



## Western Washington University Associated Students

### AS Board of Directors

May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020

MS Teams

**Board Members:** *Present:* Lani Defiesta (President), Selome Zerai (VP for Activities), 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: None*

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

**Secretary:** Sierra Templeton

**Guest(s):** Rukhsar Sadat, Malik Ford, and Sargun Handa.

#### Motions:

**ASB-20-W-14** To approve the meeting minutes from the date of April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020. *Passed.*

**ASB-20-W-15** To move the Ramadan Accommodations Resolution from Information Items with Board to Information Items with Guests. *Passed.*

**ASB-20-W-16** To adopt the Ramadan Accommodations resolution that the senate passed on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020. *Passed.*

**ASB-20-W-17** To move the Ramadan Accommodations resolution to Action Items with Guests. *Passed.*

**ASB-20-W-18** To pass the Ramadan Accommodations resolution on behalf of the Associated Students of Western Washington University. *Passed.*

**ASB-20-W-19** To acknowledge consent item A. *Passed.*

*Lani Defiesta, AS President, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.*

#### I. Approval of Minutes

A. April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020

*MOTION ASB-20-W-14 By Mullins*

To approve the meeting minutes from the date of April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020.

*Second: Zerai*

*Vote: 5-0-2*

*Action: Passed*

*Yes:*

*No:*

*Abstaining: Dreschel and Battsengel*

#### II. Revisions to the Agenda

A. Ramadan Accommodations Resolution

*MOTION ASB-20-W-15 by Zerai*

To move the Ramadan Accommodations Resolution from Information Items with Board to Information Items with Guests.

*Second: Barenburg*

*Vote: 7-0-0*

*Action: Passed*

*Yes:*

*No:*

*Abstaining:*

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

A. None

### **IV. Information Items - Guests**

A. Ramadan Accommodations Resolution- Zerai

1. Zerai stated that the document was made in support of Muslim students, the two main asks being to arrange with students to change to evening deadlines, or to give students a 12 hour extension, and to allow students to arrange for online tests and quizzes to be taken at a different time.
2. Zerai stated that the resolution passed in the senate, and that as the Muslim Students Association (MSA) has historically gotten the short end of the stick, it is important that this resolution is centered around Muslim persons rather than all religious organizations on campus.
3. Gerhardt asked senators present what they would like Western's role to be with Ramadan accommodations, asking why these hadn't passed before Ramadan.
  - a. Sadat and Ford noted that with SB 5166 passing in Washington, they assumed more accommodations would be made for Muslim students, but many professors didn't include the reference to this in their syllabi, and there were also several incidents which indicated specific accommodations needed to be pushed for.
  - b. Ford stated that in the future the plan would be to take the resolution to the EOL or other higher-up organizations, but for now they would like to pass the resolution as soon as possible. Sadat added that it's important at the moment to be specific to Muslim students, but in the future, other religious groups can be advocated for if needed.
4. Barenburg suggested adding a line about why the resolution is coming about such as "we encouraged all faculty to put this on their syllabi.."
  - a. Mullins responded that adding too many edits with given time constraints would limit the ability to move it forward to be passed.
5. Defiesta asked if there is any other follow-up they would like to see from the board, such as other things to support, or communications to Deans.
6. Zerai stated that this will be sent to Deans and current chairs, and they do plan on meeting with the EOL.
7. Radat mentioned that next year they plan to send out a reminder before Ramadan to professors, as well as collaboration with other organizations on campus.

*MOTION ASB-20-W-16 by Zerai*

To adopt the Ramadan Accommodations resolution that the senate passed on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

*Second: Mullins*                      *Vote: 7-0-0*                      *Action: Passed*  
*Yes:*  
*No:*  
*Abstaining:*

*MOTION ASB-20-W-17 by Mullins*

To move the Ramadan Accommodations resolution to Action Items with Guests.

*Second: Drechsel*                      *Vote: 7-0-0*                      *Action: Passed*  
*Yes:*  
*No:*  
*Abstaining:*

**V. Action Items - Guests**

A. Ramadan Accommodations Resolution

*MOTION ASB-20-W-18 by Zerai*

To pass the Ramadan Accommodations resolution on behalf of the Associated Students of Western Washington University.

*Second: Mullins*                      *Vote: 7-0-0*                      *Action: Passed*  
*Yes:*  
*No:*  
*Abstaining:*

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

A. None

**VII. Action Items - Board**

A. None

**VIII. Information Items - Board**

A. None

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

A. Travis Felver- AS Student Enhancement Fund

1. Defiesta stated that Felver has been sitting on the committee as a proxy for quite some time and has been doing a great job.

