



# Western Washington University Associated Students

## AS Board of Directors

January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020

VU 567

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

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

**Secretary:** Sierra Templeton

**Guest(s):** Nicole Ballard, Kayl Gillihan, Hunter Pederson, Sargun Handa, and Stella Harvey.

### Motions:

**ASB-20-W-1** To approve the meeting minutes from the date of December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020.  
*Passed.*

**ASB-20-W-2** To approve the addition of Olivia Duco and Jessica Gallawa to the AS Student Technology Fee Committee. *Passed.*

*Lani Defiesta, AS President, called the meeting to order at [insert time].*

### I. Approval of Minutes

*MOTION ASB-20-W-1 By Zerai*

To approve the meeting minutes from the date of December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

*Second: Mullins*

*Vote: 5-0-0*

*Action: Passed*

*Yes:*

*No:*

*Abstaining:*

### II. Revisions to the Agenda

N/A

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

1. Sargun Handa commented that they have been elected as vice chair of the student senate with the goal to implement sexual abuse training in addition to the mandatory reporting training that senators have to go through.

- a. Defiesta noted that in the past CASAS has been spread thin which is why something like this hasn't existed, but this could definitely happen.

### IV. Information Items - Guests

A. WILD Legislative Agenda (Drechsel)

1. The structure of the agenda is one “main” agenda with a list of items as well as a document from each office outlining their headlines and asks. The offices included are the SAIRC, ESC, and ESP with main coordinators Kayl Gillihan, Jose Ortuzar, and Joselyn Chavez respectively.
2. Main Agenda- mostly the same as the Western Lobby Day (WLD) Agenda
  - a. Support for Undocumented Students
  - b. Funding for Ethnic Studies
  - c. Farm Workers Protections
    - i. Was on the ESC agenda last year, now is more updated. Includes an ask to support SB 6261 to close loopholes that stop farmworkers from being able to retaliate against work injustices.
  - d. Support for Survivors of Sexual Assault
3. Drechsel asked why the farmworkers protection ask is on the main agenda rather than the ESC agenda. Gillihan responded that the item was moved there in an effort to be more intersectional as well as draw focus to the item that may pass.
4. Zerai asked how the Ethnic Studies funding request is doing, as well as if support for black students is being included.
  - a. Defiesta stated that the Ethnic Studies Coalition has found a time for a meeting to discuss what progress can be made in the legislative sector, and also asked how the board can work to move forward proposals supporting black and indigenous students especially.
  - b. Zerai noted that she’s hesitant in creating a space like this quickly as it may lead to alienation of a certain group of people.
  - c. Drechsel noted that there haven’t been talks of curriculum and classes, as discussion has been focused almost entirely on funding. They should be interconnected.
  - d. Defiesta stated that this program will interact with the way the institution works and should stay in place for a long time so there needs to be procedures to make sure that anti-blackness is addressed. Faculty and staff should be involved in the creation of curriculum as well as students outside of the AS. She will work with coalition to find other ideas.
  - e. Barenburg said that she would love to be involved in curriculum building whenever that occurs in order to add legacy documents.
  - f. Zerai said she’s worried about this conversation ending after WILD because these conversations about curriculum might not happen until next year.
  - g. Defiesta stated that it would be good to think about how the intention stays wrapped up in the work which can be a challenge in higher education.
  - h. Drechsel said that there is a bill in the house to sponsor funding for Ethnic Studies. The funding was reduced from \$500,000 to \$350,000 with no specified number of staff, just as many as possible with the new budget. The Ethnic Studies Coalition has given this the okay.
  - i. Gillihan said that she’ll talk to WILD people about intent in a meeting over the weekend.
5. SAIRC
  - a. Mental Health and Wellness
    - i. Similar to the WLD agenda with another ask to allocate more representatives to get resources for disabled students.
  - b. Public Accessibility
    - i. Markers on licenses for deaf and hard-of-hearing people.

- ii. Closed captioning on public televisions.
    - iii. Insulin cap of \$100 per month, or WA State handling and distribution to lower costs.
    - iv. Medicare to cover prosthetics and orthotics.
    - v. Changing college guidelines concerning weather closures and assistance to the disabled.
    - vi. Pederson noted to reach out to the Western College Diabetes Network as students may be interested in giving testimony and lobbying for this.
  - c. Reproductive Justice
    - i. The first ask may be moved under the Support for Survivors of Sexual Assault item.
    - ii. Extension of insurance so that anyone who is qualified for maternal care is covered for reproductive care as well.
    - iii. Menstrual hygiene products and supplied for students from grades 6-12<sup>th</sup>.
- 6. ESC
  - a. Support for Native American Students
    - i. This item is taken straight from Bennett's legislative priority. This item may end up on the main agenda instead of the ESC depending on how many asks are on the main agenda.
    - ii. Mullins asks what the definition of a tribal member is in the legislative department, to look at who is covered for economic assistance as some students are parts of tribes but aren't considered native. Drechsel stated that she will ask Bennett about legislation concerning this and that there will be more items on the agenda when this is an action item in the following week.
- 7. ESP
  - a. Will be on the agenda soon, the ESP is aware that this lack of time may lead to some asks being denied from lack of revision.

