

**Western Washington University Associated Students
STUDENT SENATE**

Date: January 27th, 2021

Attendees: *Olivia Chatters, Althea Frye, Ankur Handa, Kara Henry, Kendrick Jackson, Connor Johnson, Jasleen Kaur, Marissa McGinnis, Francis Neff, Alex Park, Samia Quidwai, Liz Rosales, Sameer Shorab, Kharma Stambaugh, Aidyn Stevens, Selam Swier, Laura Wagner, A.P. Wang, Sargun Handa, Nicole Ballard, Jude Ahmed, Casey Hayden, Annie Byers, Ruth Flint-Blanchard*

MOTIONS

ASWWU-21-W-22 To table the minutes.

Sargun Handa, Senate Pro-Tempore, called the meeting to order at 7:04 P.M.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Minutes approval was postponed for the following meeting.

ASWWU-21-W-22

Motion by Ankur Handa

To table the minutes for the following meeting

Second: Francis Neff

Passed 15-0-0

II. REVISIONS TO THE AGENDA

III. BSO DEMANDS

- a. S. Handa (she/her) was in Finance Council discussing the Federal Lobbying Trip, which has a budget of \$4,200 for the Executive Board, and she is bringing it to the Executive Board to abolish and reallocate the funds to the Black Student Coalition. She was looking at whether the Senate needs the allocated money for a Secretary, as an AS Executive Board Assistant currently fills that role, and if that money can be reallocated for the BSO Demands.
- b. Neff (he/Him) spoke about the public forum hosted by him and Laura Wagner on the changing of the name of the College of the Environment. He felt it went well. They heard from the Office of Admissions that they would no longer refer to the college as “Huxley” but rather as just the “College of the Environment”. Several journalism sources on campus have also reached out. They are considering a weekly public forum around the name change. Wagner (she/her) added that the name “Huxley” was originally chosen was because two

- administrators at Western in 1969 liked Huxley's work and named the building for him. There was no donation from his family or community to continue his legacy, which means that hypothetically it should be easier to remove the name from the college.
- c. S. Handa (she/her) gave several updates. She stated that the Office of Civic Engagement is wanting to work with her and AS President Malik Ford on Black History Month. Handa also stated that there would be a student survey going out about the PLEJ GURs.
 - d. Henry (she/her) updated that Fairhaven Senators would be going to the Fairhaven curriculum meeting about whether the 13th BSO demand is being met.
 - e. Stevens (she/her) updated that the CFPA is in charge of the art that goes up around campus. The CFPA Senators are interested in creating a referendum to support that the new art piece going up is done by a BIPOC artist and investigating why there is such little diversity in the artists featured on campus.

IV. PUBLIC FORUM

- a. "Have you thought about the legacy of our environment being the Indigenous people whose land we are settlers on, when it comes to naming the College of the Environment?"

Wagner (she/her) responded with an answer she had earlier given to a reporter asking her about what name she would like the college to take. She feels that it should be someone important in the field of environmentalism and sustainability, and not a straight, white man. She feels it should be a Black or Indigenous person, local or otherwise, and would personally want a BIPOC woman's name for the college, rather than a man. She feels it only makes sense for the name to be replaced by someone who has anti-racist and intersectional values.

- b. "Do you consider that the artists meant to produce art on campus can be representative of what we're local to, but lack the basic resources such as housing, food, ability to pay for tuition, and transportation?"

Stevens (she/her) said that she agrees with this question, and that one of the CFPA Senator's goals is to support current artists who are students at WWU. She continued that it is important to meet the basic needs of all WWU students but especially BIPOC students and art students who have extra costs. She feels that thinking about the art on campus relates to that, but it is created by non-students and is picked through a committee. She stated that she is aware that it is a question but agrees that meeting basic needs of artists on campus is important.

- c. "By having elections in the spring to provide summer training, how can you all ensure training will be equitable for both branches? Also, more training does not mean "more experience." What needs to be implemented is better and more effective training. And, the idea of getting a "head start" is not conducive to the job performance of senators as the academic year doesn't traditionally involve

summer quarter and not many students take summer classes. Therefore, it's irrelevant. Furthermore, understanding how these bureaucratic systems work is contingent on how effective the training is for Senators. So, again their job performance is dependent on the training provided to Senators. Do we really need a whole summer to teach senators how to send an email? Or, a whole summer to teach them how bureaucracy works, when it is crystal clear how they function?"

