of about \$330,000. The amount already in the reserves is about \$913,000. There is a cascading authority for the funds in the Reserves that is determined by the specifications for each area as laid out in the policy. This committee has decision making authority over the initial amounts for AS Grants (with consent from the AS Executive Board and AS Student Senate for grants over \$20,000). Areas in charge of the grant will make decisions on individual expenses for each grant. For instance if the Queer Guild is granted \$8,000 they can spend that money in accordance with their proposal.

There are three reserve policies that govern the allotment, requests, and purposes of the AS Reserves. AS Grants are available for pilot projects or onetime expenses. If the request is something that has not been funded in the AS Operating Budget, it may be funded as a pilot project that allows for assessment before operationalization. Financial policies are also up for review by this committee.

Parliamentary Procedures- Since this is a decision making Council it is important for records to keep track of the action taken by the committee through motions. ParliPro helps to ensure that more voices are heard. Items presented as an Action Items can have motions proposed for a vote. It is helpful to be specific about the motion including where funding is coming from, where it should be transferred to, and how much funding is included.

IV. Information Items

A. Outdoor Center Trip Leader Training Decision Package

Stephen Magnuson, Outdoor Center Programs Coordinator this has been a process for four years to re-conceptualize Outdoor Center Trip leader hiring and training processes to be more inclusive of individuals who may be coming in with less technical outdoor leadership experience. Also to encourage more participation in the leadership development process. Over the first three years of the grant it was planning, designing, testing and redesigning. In the last year and a half they have stabilized the program in what is best to be in the trainings. It has stabilized to be about \$36,000 for the training program. A large part of this is student instructor pay because it is required to pay students for any trainings they are required to attend. For other supplemental trainings the senior instructors are paid to help facilitate the trainings. The hope is to start students early in the program as it builds upon itself, and then by the time they are in their Junior or Senior year they would move up to being a senior instructor. Funding also includes meals, transportation, and the

credential fees for some certifications. One of the biggest goals is to take away the financial barrier for students to be able to participate in this development. Jo said that last year the committee looked at operationalizing this program, but there was a significant increase in the Operating Budget due to the \$1.50 increase in minimum wages. This was leaving the AS Budget in a deficit. Jo said that at first they questioned spending this much funding on a project, but now they understand that this is essentially an affirmative action type program to try to have equity and justice in hiring by reducing barriers. There are trends in the right direction towards a more diverse staff and Jo doesn't think that they should end the program because the numbers aren't as high as they had hoped.

Vigil said that Magnuson has great numbers in the package. The OC Excursions program attendees are actually representative of WWU students. There has been an intent and desire by the OC more racial equity and to have the Excursions Leaders be more representative of WWU students. Vigil asked how many employees are getting the benefit of this training. Magnuson said that it is about 35-40 trip leaders. They hire 10-15 employees per year. It's about \$1,000 per employee in an investment in their professional development. Magnuson said that there is about a \$2,000 investment in the average AS employee's professional development. In the past they had a lot of students walking in to WWU with a high level of knowledge. At this point they are not finding this knowledge anymore and in an effort to diversify operationalizing this program is proposed. The OC Trip Leaders do not attend AS Staff Development days.

Magnuson said that the OC does bring people in to help in the field. Last year they had sessions on ableism, race and the outdoors and land use and ownership. It is important for their students to recognize privilege and power structures when leading others. Presentations have also been available from LEADS, Prevention & Wellness, Counseling Services, etc. based on the needs of the staff. Griffis asked if some people coming in do have experience. Magnuson said that 75-80% of incoming staff don't have the contextual experience. If there is no one who had advanced skills in an area, they may look for someone with experience in that specific area. For example White Water Rafting would be hard to teach in 2-3 years. Griffis said that the training sessions are laid out, it says a lesson is assigned to an instructor- it would either be Magnuson or a Senior Trip Leader. Kaemingk asked how many students go on the field experience trip. Magnuson said about 10-15 students attend the trip, they are paid for their time, food, transportation etc. They only do the field experience trip in the first year. Kaemingk asked if this fluctuates a lot based on graduation rates. Magnuson said that it does vary a little from year to year. It is more ideal to have 10-12 leaders. For Western Outdoor Orientation Training they have 21 leaders out in the field during those days. Not everyone can come back early in the summer to lead a trip so they need a big pool. There is a contracted basis for the trip leaders, they agree when hired. It is a per job basis. It is \$70 for apprentice, \$80 for apprentice, and \$90 for Head Trip Leader for a weekend. When that is broken down to hourly, it is below minimum wage. They agree to this in order to keep costs down for students. If they went up to paying hourly for everything that they do, the costs would not allow the trips to continue in the current way. They would have to look at many different options that would greatly change their programs. The Trip leaders ultimately feel that the service they provide is important and they feel that the contracted rate is acceptable to open it up to more students. Magnuson did a large scale audit of all Outdoor Rec in WA, Oregon, and Idaho. Ultimately through the audit they ended up in the mid to high end of Trip Leader pay.

