



SUSTAINABILITY, EQUITY, AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE

June 3rd, 2020

9:00am

Microsoft Teams

Present: Trever Mullins (ASVP for Sustainability); Kelsey Leppek (ESP Director); Emily Gerhardt (ASVP for Student Services); Christina Ngo (SAIRC Marketing and Assessment Coordinator); Soumya Ayelasomayajula (ESC Assistant Director for Logistics); Grace Wang (Environmental Studies Chair); Grace Wang (Environmental Studies Department Chair); Leigh Chaffey (Student at-Large); Shannon Sandberg (SEJF Project Coordinator); Turner Campbell (SEJF Project Coordinator); Johnathan Riopelle (SEJF Program Coordinator); Kamea Black (SEJF Project Coordinator); Greg McBride (Assistant Director of Viking Union Facilities)

Secretary: Jude Ahmed (Executive Board Assistant)

Guest(s): Lindsey MacDonald

MOTION SEJF-20-S-2 Motion to approve the Waste Sorting Expansion grant abstract **Passed.**

Mullins called the meeting to order at 9:01am

I. Introductions

II. Revisions to Agenda

MOTION SEJF-20-S-5 By: Mullins

Motion to move the Climate Leadership Certificate to the first agenda item.
Passed.

Second: Ayelasomayajula Vote: 9-0-0

Yes:

No:

Abstaining:

III. Discussion Items

a. Climate Leadership Certificate – Lindsey MacDonald

Western needs more mechanisms for supporting reciprocal community-engaged work for students and the need more paid internship opportunities, especially because there are not many paid internships available due to the pandemic. There is also a need for more commitment

for climate justice. This grant is meant to fund two cohorts of eight to twelve students that would be a year and a half long experience. It would involve a place-based orientation, four courses, a paid internship, and independent study, and monthly forums. Many of the components are offered for all stories so it would engage the larger community. MacDonald outlines the sequence of the certificate. The grant requests \$77,020 to cover outreach, place based orientation, student intern stipend, and food for the monthly forum. Ayelasomayajula asks how aspects of environmental justice will be incorporated into this curriculum, and asks her to expand on the social justice pedagogy. To MacDonald the social justice pedagogy will value where students come from and it will be a lot of peer-to peer learning and recognition of where students come from. A certain component will be really connected to engaging community voices and making sure they are compensated. MacDonald's orientation around sustainability is talking about social justice issues and the disproportionate impact of different communities. Mullins asks if other academic departments are able to fund the line item for a teaching contract and why they need to pay teaching contracts through SEJF. MacDonald says that that item in the previous budget has actually been removed and is no longer needed. Mullins says will be back next week to be voted on!

IV. Budget/Program Report

The budget presented is an estimated range based on all the varying factors that could change next year. Riopelle states that \$273,000 represents how much money the fee would intake if the fee was meant to be \$7 a quarter for the entire FY 20-21' and they will discuss this summer further what changes in fees may happen. Riopelle does not believe they will drop \$7 and believes it may be possible to return to \$9. So, the lower range assumes a \$7 fee and an enrollment of 13,000 students. \$418,500 is what they projected to have if they have \$9 fee and 15,000 enrolled students. The main program expenses go towards the salaries of two program managers and two coordinators for the year. They also included funding for WOHESC although they may be unable to attend based on the pandemic. There should be at least \$200,000 in funds available for SEJF grants and that can fund a lot of projects.

Moldenhauer asks if the Green Direct Program is through Puget Sound Energy. Riopelle says Western joined several Puget Sound institutions like UW

or Microsoft to work with PSE to build a wind farm and commit to use that energy instead of just buying reusable energy credits.

V. Discussion Items

a. SEJF Feedback

Mullins hopes that next year the committee will be able further work towards embodying the equity and justice issues that the Associated Students needs to work on in order to combat anti Blackness. In his position as VP for Sustainability Mullins wants to recognize that sustainability movements have been historically coopted from Black and indigenous activists. Students have reported in years past that this committee has been difficult to navigate for Black and indigenous activists and there is only so much that can be done to honor this work and break down barriers within a formal committee.

Moldenhauer believes it is really important to look at these grants through an intersectional lens and emphasize to the grants that we see that we do want to see intersectionality and engage Black folks in the program. Sandberg wants to focus this summer on making the SEJF process more accessible and less complicated and if anyone has feedback from students in informal and formal channels she is interested in receiving that feedback so help her this summer. McBride wants to know what accessibility look like, not just through processes. Ayelasomayajula suggests the committee could advocate for students outside of just funding grants especially when BIPOC students bring up issues within their departments or the Huxley college. Ayelasomayajula thinks that a step that we could take to make it more accessible is making the information of this committee more available and making the application process more accessible as well. We as committee members and the program staff work hard with the team to support them but from what I have heard from students, especially BIPOC students, is that it is a daunting and exhaustive process. Chaffey agrees that having a step by step process would be helpful because it does seem like a very long and stop-and-go process which is probably a barrier for students who apply for grants. Mullins knows that one concern is that most students on the committee get paid for their time and Chaffey is the only one that does not get paid. Campbell brings up that one idea they have looked at is providing some sort of compensation for students. Mullins recognized that when committee members are representing one aspect or office, there tends to be tokenization, especially in regards to diversity. Those representing offices and positions bring expertise

that is needed to the committee, but ultimately think of the betterment of all students. Campbell wants clarification of what it means to not want to place extra burden on students of color but also include more voices from students of color. Mullins is thinking about the difference between having an identity and experience but not being the only person that bring up or advocate for the impact on other identities. SAIRC and ESC representatives are not meant to be the only ones bringing up concerns of students of underrepresented ideas. At the current state of the world, Black students should not be the ones educating committees, and the AS and its committees need to take that seriously. Ayelesomayajula has definitely felt that way in this committee where often these issues around accessibility, representation, equity, justice, etc are brought up by the ESC or SAIRC representative and not as much by the other members on this committee unless it is about budgets. Having trainings could allow for more people to possibly feel comfortable around these topics and understand them in relation to this committee but also has to be ingrained into the way the committee functions and its values from the beginning. Campbell suggests having trainings for members on these important topics. Mullins agrees and believes this can be incorporated better into fee language discussions. Leppek suggests that this whole COVID situation provides a unique opportunity to better meet teams where they're at--ie. even once things are back in person, meeting with teams over Zoom or coordinating by email for filling out the grant might make the application process more accessible for students who don't spend as much time on campus, work irregular hours, etc. Campbell's concern is with time and feels that they have not had time to flesh out a lot of these conversations and to make that happen and they are going to need to create space for it by pushing something else off the committee's plate. Leppek suggests, from the AS side, meeting at the beginning of fall quarter and incorporating trainings into the schedule before we start seeing completed applications would be an appropriate use of time. McBride wants to recognize that the education around undoing racism is not a one-hour training and is lifelong work. Mullins agrees that right now there is no excuse to not educate yourself. Chaffey learned about SEJF pretty late into their experience as a student and figuring out how to join this committee was long winded and difficult as well. Leppek feels having more advertising (and maybe not necessarily much more, but different advertising) would be helpful-advertising that reaches a broader audience and makes the entire process feel more accessible and welcoming.

Campbell asks what that could look like. Leppek wants to think on it, but one potential barrier is that the existing advertising is reaching the same audience. Moldenhauer plugs the Huxley Town Hall happening at 4pm on Wednesday, June 3rd to discuss issues such as these surrounding anti blackness and inclusion as well as COVID-19.

VI. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 10:04 am