"This narrative of Student Senators aren't fully developed in their position until now (winter quarter) is just false since even our executive board student leaders are not fully developed in their position until now also (Winter quarter) even with summer training."

"Is the AS Student Senate comfortable with gatekeeping student leadership away from nontraditional students?"

S. Handa (she/her) started by saying that there may not be sufficient time to answer these questions as the meeting is a special one to address a specific Information Item. She clarified that these questions were all about the student senate elections being moved to the spring. She explained that the referendum was a mandate by the WWU students, so it had to get on the ballot. She continued that it was better and more efficient training being sought, not more training. Effective training is most effective when it is done on the job rather than through PowerPoints and Legacy Documents. She acknowledged that not everyone will be happy with the solution found. On the issue of gatekeeping, Handa argued that not having representation year-round is not something that can be fixed in Fall Elections, but with Spring Elections, representation for Transfer and Graduate Students can still be fixed through having other opportunities for those groups in student government.

Quidwai (she/her) spoke on the topic of using the summer to train Senators. She explained that she is a doctoral candidate getting her doctorate in audiology so she has a lot of academic experience and is not entirely clear on how bureaucracy works, so having a summer to adjust would be helpful. She also said that as a full-time graduate student she and her co-senator serve on several committees that meet over the summer, which means it would be beneficial to have Graduate Senators elected in the spring. She also pointed out that since the majority of voters wanted to move the election, it would not have been right to ignore that decision.

S. Handa also pointed out that this decision may change with different Senates. She thanked the audience for their questions. She also explained that past Senate Pro-Tempores had wanted elections to be moved to spring, so it was a responsibility passed down to her, that was then passed by the WWU Voting Student Body. She then read testimonials from Mario Alem, the OCE Elections

Coordinator who supports the elections being in the spring. He feels that he can do the work needed to have elections in the spring.

V. INFORMATION ITEMS – Guests*

a. Finance Council Value Statement – Noemi Bueno presented on the Finance Council Value Statement from the AS Finance Council. She read the statement to the Senate. She explained that the document was put together with different departments and wanted to explain it and the values of the AS Finance Council to the Student Senate. Raquel Vigil (she/her) reminded the Senate that one of the reasons it is important for them to see the document is that the Senate and Executive Board share the responsibility of passing the coming budget later down the line.

b. WILD Agenda – Mariam Wolters (she/her) presented the documents for the WILD Agenda and SAIRC Write-Up. When discussing food insecurity, she asked the Senators if they thought it would be valuable to add a statement about a survey that had found up to 1/3 of Washington’s Population is facing food insecurity. Vigil added that currently there are prohibitions on FNA fees to support food pantries. The fees can minimally support the pantries, so supporting this could potentially help fund programs like WHOLE. On the topic of DEI training and supporting more training, Wolters opened the floor for comments from the Senators. Park (she/they) said that they appreciate the effort put into it but had no additions at the moment. Johnson (he/him) asked what value there might be in the proposed training over the current training. Wolters responded that that is an important point, and that Senate Bill 5227 was difficult to write because how effective it is had to be considered. She believes that it puts more emphasis on making sure staff has more comprehensive training than students do, which is valuable since it takes the burden off of Students to advocate for themselves. She said she would look into how the bill had been received by the Higher Education Committee for input to see if they addressed anything that would be important for advancing DEI. She also mentioned that it is important to make sure that students who the DEI programs are about are in communication about what the programs will look like, which is a focus of 5227. On the topic of house bill 1090, which relates to banning private for-profit prisons in Washington State, Johnson (he/him) asked under what purview the house would have jurisdiction since it is a state issue not federal. Wolters responded that that is an issue to look into and she does not have an answer in the moment.

VI. ACTION ITEMS- Guests *

VII. PERSONELL ITEMS

VIII. ACTION ITEMS – Senate*

IX. INFORMATION ITEMS – Senate *

X. CONSENT ITEMS

XI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

XII. BOARD REPORTS

XIII. SENATE REPORTS

XIV. OTHER BUSINESS

The meeting was adjourned @ 8:30 P.M.