**V. Action Items - Guests**

A. N/A

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

A. N/A

**VII. Action Items - Board**

A. N/A

**VIII. Information Items - Board**

A. N/A

**IX. Consent Items (subject to immediate action)**

- A. Olivia Duco and Jessica Gallawa of the AS Student Technology Fee Committee
  - 1. Barenburg stated that she met both of the students and both provided excellent commentary on the committee and were recommended by a professor in the Chemistry department as well.

*MOTION ASB-20-W-2 by Drechsel*

To approve the addition of Olivia Duco and Jessica Gallawa to the AS Student Technology Fee Committee.

*Second: Barenburg*

*Vote: 5-0-0*

*Action: Passed*

*Yes:*

*No:*

*Abstaining:*

## **X. Board Reports**

**Lani Defiesta, AS President** stated that she has a meeting with CASAS in the following week, and this week she met with Sabah and Melynda in groups to discuss response to the forum and how best to communicate with students in the best way possible. The website currently isn't accessible, and sending too many emails is ineffective. She also has a meeting to clarify the policy for weather related campus decisions as well as how to amend and implement different policies concerning this. She's going over what the job description for the Title IX position should look like,

1. Mullins noted that he will have a meeting with Melynda concerning the balance of communication and overload to students and on the university website. The University of Oregon has a One Stop for students that has every resource under it as well as an app called Navigate that guides students through registration, classes, etc. and that Western should look at this as an option.

**Trever Mullins, VP for Sustainability** stated that there has been major developments concerning food and housing insecurity. Lorrie Bortuzo worked with Melynda and the Office of Sustainability in order to develop a work plan in line with a house bill in order to address basic needs on campus of students. The first step would be to create a website for students to find all the locations and resources for this. Bortuzo is in charge of administrating the funding and he has a meeting with her the following week. There will be a change happening in the Office of Sustainability so watch out.

**Selome Zerai, VP for Activities** stated that she has been in the process of figuring out why activities council S&A fee can't give funding to religious clubs, as well as looking at Ramadan accommodations. Also been looking at what's going wrong with the CSC ambassadors and how to provide reports to speed line the process.

**Grace Drechsel, VP for Governmental Affairs** stated that Western Lobby Day was a success, with around 100 students attending and around 63 legislators reached. All the snowdays the week before made preparation rough, but the event went well. There's been a turnaround for the WSA ask for the Undocumented Student Loan Program, so there will be a big push in the next week for support. Drechsel encouraged everyone to register for Western Intersectional Lobby Day which is happening President's Weekend. She's been in the process of negotiating the contract with the WTA and keeping costs down for students. Students are coming together to do a lobby day for transportation and they may also add a lobby day to support students who are a part of Western on the Peninsula to ask for a more equitable tuition price as the AS also represents these students.

1. Zerai asked why tuition is higher for these students and Drechsel responded that the program is not state supplemented so tuition is a major by major basis, in most cases ending up to be about \$6,000 more, a loophole which needs to be closed.

**Adah Barenburg, Senate Pro-Tempore** stated that she had a meeting to discuss access to services for Western on the Peninsula students, as well as about how to make sure international students are informed about western events and receive the experience they are paying for. She met with students about the issue with access to food during Ramadan, and with Jen Nimtz about how to improve math 110 and 112, hopefully creating a survey and getting student testimonial. She also met with someone from AS productions about creating a promo video for the Student Senate. There was a student tech meeting for student proposals. They have 20 million to give out, and all of the proposals they received amounted to 70 million, so they will have to figure out what to fund.

## **XI. Other Business**

### **A. Ramadan Accommodations (Zerai)**

1. SB 5166 passed that allows accommodations in academics to be made for religious reasons, and consequently she and Adah met with Muslim students to discuss how improvements can be made. Historically, student's grades suffer during fasting and since this is the first year this accommodations bill is in place, what we do this year will set a precedent for the following years. She will be working with Hunter Pederson and the MSA Board to let all staff and faculty know that not providing accommodations is discriminatory. The funding from the activities council cannot provide support for religious clubs because of a University policy. Although there is a Supreme Court law that prohibits funding being used for events where there is preaching, events or gatherings of religious groups are not prohibited. There aren't many religious clubs at Western and it's unsure as to if this is caused by lack of funding or if the small amount of clubs leads to lack of funding.
2. Defiesta asked if the S&A fee is considered state money and Drechsel clarified that it is since Financial Aid is able to cover the fee.
3. Aramark is attempting to accommodate for Ramadan but because they aren't sure how much food to provide for the 2 meals a day, it hasn't been the most well-executed. Zerai asked how the board can make sure staff and faculty are supporting the accommodations.
4. Barenburg recommended a draft email for students to send to their professors that outlines the necessity of Ramadan accommodations with a section at the end for students to add their specific needs. She also stated that she'd remind student senators to talk to their deans about the issue and that she will talk to Brent Carbajal about this.
5. Drechsel noted that although not supplying reasonable religious accommodations is illegal, faculty and staff decide what reasonable means in this context.
6. Zerai stated that all staff have different levels of flexibility and different colleges especially have different attitudes. If the needs of students aren't met, they may fail classes and have to put more time and money into schooling.
7. Barenburg stated that there were a lot more religious accommodations on the syllabi which is technically required but this is a good start.

*Lani Defiesta, AS President, adjourned this meeting at 3:56 p.m.*