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|  | **Western Washington University Associated Students** |
|  | **AS Board of Directors** |
|  | April 15th, 2020 |
|  | MS Teams |

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| **Board Members:** | *Present:* Lani Defiesta (President), Yesugen Battsengel (VP for Diversity), Grace Drechsel (VP for Governmental Affairs), Emily Gerhardt (VP for Student Services), Trever Mullins (VP for Sustainability, and Adah Barenburg (Senate Pro-Tempore)*Absent:* Selome Zerai (VP for Activities) |
| **Advisor:** | Leti Romo (Assistant Director for Student Representation & Governance)Annie Byers (AS Board Program Coordinator) |
| **Secretary:** | Sierra Templeton |
| **Guest(s):** | Sargun Handa, Hunter Stuehm, Sanai Anang |

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| **Motions:** |
| **ASB-20-S-6** | To approve the March 6th, 2020 meeting minutes with time changes in consultation with the board assistant assigned to the minutes. ***Passed.*** |
| **ASB-20-S-7** | To remove the AS Logo Redesign from information items ***Passed.*** |
| **ASB-20-S-8** | To add five more minutes to the discussion for the Student Presentation information item. ***Passed.*** |
| **ASB-20-S-9** | To move the Student Presentation to an action item. ***Passed.*** |
| **ASB-20-S-10** | To endorse the Student Presentation item. ***Passed.*** |

***Lani Defiesta, AS President, called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.***

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| **I.** | **Approval of Minutes** |
| A.  | March 6th, 20201. Battsengel commented that the meeting starting time and ending time were conflicting and asked what the accurate time was. Drechsel suggested contacting the board assistant who took minutes for this meeting to fix this issue.
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|  | *MOTION ASB-20-S-6* | *By Drechsel* |
|  | To approve the March 6th, 2020 meeting minutes with time changes in consultation with the board assistant assigned to the minutes. |
|  | *Second: Gerhardt* | *Vote: 4-0-2**Yes: Drechsel, Gerhardt, Mullins, Barenburg**No:**Abstaining: Defiesta,Battsengel* | *Action:* ***Passed*** |

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| **II.** | **Revisions to the Agenda** |
| A. | Removal of the AS Logo Redesign information item1. Stuehm noted that the AS communications committee endorsed a new logo for branding, but that there’s more work to do with marketing. There were some unexpected logistics, but he will bring it back to the board next week after more meetings.
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|  | *MOTION ASB-20-S-7* | *by Defiesta* |
|  | To remove the AS Logo Redesign from information items. |
|  | *Second: Mullins* | *Vote: 6-0-0**Yes:**No:**Abstaining:* | *Action:* ***Passed*** |

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| **III.** | **Public Forum** *(comments from students and the community)* |
|  | None |

