



AS Finance Council

May 11, 2022 11:30 a.m. Teams Online

Members: Present: Noemi Bueno, Chair (AS Business Director), Ben Crandall (Activities Rep), Madi Gilbert (delegate for Central Services Rep), Chelsea Joefield (Resources Rep-ESC), River Johnson (Student Senate Representative), Silvia Leija (Resources Rep-SAIRC), Daniela Reyes (delegate for AS Student Senate President) **Absent:** Glory Basic, Vice Chair (AS President), Naira Gonzales Aranda (ASVP for Diversity)

Advisor: Raquel Vigil, Assistant Director for Business Services and Planning;

Secretary: Cindy Monger, VU Administrative Specialist; Samantha Hughes, Viking Union Organization Business Services Program Support

Guests: Susanna Schronen, VU Fiscal Tech

MOTIONS

FC-22-S-07 Approve the minutes of May 4, 2022. **Passed**

Noemi Bueno, chair, called the meeting to order at 11:33 a.m.

I. Call to Order

II. Approval of the Minutes

MOTION FC-21-S-07 by Joefield

Approve the minutes of May 4, 2022.

Second: Leija

Vote: 6-0-0

Action: Passed

III. Revisions to the Agenda- Table all action items to the next meeting

IV. Public Forum- Leija said the Honors Students of Color released demands

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lTJ6AWu_ip-XuANVIDYaVhurKaFijyOv3UOPps0BpWs/edit] for the honors program because of issues regarding racism and the way that students are treated. These demands were reviewed by the Executive Board. There hasn't been any response transparency from the Honors program, so the students have created a change.org petition to put pressure on the college to acknowledge the demands publicly. They are seeking support from staff, faculty, committees, and student groups.

[https://www.change.org/p/support-honors-students-of-color-hsoc-demands?utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=custom_url&recruited_by_id=c4da1c60-ce40-11ec-b356-35bb99ed835e]

The demands were presented on February 4th and a week later the students were told that the demands would not be publicly acknowledged based on the advisement of the university. The school told them that they they do not want to deal with demands anymore. If students want to present demands, it will need to be in the form of conversations not demands. Johnson asked if this was in response to Black Student Organization demands, they were curious about the reasoning behind this. Leija imagines that it was in response to the BSO demands. She had a conversation with the MCC director, and apparently, the university doesn't want to deal with things in terms of demands because they said they are not working. Bueno asked if the Finance Council could take a stance on this. Monger said that in general the elected officials take stances on behalf of students and this was reviewed by the AS Executive Board. However, the petition would be included in the

minutes to raise awareness. Bueno encouraged the council to sign the linked petition to support our students.

Reyes shared that in light of Mental health awareness month, The Happy Club is holding a Spring Fling dance Friday, May 13th. They will have free food from Mi Rancho and Insomnia Cookies. Bueno hopes everyone is taking care of themselves this Mental Health Awareness Month. Crandall said The Outdoor Center and Counseling Center are holding an event out at Lakewood on May 21st 10am-6pm that is free to students with most of the day being crafting, hiking, sailing, mindfulness, baking, hanging out, being in the water, eating food, and having fun. Bueno said that this month is Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) Heritage Month, shoutout to all students who fit this demographic and please check out the programming happening. There are also a lot of Heritage Dinners coming up for people to check out. ESC Night Market is May 21st from 5-8 pm. lots of clubs have amazing food planned!

V. Black Student Demand Updates

VI. Information Items

A. Services & Activities Fee Update- Last week the AS raised some concerns about the increase in enrollment towards pre-pandemic levels. Those numbers were surprising to see, and they felt it was maybe too good to be true. The committee reached out to enrollment to ensure that the numbers were accurate. The number was very old and not accurate to the current numbers they were seeing, but it also included the roughly 1,000 students that attend satellite campuses, and that money doesn't go to the S&A committee. Currently, enrollment for the fall is estimated at 14,200 students. S&A Fees are distributed by percentages to the AS, Departmentally Related Activities Committee, Campus Recreation, and Athletics. There was also a vote last week to maintain the percentages that were used last year, but it did not pass. In 2021 the AS took a reduction of 2% in the fee to support our students and families. Last year the AS went back to 43%. Bueno said that there are larger increases to the budgets in some areas, but people really wanted to maintain their percentages. No other areas took reductions during the pandemic.

