ASWWU Proposed Ethics Board

By Nicole Ballard
• My involvement with the process
  ○ I have seen the grievance process through multiple perspectives
    • Twice on the implementation side as I worked in the OCE.
    • Once last Spring Quarter.
  ○ I am not running in the 2021-2022 Election Cycle.
    • I am graduating (thank goodness, amiright?)
  ○ I have no stake in the future elections.
    • I have not spoken to or know of any possible candidates, etc
    • My only connection to the process now is ensure that it is as equitable and harm-free of a process for all parties involves.
Current Model

Advisor - Eric Alexander

Elections Board Chair - hired in winter quarter and sometimes is the REP Director

Twelve (12) students-at-large, no more than two (2) from any one Western affiliated organization or club, to be appointed by the AS Executive Board.*

If individuals appeal the results of the Election Board, the appeal is heard reheard by the Executive Board and a final decision is reached.

*Appointments made by the AS Executive Board cannot be rescinded or changed after the official election process has begun, unless approved by a majority vote of the AS Executive Board.
Issues with current model

- The current grievance process is underdeveloped and has lead to harming students from all different parties associated with the grievance process.
- We do not focus on the grievance process until it’s too late which leads to huge errors being made.
- It is not consistent in who chairs the board, who is on the board, or how the process is run from year to year which leads to inequitable outcomes.
- Recruitment for the grievance board is challenging since it’s voluntary and sometimes the board doesn’t have grievances to look at in a given election.
- The chair role has historically been given to a student which can put them in a difficult situation that can also impact their environment on campus.
- With the current grievance process, the timeline often means we are handling grievances during the end of the school year and when a large amount are filed, they can carry us until finals week.
- Election results are announced on Friday even though grievances can be filed until the following Monday which leads to sometimes false results which can confuse the student body.
- There is no board that can hold elected officials accountable for going against the election code or intentionally not following processes.
- Elected officials (ASVP for Gov) appoint for this committee.
Proposed Model

Phase 1
Ethics Board Panel 1:
- Chair/Student Coord (notes)
- At-large student 1
- At-large student 2
- At-large student 3

Ethics Board Panel 2:
- Chair/Student Coord (notes)
- At-large student 1
- At-large student 2
- At-large student 3

Phase 2
Ethics Board Panel 3:
- Chair/Student Coord (notes)
- At-large student 1
- At-large student 2
- At-large student 3

Ethics Board Panel 4:
- Chair/Student Coord (notes)
- At-large student 1
- At-large student 2
- At-large student 3
Appeals Process

Appeals Board Panel 1:

- Chair/Student Coord (notes)
- At-large student 1
- At-large student 2
- At-large student 3
- At-large student 3
- At-large student 3

*None are from the original hearing*
Guiding questions:

1. Is the complaint legitimate?
   a. Was the complaint filed according to the time requirements?
   b. Is the complainant authorized in the Code to file a complaint?
   c. Does the complaint address a specific area in the Code?
   d. Is the form complete?
Hearing Agenda

I. Call to order (Chairperson)

II. Introduction/Conflict of Interest Declaration/Process Decisions

III. Presentation of Complaint (5 minutes)

IV. Response (5 minutes)

V. Questions from the Board

VI. Elections Coordinators Interpretation (written statement)

VI. Final comments by Complainant (5 minutes)

VII. Final comments by the person filed against (5 minutes)

VIII. Adjournment of public hearing (Chairperson)

IX. Executive Session for Discussion/Decision (Set a time for notification)

X. Public Meeting re-convened for formal vote on actions.
Details/Benefits

- These students would be paid
  - $15.35 for Student Coordinator
  - $150 stipend for committee members
    - 6 hours of hearings
    - 4 hours of trainings
- This model removed elected officials from the process entirely
- In the future, these students will be hired on at the beginning of the year and can be trained throughout the year
- What will training look like? How can we ensure its most equitable?
Benefits

- This also removes advisors from being too involved in the process and can focus on building effective working relationships with board members and those that are pursuing running.
- There are people who can more consistently see this process through from year to year.
- This board can hold elected officials accountable for their involvement in elections.
- Removes the pressure put on an individual student chair while remaining an all student decision.
- There is a checkpoint at each step to allow for power to be dispersed.
- Moving to a multi-panel model will allow for grievances to be done more quickly.
- Takes powers away for the board and allows for a third branch of government to hold all students accountable for their actions in a fair way.
- We are changing the system- how can we make it more transparent?