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| **IV.** | **Information Items - Guests** |
| A. | Student Presentation (20 Minutes) Doc 2 Zerai1. Defiesta read the statement prepared by Zerai regarding the student presentation in remedy of her absence.
2. Anang stated that over 10 million Americans have filed for unemployment in March, and the federal reserves are estimating that the U.S. may reach a 30% unemployment rate. He noted that the great depression had a 24.5% employment rate comparatively. The stimulus package may be good as a short-term solution, but if this crisis extends for longer than a few months, Americans may not have the funds to pay for essential services. We may encounter more instances like this as due to the permafrost, diseases that were previously trapped in ice may be waking up.
3. Anang stated that a group of people left out of this conversation/stimulus packages are students. They are entering into a workforce with debt and without the means to pay it off due to the acute economic impact of COVID-19. This Bootstraps project wants to pair up Western graduates with local businesses that currently cannot operate due to COVID-19 constraints, to assist the businesses in moving to an online platform.
4. Anang stated that the Bootstraps project is being temporarily renamed as the Corona Crisis Mitigation Fund and would also like to take community entrepreneurs with three or more years of experience with Western seniors to create new projects that can assist the crisis America and Whatcom County is dealing with. The Fund is looking for an endorsement similar to that that the student senate gave them.
5. Romo asked how Anang envisions the executive board to play into this process. Anang answered that he’d like assistance in choosing projects to greenlight. The student senators, for example, can make sure the needs of students in different colleges are represented. He plans on reaching out the the ESC to make sure the fund is equal opportunity/access. The Fund would value the executive board’s advice that is supportive of students needs and also any connections to local government.
6. Drechsel asked what the selection process of the projects would look like. Anang answered that once there is a pool of applicants, the fund may narrow it down to a handful, then ask the final applicants to present to the student senate for input.
7. Defiesta question Anang whether the name of the project was changed and questioned the weight behind the word bootstraps. Anang answered that for the next 24 months, the name is the Corona Crisis Mitigation Fund, and after this time limit, it will change back to the Bootstraps name. This is so that stakeholders know that this is a continual project that won’t just end after two years.
8. Mullins noted that no matter the name, the purpose of the fund is there. This project should be moved forward in order to supply relief and as it goes through its process, the name can be changed.
9. Anang clarified that in his experience as a dark-skinned black man, the term “bootstraps” has been used to as a negative, implying that everyone can have the same opportunity if they just work hard enough. The Fund seeks to turn this phrase around in order to take back the power in the word.
10. Drechsel questioned the use of the phrase “social clout” as a qualification in the application process. She suggested a revision requiring a petition of 20-30 community members who endores the project. Anang clarified that the fund seeks to confirm that either the student is able to produce a list of people in the community who support them (a petition of authenticity) or have enough social influence. Looking at other successful projects it seems that this social aspect (backdoor influence or social media influence) is essential in launching a project in this short three-quarter timeline.
11. Gerhardt asked if there is a plan for the students working with local businesses to be hired on after the business is moved online. Anang responded that if a student is essential in creating the position they have to be kept on, which would be a part of the agreement.
12. Gerhardt asked if the name would be confusing to students simply trying to access aid. Anang responded that as a nonprofit, they hope to expand to offer aid such as this based on student and community need.
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|  | *MOTION ASB-20-S-8* | *by Mullins* |
|  | To add five more minutes to the discussion for the Student Presentation information item. |
|  | *Second: Drechsel* | *Vote: 6-0-0**Yes:**No:**Abstaining:* | *Action:* ***Passed*** |
|  | 1. Mullins stated that he believes the focus of the discussion is hard on the nitty-gritty details as this is just an official endorsement rather than something to fund. Things will change before this becomes an official endowment that students can use and picking apart small things won’t make sure students receive support.
2. Defiesta stated that she agrees, but that this endorsement does come out on behalf of the board so it is important to make sure the board knows what they are supporting, honoring the work Anang has been doing.
3. Stuehm commented that the next step if the board agrees for this to becomes an action item, would be to include in the motion flexibility to format and formalize the statement before it is distributed to the public.
4. Barenburg voiced her agreement with Mullins and stated that it’s good for the board to give feedback to Anang but he decides what to do with it.
5. Defiesta asked since Zerai is absent, whether this falls under the allowed requirements of a unanimous vote. Romo stated that her interpretation is that it is just unanimous of the board members who are present, and since Zerai brought this item forward, it seems as though she’s sponsoring it. Drechsel stated that she doesn’t remember anything in the bylaws about this but she agrees with Romo.
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|  | *MOTION ASB-20-S-9* | *by Mullins* |
|  | To move the Student Presentation to an action item. |
|  | *Second: Drechsel* | *Vote: 6-0-0**Yes:**No:**Abstaining:* | *Action:* ***Passed*** |

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| **V.** | **Action Items - Guests** |
| A. | Student Presentation1. Anang thanked the board for taking the time to meet with him, this was a great engagement and he looks forward to look for sponsorship and investment. He is working hard to make sure this is descriptive and for students.
2. Drechsel noted that she was not getting into the weeds to seem hypercritical, she was very impressed, but giving this critique is showing that the board cares.
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|  | *MOTION ASB-20-S-10* | *by Mullins* |
|  | To endorse the Student Presentation item. |
|  | *Second: Battsengel* | *Vote: 6-0-0**Yes:**No:**Abstaining:* | *Action:* ***Passed*** |

