

Western Washington University
AS Food and Housing Insecurity Advisory Committee

[insert date]

VU 462 A

Board Members: *Present:* Trever Mullins (VP for Sustainability), Patrick Czichas (AS Student Senator), Daniela Tierra (ESC Representative), Soumya Ayelasomayajula (ESC Representative Proxy), Gia Okeefe DePaolis (QRC Advocacy Coordinator), Ethan Chrisope (Off-Campus Living Representative), Britta Eschete (Career Services Representative), Alyssa Tsukada (Office of Sustainability Representative), Karen Deysher (SAIRC Coordinator), Christian Urcia (Supervising Resident Director), and Lorrie Bortuzzo (Multicultural Services).

Secretary: Sierra Templeton

Guest(s): None

Motions:

HIA-20-W- Approval of... *Passed.*

I. Call to Order

Trever Mullins, AS VP of Sustainability, called the meeting to order at 12:16 p.m.

II. Additions and Changes to the Agenda

None

III. Approval of Minutes

None

IV. Discussion Items

A. Future of the HIA

1. Mullins asked for input on how the committee can best serve the needs of students in this time of crisis.
2. Eschete responded that a cohesive website for resources is needed. Urcia noted that the Office of Student Life has website, the Covid-19 student assistance page.
3. Urcia commented that the SwipeOut Hunger program has been put on hold for the quarter due to lack of students holding meal plans, and the website needs to update to communicate this.

4. Deysher commented that although the website has lots of helpful information, the way that it's organized may not encourage student engagement, this goes for the emails as well.
5. Mullins stated that we need to decide, going on, what the committee's purpose should be. Does the HIA look at student concerns, look at projects that need to be improved, etc. Increase in transparency is needed as well. Deysher responded that the current state of affairs may increase funding for student resources, showing how vital these are to students.
6. Tsukada commented that a lot of students had to leave personal belongings on campus, including modes of transportation. How are students supposed to get these items back, and will the university be storing them in the meantime?
7. Urcia responded that the University is not expecting students to pick up belongings, but students are able to at any time. It's hard to promise future storage, not knowing what the following quarters will look like. Currently Housing is trying to figure out how many students have ended the housing contract and still have their belongings on campus.
8. Mullins asked how HIA can make sure this type of information is getting out to students in a unified way. He also asked who is regulating the information that is being distributed.
9. Bortuzo stated that the survey for expressing needs on the Covid-19 page may be the most important in getting resources for students, and it needs to be highlighted so students at WWU have the platform to express need.
10. Deysher stated that both food pantries are closed because they can't be accessed at the moment, so they have been working with the Students In Need working group to figure out how to address this. This may include giving out grocery cards, pop-up food distribution, and distribution of meal kits from the Birnham Wood Pantry. It's difficult to get students who aren't on financial aid food due to University restraints. They are trying to find a balance between staying safe and setting these resources out.
11. Okeefe DePaolis asked whether a graphic can be created so that the student need survey can be shared on online platforms. Deysher responded that they will work on the graphic to try and share it through MS Teams. They noted that the safest way to contribute to the food pantry is through the Viking Funder, because concerns with food handling is still an issue.
12. Ayelasomayajula stated that she saw a few groups online doing some of this work in Bellingham, some student led as well. She asked whether there's a possibility of collaboration.
13. Deysher stated that there a lot of things outside groups can do where the University cannot because of various red tape. Collaboration with these off-campus groups is imperative in providing student support.
14. Mullins noted that this crisis is forcing WWU to look at how to support students so hopefully they'll be more apt to continue this after the limitations of the pandemic are gone.
15. Eschete asked if there's information about if students are actually receiving support. Deysher responded that they are working on a survey concerning that now, but it's just complicated to distinguish resources. This is all an ongoing conversation in its early stages.

Trever Mullins, AS VP of Sustainability, adjourned this meeting at 1:01 p.m.