

**Western Washington University Associated Students
STUDENT SENATE**

Date: March 3, 2021

Attendees: *Rebeca Andrade-Eekhoff, Olivia Chatters, Althea Frye, Ankur Handa, Anna Hedrick, Kendrick Jackson, Connor Johnson, Jasleen Kaur, Marissa McGinnis, Francis Neff, Samia Quidwai, Daniela Reyes, Colton Rommanose. Liz Rosales, Sameer Shorab, Kharma Stambaugh, Aidyn Stevens, Selam Swier, Laura Wagner, A.P. Wang, Sargun Handa, Raquel Vigil, Casey Hayden, Annie Byers, Ruth Flint-Blanchard*

MOTIONS

ASWWU-21-W-27 To confirm appointed senators.

ASWWU-21-W-28 To approve Spring Elections on constitution.

Sargun Handa, Senate Pro-Tempore, called the meeting to order at 6:34 P.M.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

II. REVISIONS TO THE AGENDA

III. BSO DEMANDS

- a. Ranulfo Molina (he/him) reported that the BSC Hiring Committee hired 3 new student employees. The Black History Month was very successful. He is working with the ASVP for Sustainability to send out a survey to BIPOC students about the College of the Environment name change.
- b. Laura Wagner (she/her) reported that she is on the Legacy Review Task Force and that she and Kaylan are working with Z, the ASVP for Sustainability, to create the survey that Molina had mentioned. She also reported that the PLEJ Forum was successful. Wagner is also working with Shred the Contract with a focus on abolition. She is also working with Z to reach out to the sustainability and environmental focused clubs at WWU to join their efforts. Neff and Wagner also met with Nicole Vargras (check) on the topic of diversity and inclusion at the College of the environment. Wagner added that she's interested in working with Fairhaven Senators on researching the College of Ethnic Studies.
- c. S. Handa (she/her) updated that she had spoken to Brent Carbajal about the Ethnic Studies timeline, and that they were hoping to get funding during the legislative session. Then there will be a conference during spring quarter with the student body on what is wanted from the Ethnic Studies Program, which likely will not be a College. She asked about the difference between and institute and a program, and an institute is more interdisciplinary. Some institutes are within Colleges and some are not. The soonest Ethnic Studies Faculty could be hired is Fall Quarter.

- d. Stevens (she/her) updated that the Fine and Performing Arts Senators have been doing work with Demand #7 of adding art made by black artists to campus (check). With the Western Sculpture Collection, they have been collecting information on how the process works of bringing in new art to campus. They hope to add another student voice to the selection committees. They've been in contact with the AS Productions VU Gallery Director about adding that to their job description, which they agreed with. Stevens and Stambaugh are also looking at how they might get student art into dorm buildings. She also hopes to speak to Chairs and Deans of the various departments to work out future dedicated revenue to fully fulfil BSO Demand number 7. The CFPA has also started a diversity, equity, and inclusion task force with more students than faculty on it.

IV. PUBLIC FORUM

V. INFORMATION ITEMS – Guests*

- a. ASWWU CDO Letter – Ranulfo Molina (he/him) the ASVP for Diversity presented the CDO Letter to the Senate. S. Handa added that she and the AS President had signed the letter in support. It also includes student testimonials. Neff (he/him) said that he had received an email from Professor Jean Meyers that said that any student could sign onto the letter in support and that he would forward that letter to S. Handa. Molina explained that it was likely that the College of Environment has its own CDO letter that Neff was being asked to sign support of. Hunter Steuhem (check) added that bringing the letter to the Senate Meeting was meant to allow the public to weigh in, but that he, Sargun, Malik, and Ranulfo could speak out on the letter since they would have support from various AS offices, but they do not need specific signatures at the moment. McGinnis (she/her) added that she had received the same email as Neff, and that many people were sent it in various colleges.

VI. ACTION ITEMS- Guests *

VII. PERSONELL ITEMS

- a. Student Senate Appointees – S. Handa introduced the new Student Senators. Anna Hedrick introduced herself, saying that she is an At-Large Senator and a Freshman. S. Handa explained that Hedrick was chosen because of her work as a member of Key Club and ASB, her response to the DEI Question on the Application, and because of her commitment to advocating for diverse students to support their success. Wagner (she/her) who was on the committee that selected the senators added that she had noted that Hedrick had similar passions to what current senators were working on and had attended the PLEJ forum previously. Handa then explained the selection process. There had been 40 applicants to the