*MOTION ASB-20-W-19 by Defiesta*

To acknowledge consent item A.

*Second: Drechsel*

*Vote: 7-0-0*

*Action: Passed*

*Yes:*

*No:*

*Abstaining:*

## **X. Board Reports**

**Lani Defiesta, AS President** stated that she made the first executive board report at the student senate meeting the night before and is in the midst of planning the “State of the AS” event with Barenburg. She plans to meet with the rest of the board concerning this as well. She voted to reduce the summer S&A fee, the WSA general assembly was held this past weekend, and student trustee committee applications just opened up.

**Selome Zerai, VP for Activities** stated that she is looking into creating a student activities board, talking to Eric Alexander about the next step of restructuring. Her goal is to connect the VU and the AS in one committee. She has also been working on her legacy document and the Ramadan resolution.

**Yesugen Battsengel, VP for Diversity** stated that they met with the ESC and the SAIRC about what to plan for API month. The first ESC meeting of the quarter is the following day and they are looking forward to that.

**Grace Drechsel, VP for Governmental Affairs** stated that she attended the WSA general assembly which passed a pretty solid agenda that protects the funding for financial aid when the state budget starts to make cuts due to COVID-19. When the agenda is finalized she will send it out to other board members. WWU brought a proposal to use state funding to distribute emergency grants. She is working with Battsengel and Kayl Gillihan to develop a student activism guide as a student resource to engage students on campus. She is working with the REP to solidify local lobby day, having the meetings spread out over a week to make it more accessible.

**Emily Gerhardt, VP for Student Services** stated that she has been talking to Kenzie Garner about her role on the Transportation Advisory Committee, which hasn’t met in 5 years, and is in the process of transferring the chair from the AS VP for Student Services to the Alternative Transportation Coordinator. She met with Melynda to talk about the \$5.8 million CARES grant, 1 million of which will be distributed to students through the application process, students who have had to move out of the resident halls, RAs who were laid off, and those with a family contribution of less than \$10,000. \$400,000 has already been distributed through the application process.

**Trever Mullins, VP for Sustainability** stated that in SEJF the basic needs working group will receive a proposed \$26,000 grant which should go back to students in the form of pop-up food distribution, grocery cards, and other resources. He’s working on the future of HIA and how it can be better attributed to students especially with COVID-19. Looking at the future of ATF as well for the next year.

**Adah Barenburg, Senate Pro-Tempore** stated that she has been having “State of the AS” conversations. She also talked with Eastern Washington University student government

about their move to all online classes except for labs or essentially in-person classes. They had been suffering economically because of the tuition cut they made during the 2008 crisis. The faculty senate met Monday to discuss the pass/no pass system and the student technology fee.

## **XI. Senate Reports**

- A.
  1. Handa stated that senators have been working on legacy documents as the last meetings are coming up.
  2. Sadat stated that she has been working with Fairhaven Outreach for Fall recruitment.
  3. Ford stated that he has been working on creating a relief committee to provide AS dollars for students in need of support.

## **XII. Other Business**

### A. Student Activism Guide

1. Mullins asked Drechsel how involved clubs would be in student advocacy and resources, hoping this isn't a list of things to direct a student on what they have to do.
2. Drechsel responded that the guide will be a compilation of resources from other places rather than direct advice. They are still figuring out the logistics and working on club outreach.

### B. Public Meeting Chat Function

1. Mullins noticed that during public meetings on MS Teams, the meeting chat is not open to the public and is unsure of the legality of this. Should there be practices of reading out relevant information mentioned in the chat?
2. Byers noted that once the comment is acknowledged it can be read. Side discussion should be avoided.
3. Barenburg noted that this has been a concern for her as well, which she has tried to acknowledge during senate meetings, but in situations of overuse, this is difficult.
4. Romo stated that one thing to keep in mind is that these discussions that are happening in the chat may have been happening before in person. How do we continue to value these conversations in a way that is accessible rather than simply getting rid of these comments? It is also important to consider that some may not have Wi-Fi in which they are able to communicate clearly through video chat. She asked if there is a way to share chats in the same way Zoom does after a meeting.
5. Barenburg noted that some senators have expressed that they have a bad time concentrating on both the chat and the video.
6. Handa mentioned that it would be beneficial to continue to remind senators of the reduction of side chat, mentioning legality issues and that relevant comments will be read.

### C. Food Pick-Up

1. Defiesta noted that every Wednesday from noon to 2 p.m. at Viking Commons there is a food pick-up bag of non-perishables as well as produce from the Outback Farm and other food such as bread from Aramark.

*Lani Defiesta, AS President, adjourned this meeting at 6:45 p.m.*