

We as members of the ESC Executive Board are writing to express our frustration with the way the ESC Executive Board meetings have been handled, as well as how we as student representatives have been treated within this space.

It is important that the ESC staff and administration recognize that taking away our right to vote during the recent situation involving WWU Hillel was not only a violation of our current bylaws, as intended, (regardless of how the administration decides to interpret them) but also put the mental health and safety of several students at risk. The way the situation was handled demonstrated that the ESC and its history of being student-run are not respected by WWU's administration.

This situation with WWU Hillel raised questions about who the ESC serves and is intended to serve. The ESC is for *us*. We, as student leaders, and WWU students, do not have the privilege of shedding our identities on campus for safety. The ESC is *our* space. We need the ESC staff and administrators to commit to empowering us to create a space that is anti-racist and anti-colonial (to whatever extent we can achieve that through a university space). We ask that the ESC staff and existing administrators connect with the leaders of the original ESC movement like Michael Vendiola, and Larry Estrada, the advisor at the time. Both are still engaged members of the university community and have expressed deep concern for what is happening.

Furthermore, the ESC Executive Board meetings in themselves have created a hostile and overall unwelcoming space for ESC executive members. Several of our clubs have met and/or have had conversations that were open to all willing ESC clubs in the last few weeks to talk about some of our issues with the ESC and this committee. Within these conversations, some of the issues that have been brought up include:

- Not getting enough training to run clubs to the standards that ESC student staff wants. This creates frustrations for all parties involved and makes ESC leaders less likely to approach the ESC student staff.
- The current meeting format does not allow for students to get to know each other. The ESC as a community is already fragile due to anti-Blackness and cliques. Without giving the student leaders the opportunity to get to know each other and create bonds, we cannot be expected to create a true community in the ESC.
 - Additionally, club members have brought up the issue of meetings being too formal. As a committee that serves students of color, we should not be beholden to the same statutes and formats that white students do. It is not in our history or nature to operate in bureaucratic formats. Our existence disrupts the status quo in the university, the ESC should as well.
- Neither ESC student staff nor the AS VP for Diversity should be leading executive meetings. Clubs have raised concerns about ESC student staff and the AS VP for Diversity acting unprofessional toward club leaders, leading to a previously raised point of student leaders being less likely to approach staff. It has come to a point where student leaders have been told off for criticizing elected officials.

- Similarly, club leaders are told that committee chairs are too busy to respond to inquiries.

In an effort to reduce stress and friction among all parties, we would like to propose a new format for these meetings that continues with the ESC philosophy of being student-run. On Monday, April 4th, 2022 several ESC student leaders met and discussed a potential new format for ESC Exec board meetings we would like to propose now. Our proposed format removes the ESC Advocacy Coordinator and AS VP for Diversity as Chairs. Instead, our meetings will have each ESC club leadership team (whether chair, co-chairs, president, president and VP, etc.) take turns leading our ESC meetings. They would coordinate with the ESC Advocacy Coordinator to create the agenda and ensure that all important updates are delivered to student clubs in a timely manner. All decisions would be based on a majority vote and any dissent would be handled through discussion and compromise. Meetings would focus on brainstorming collaborative events and discussing ESC issues like the question of what is the ESC and who is it meant to serve. The AS VP for Diversity would act as a visitor to these meetings and provide AS updates to the committee as needed.

By revising our current format, we hope that several, if not all, of the existing issues, will be addressed and will bring back the power within the ESC to students.

Signed,

Arab Student Association

Black Student Union

Blue Group

Filipino-American Student Association

Japanese Student Association

Khmer Student Association

Korean Student Association

Latinx Student Union

Mixed Student Organization

Pacific Islander Student Association

Vietnamese Student Association