various open Senate positions, and 4 had been chosen. There were 15 quarterfinalists, then 8 semi-finalists who were interviewed by Handa, and then the 4 chosen. S. Handa then introduced Colton Romannose, the appointed CHSS Senator, who is a transfer from Northwest Indian College and studying Psychology. She explained that he was the VP of Finance at his previous college and his DEI response stood out. He had also volunteered for the “Witnessing Our Future” Suicide Prevention and attended Tribal Leaders Health Summit Panels. Romannose introduced himself as a senior in the psychology department as well as a transfer from the Northwest Indian College. Flint-Blanchard (they/them) who was on the selection committee stated that their general reasoning for the appointed senators was that their applications stood out due to responses and prior experience. Handa also added that all three committee members went through the applicants separately and felt that the chosen candidates were in their top choices before coming to the selection meeting. Handa then introduced Daniela Reyes, a new At-Large Senator, and explained that in Reyes’ application she had spoken about being from a majority white town that had many confederate flags, and that Reyes had helped create the first MLK day of service there and volunteered to create a more comfortable environment for students of color. Handa also drew attention to Reyes’ answer to the DEI question. Wagner agreed that she was impressed by Reyes’ background because of her experience with living in a small conservative town as well. She also said that she was impressed by Romannose’s emphasis on safety during COVID. Reyes (she/her) introduced herself as a freshman with an interest in Political Science. The final appointed senator introduced was Rebeca Andrade-Eekhoff who is an AS Productions Employee. Handa spoke on her previous work on Black History Month with the AS, she worked in an unpaid internship with the Canadian Embassy to document low-income women on a small island, and she worked in a camp for neurodiverse youths. She is the appointed Fairhaven Senator. Handa drew attention to Andrade-Eekhoff’s answer for the DEI question. Wagner added that she was impressed with Andrade-Eekhoff’s summer camp and embassy work, and that her statements made it clear that she would advocate for DEI and accessibility. Rebeca Andrade-Eekhoff (she/her) introduced herself as a senior Fairhaven student studying cultural advocacy through documentary film making and arts management. Johnson (he/him) asked about how the appointees would be sure to communicate and advocate for the students they represent since they were not elected. Reyes responded that she is interested in learning how the processes work and being available to work with other student organizations, and that she will take on anything she can help students with. Hedrick responded that she plans to be engaged with clubs to see what the discussions there are so that she can make connections with people from diverse backgrounds as well as finding solutions working with her fellow senators. Andrade-Eekhoff responded that she used to feel that she needed others to speak for her, but

she has grown and wants to be the voice for others who feel that way, so she is reaching out to Fairhaven students and being a voice for them. Romannose responded that not being voted onto the position is a detriment to not hearing earlier student demands, he believes that understanding the unique needs during COVID is the first step in helping to implement those demands, he also thinks that the changes caused by the pandemic need to be addressed.

ASWWU-21-W-27

Motion to confirm the appointed senators

By McGinnis

Seconded by Johnson

Passed 14-0-0

VIII. ACTION ITEMS – Senate*

IX. INFORMATION ITEMS – Senate *

- a. Math Failure Rates – Chatters (she/her) presented the documents on the First Year Math Failure rates. Sargun Handa (she/her) gave some background on the issue that First Year Math courses had very high failure rates especially for students of color, first generation students, and Pell Eligible students. The courses are also taught by TAs or Grad Students who do not have the resources to teach the courses with the knowledge needed. The courses need to be passed to graduate and when the Math Courses need to be retaken financial aid will stop applying. Chatters explained that the best thing for the senate to do is show support for funding of student committees working on this issue. Handa (she/her) asked what the next steps are for the senators working on the issue. Chatters responded that getting student input and support since there has not been a survey sent out on the issue. Stambaugh (she/her) asked if they plan to look into the ALEKS placement test since it is inconsistent to what level students are put into. Chatters responded that while she does not know that there's anything specific going on with ALEKS, they are looking into how standardized testing is unfair to marginalized students because of how they are set up. A. Handa (he/him) said that he had looked into ALEKS and how it places students and hopes to replace it with a better placement system. Johnson (he/him) asked if other schools have better placement systems. Handa (he/him) said that in his previous school the math department had its own placement test which worked more accurately. Chatters explained that many Washington Universities used ALEKS. Stambaugh brought up that when ALEKS places a student

they cannot take lower-level courses so if a student is placed in an upper-level class, she thinks it may make sense that students could take lower-level courses if needed. Chatters said this was an issue she would bring up. S. Handa brought up that the previous years At-Large senators had gathered testimonials and that she would search for that document. Chatters brought up that Covid may have affected student math scores in the current school year. S. Handa presented the studies on the math courses at WWU and Math 114 scores.

- b. Student Senate Bylaws, Senate Job Descriptions, and Charge and Charter – S. Handa presented the changes on the Bylaws, Job Descriptions, and Charge and Charter and got input from the Senators on changes that may be needed for accuracy.

X. CONSENT ITEMS

- a. ASWWU Constitution – S. Handa presented on the ASWWU Constitution and the change for spring elections the student body voted on.

ASWWU-21-W-28

Motion to approve the change from the student body vote for spring elections.

By Johnson

Seconded by Wagner

Passed 17-0-0

XI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

XII. SENATE REPORTS

- a. Neff reported that they had a meeting regarding DEI and curriculum for the College of the Environment and what classes need to change.
- b. Wagner reported that she uploaded all the information she had on the College of the Environment name change.

XIII. BOARD REPORTS

XIV. OTHER BUSINESS

The meeting was adjourned @ 8:34 PM