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| **VI.** | **Personnel Items** *(subject to immediate action)* |
| A. | None |

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| **VII.** | **Action Items - Board** |
| A. | None |

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| **VIII.** | **Information Items - Board** |
| A. | ATF 20-21 Fee Increase Proposal (30 Minutes) Doc 3 Mullins1. Mullins stated that this fee increase is below the 5% which would require a student vote. Last year the fee increase was just under 5%, and there was an increase proposed this year slightly over 5%. That being said, this increase is only a dollar. While the WTA contract continues to go up each year, they expanded the current contract to the next year, but the Late Night Shuttle contract is expected to go up in July. Normally the ending cash balance stays at $300,000 in order to run the system for a full quarter to wrap up operations if students vote against the fee.
2. Defiesta asked if this starts this summer, Mullins responded that the increase applies Fall 2020, and during Summer 2021 the fee will increase from $22 to $23.
3. Drechsel noted that she was very wary of the fee increase at first due to the epidemic, but it’s important to see the value of Western’s relationship to the WTA even during these times. It will save headaches in the future.
4. Defiesta asked if with the uncertainty of courses happening on-campus, would waiving the fee be a possibility if there are no on-campus classes in the fall. Drechsel responded that this was a pretty swift decision and that she doesn’t think it would holds up to charging the fee in the fall quarter if this were to be the case. Mullins added that Trinkhaus was careful not to say what will happen in the future, but knowing the WTA there’s no reason not to extend into the fall although the fee may increase by much more in the future. Dreschel noted that if more clarification is needed, McMurren can be contacted, and there can be more discussion next week when this is an action item.
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| **IX.** | **Consent Items** *(subject to immediate action)* |
| A. | None |

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| **X.** | **Board Reports** |
|  | **Lani Defiesta, AS President** stated that since the town hall, her and Barenburg have met with admin to talk about having another webinar town hall. They were informed of a 5.8-million-dollar stimulus package the university is receiving from the federal government. Admin are receptive to doing some form of outward communication such as a AS/admin hosted town hall. She met with faculty and staff members concerning their perspective and they’re interested in reaching out via webinar to debrief and communicate with students outside of class time. Drechsel and herself sent an email to the Bellingham City Council in favor of the Bellingham Tenant Union Resolution to support a rent freeze and mortgage forgiveness which passed unanimously. She noted that there’s a Board of Trustees meeting on Friday in which herself and Barenburg will yield time for Yesugen’s presentation. It will be at 8:00 a.m. at wwu.edu/live.**Yesugen Battsengel, VP for Diversity** stated that they met with Melynda Huskey on how to support undocumented students especially with the instability of DACA. They’ve been meeting with the undocumented and mixed-status student committee which is hoping that the university is taking the COVID-19 epidemic as an example of something unforeseen that wasn’t prepared for and showing that this issue is something they can be prepared for. Preparing protocol for what may happen if DACA were to be rescinded and how they could support students in this event. The EO, Prevention and Wellness, and CASAS are all still running and are available resources. They’ve been in contact with the ESC about virtual meetings.**Grace Drechsel, VP for Governmental Affairs** stated that she is trying to figure out the best route to organize the LAC, recognizing that this is unpaid for most students. There will most likely be a special session for COVID-19 relief in which the budget may be cut leading to having to defend higher-ed funding Western already has. She’s been trying to figure out how to advocate for students to get them financial help and got in contact with local officials to sign the resolution, which passed unanimously.**Emily Gerhardt, VP for Student Services** stated that she reached out to RAs and is planning on contacting RL supervisors to get a plan to help the RAs. The Office of Student Life has the COVID-19 website up and running that contains a form for students to fill out concerning what support they need. The Fairhaven pop-up pantry was open today and 117 students showed up and received food, which she commends Romo for.**Trever Mullins, VP for Sustainability** stated that he met with the SEJF team yesterday. There has been communication with the basic needs working group to get funding to support their work. He’s trying to figure out was HIA and basic needs have in relation as well as the SB 5800 working group. Mullins has also been busy with classes and thinking about the future of SEJF and potentially student fees that aren’t under the AS umbrella and how they can be regulated in this time of crisis.**Adah Barenburg, Senate Pro-Tempore** stated that she received more clarification from Melynda Huskey today stating that the stimulus package they received should mostly be spent on emergency funds and is supposed to stretch through Fall 2020 as well. There are two more weeks before the funding arrives. Barenburg learned that the university is shipping laptops for free if they are needed. There are no hotspots available at this time but there are on-campus options in Haggard and Arntzen Hall complying with social distancing. They have also shipped cameras for classes, purchased licenses for remote technology software access and are trying to give as many hours as possible to student employees. Both resolutions in the senate have passed. |