Vigil said that the AS has put a value on people being paid for their work. They are getting the benefit of professional development and also getting paid for their time. Magnuson said that Field Experience is paid at an hourly wage for 8 hours per day at minimum wage and this is for 6 days. They also have two more weekend long trainings that are a total of 32 hours. A new trip leader receives 72 hours of training. National average is closer to 100 hours before leading a trip. Trip leaders assisting with training are paid at the contracted rate.

Jo said this was funded as a Grant to allow for trying this new program in a pilot to see how much funding is needed for the program and assess before operationalization. This proposal is to add this funding to the operating budget starting in July of this year. Magnuson said that Western Outdoor Orientation Trips (WOOT) are a weeklong pre-orientation training they serve about 100-130 student annually in about 12-14 trips primarily backpacking and sea kayaking. The data shows positive correlation to academic and social success upon entering university. Student participants are also retained at a higher level than those not involved in WOOT. The whole idea is to build a support community.

Throughout the academic year excursions also run wellness and excursion events. There is a lot of leadership development for the leaders. For the participants its purpose is to engage in outdoor activities and build community. Ballard asked what the ratio is trip leaders to participants. Magnuson said there are typically 3 trip leaders and 9 students per trip, at most it is a 5:1 ratio. There are limits in terms of total number of people per trip, especially in national parks. Ngo asked how many excursions are run throughout the year. Magnuson said that there are anywhere from 1-3 programs per week. They have instructional courses designed to teach people how to safely participate in various outdoor activities (e.g. snowshoeing, backpacking, etc.); regular outdoor outings which are not instructional but led (e.g. ice climbing, etc.); and then short 2 hour Wellness Activities in town (e.g. arboretum hike, bike to boulevard, etc.). Vigil asked if the training has led to greater persistence in trip leaders. Magnuson said trip leaders prior to training people would just come in and be hired as a trip leader if they already had skills. They had over 75 people who were trip leaders and only about 15 were actively involved. There was little control over their skill level and what they were instructing. Magnuson said, since the implementation of the training, people voluntarily leaving the program has only been about 3 people total in 4 years. This was either because they decided it wasn't for them or they dropped out of the university. This is not including graduating Trip Leaders. Ngo asked if they needed to rehire every year. Magnuson said that upon yearly evaluation they do not have to reapply. The training program is built to follow students throughout their time and to help enhance leader's skills. Their goal is to retain Trip Leaders as long as possible to get the most out of their training investment. Walsh said that this was one of the areas this was allowed, but it will now be allowed in all of the AS.

Magnuson said Wilderness First Aid is a more in depth CPR course it doesn't give a lot of tools for more serious incidents, they want people to have more than just a baseline, but this is a lot in the first year. Wilderness First Responder is a 72 hour course training on treatment in a variety of medical scenarios that may arise. Due to the fact that they are in remote areas, this is needed and even required for some permits. Jo said that next week will be a time for the council to discuss this time. Later on after all decision packages have been reviewed then a decision will be made on this item.

Jo said that they will talk next week in the training session about how to evaluate the decision packages. These are really AS Operating Budget requests. The current requests are more than the current projected funds available. Last year the AS Budget was passed at a \$57,000 deficit. However, the AS has not fully spent their funds in recent memory. In the last few years there have been salary savings due to temporary staff vacancies. One decision this committee will make is how much they would like to increase their funding and what they would like to ask the Services & Activities Committee. Budget Authorities are able to spend up to 10% over their budgeted amount. Jo said that it isn't a good idea to always count on funds being left over. They should attempt to budget more accurately to reduce the amount of funding they are asking students to pay for in their fees. At this point the AS Budget is in a deficit of about \$8,000 if there is a 4% increase, this is without the decision package requests. Vigil doesn't feel this committee should over budget by more than \$50,000.

B. ESC Club Programming Support Decision Package

This proposal is to increase the funding available to AS Ethnic Student Center Clubs to request for their programming, including heritage dinners. There are three options available that describe the impact on the clubs for each of the increases. Heritage dinners typically cost a club about \$2,500 per heritage dinner. Jo said that there is a committee that reviews the allocation of these funds, each club does not get an equal distribution. Ngo said that sometimes they will host joint programs. There have been 4 new ESC Clubs added in recent years. ESC Budget & Programming Committee is made up of the leadership of each club and they vote on the funding allocations. Some clubs only do small level programming, some will go over their amount. Jo is also Budget Coordinator for an ESC Club. Funding needs change based on need, for example they gave \$2,000 for a heritage dinner. Another club has done a lot of fundraising for a conference, but they needed \$3,000 in additional funding. Ngo said that there have been less requests in the last few years for heritage dinners because of the construction in the VU Multipurpose Room, but that may change now that it is completed. Heritage dinners typically have food, music, performances, etc. to help showcase their culture and increase awareness. Not all of the food needs are available in the area and therefore might come at an increased cost. Vigil clarified that the only clubs that are officially recognized as Ethnic Student Center Clubs can access this funding. Romo would like clarity on this because there are three different numbers given for the number of clubs. \$2,000 has been a general guideline for allocation, but this is not followed as a restriction. Vigil asked if BAP had input into this proposal, it was unknown. More information will be provided at the next meeting.

V. Other Business

VI. Adjourn

The Meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.