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| **XI.** | **Other Business** |
| A. | Passed Student Senate Resolution 1. Defiesta stated that Drechsel and herself were present and shared concerns about the senators wanting to put the resolution on the agenda for the board’s support. She stated that she cannot comfortably vote on something that may affect faculty and staff. Tuition and hiring are interconnected, and the university would not function without maintenance, staff and faculty. She hesitates in supporting something without knowing the ramifications and asks the board to consider Western’s pattern in responding to the recessions in 2008-09, and how they laid off a lot of faculty and staff then.
2. Gerhardt echoed the same concerns, stating that she feels it’s unreasonable to ask for a reduction on tuition while expecting to maintain the same amount of employment. She stated that there have to be reasonable avenues for Western, and the resolution doesn’t align with what the board has done regarding fees. She felt that a lot of the pieces of the resolution weren’t researched well enough and that the role of the senate is to look primarily into academics while the AS board is looking mostly into student life. This resolution could hurt the relationship with admin that the board has. She acknowledges the privilege the board holds but to put in the work to make sure you aren’t spreading misinformation to the student body.
3. Mullins stated that the senate has an inability to know what’s happening, and to keep in mind that the senate is only two years old and senators work 19 hours a month while the board works 19 hours a week. While there are some asks that don’t make sense, there are also reasonable ones. He stated that there are times when the senate isn’t treated the same way that the board is, they don’t have as much access to information and they didn’t have as much time to prepare for their positions. If there is to be a vote on the resolution, he encourages a roll call vote.
4. Barenburg stated that some redundant asks were already removed from the resolution and that she views the document as a direct response to student concerns regarding tuition for academics. As a member between the senate and board she feels very pulled back and forth.
5. Romo stated that she thinks it’s very important to recognize that the two bodies are not expected to have the same work, but to reach out to cover as many students as possible. She asks how the bodies can work collaboratively rather than in competition.
6. Drechsel noted that as a believer in the senate, it is doing a disservice to excuse things that the AS may not believe or support for the sake of a relationship.
7. Defiesta stated that a lot of work has been put into this, but she may not be comfortable supporting this. It’s important to look at the big picture into the future.
8. Battsengel stated that she saw the resolutions as asking for either a refund or to be more transparent with what tuition is being used towards, which seems to be a good compromise. It seemed to her to be a selection of options rather than an order. The board and senate have different constituents which we represent but at the end of the day we all have a responsibility to the student body. Lack of communication makes this tense, but we should focus on communication and taking care of each other in the time of this pandemic. It would be nice for all the VPs to know what the senate is working on, not wanting boundaries to be stepped on but respecting the senate.
9. Defiesta asked if a resolution is the best or most effective mode of accomplishing what the senate is asking for. This may be an administrator’s job, and students shouldn’t have to carry that weight.
10. Stuehm noted that the senate does reserve autonomy to ensure the power of statements they make, but he does advise rewording and branding to make it clear that this is on behalf of the AS student senate only. If the board were to endorse, then it could move forward as a statement from the AS.
11. Gerhardt asked if there is any opportunity to have a meeting with both the senate and the executive board in order to communicate what everyone is working on to have more cohesive governing bodies. Romo stated that this is up to Defiesta and Barenburg to facilitate a meeting like this.
12. Barenburg stated that she is down to organize this but that it would be good to some up with some talking points beforehand for productivity. Defiesta agreed and stated that it’s important to recognize that the board and senate are all still students making decisions for things all will be affected by.
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***Lani Defiesta, AS President, adjourned this meeting at 7:37 p.m.***