There is an increase in enrollment for incoming students, but upper-level enrollments are still down. Some people have not returned to the university after taking a break during the Covid-19 pandemic. The overall enrollment is down by 1%, instead of up by 3% as anticipated in the numbers last week. The AS was anticipated to receive about \$150,000 more based on the incorrect numbers. With the new numbers, this puts the AS back towards where we were with the numbers a couple weeks ago.

Crandall said the AS has consistently been flexible with their allocation of the fee, but the other areas haven't been. He wondered if the other areas are unwilling to change their ask. Bueno said in the conversations they have had, people have wanted to work on percentage bases and not the actual need of areas. The other groups haven't been very flexible. There was a small group meeting of the AS S&A members to discuss the situation. The AS S&A members were very flexible and open to dialogue, but the other members seemed set in what they wanted. There was a moment where they felt called out and some of the language used about concerns was uncomfortable. For the other areas, a lot of times it was the advisors speaking, rather than student voting members. They are looking at proposing a higher percentage for the AS because of the deficit. They are potentially asking for a 45% of the fee which would give the AS closer to 3 million. They are also looking at changing the number for Athletics as well, as travel costs have increased. Bueno said that they are trying to focus on the AS having primarily

mandatory increases, but also the AS is needing to respond quickly to student needs. For example, the operationalization of the Blue Resource Center which supports undocumented and mixed status students, which supports the overall success and retention of students at Western. Bueno was confused why the university is so focused on promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility, but are not supporting certain areas on campus. Crandall said, "Thank you Noemi! That sounds like a really challenging position to be in to advocate for the AS and students!"

B. FY'23 AS Budget Review- With the new enrollment numbers, the AS is currently at \$178,955 over budgeted with all of the reductions that the council have reviewed up to this point. Bueno asked if people feel comfortable bumping up the percentages for the Board and Senate to the original 10% reduction. Busic suggested looking at some of the AS Productions areas for possible reductions.

Vigil, as Advisor, would like the students to take the lead, but she wondered if the council would like her to be a little more directive in the discussions as these are hard decisions for the council. The council requested this.

Vigil said for the Childhood Development Center (CDC), they are not asking for an increase. In the year where there were some budgetary conditions, the AS requested they take a 5% decrease and this was accepted. The council could consider asking for this again, or the council could ask for a 10% decrease if they would like. The CDC would not be asked to decrease services and programming, but rather to use their fund balance to cover the reduction as proposed. They also have fees charged for tuition and some state support.

Bueno said this situation is hard, she's been doing this a long time and this is the first time they have been in this predicament. Vigil said for the CDC a 10% reduction would be \$10,875 and a 5% reduction would be \$5,400. She asked if the council was more comfortable with 5% or 10%. Johnson said 10%, Gilbert said 5%, Joefield said 5%, Crandall said start with 5%. Vigil said at this point the council is looking at reductions to budgets who either haven't spent all of their funding, or budgets that have alternate sources of funding. Reyes clarified that with a 5-10% reduction they would not be cutting any of their program or services. Vigil said the council currently is looking for \$100,000 in reductions. Bueno asked how big of a reduction would end up affecting students. Vigil said a 20% reduction would definitely affect students. If we reduce too much to the point that offices have to reduce staff, services to students would be impacted. Reyes said "I agree with an initial 5%".

Crandall said to Vigil, "maybe this is a convo for a different time, but! I am concerned that the AS is always "taking one for the team" so to speak in relation to other stakeholders and that this sets a potential precedent going into the future. Might we be able to put "pressure" for lack of a better word on other folks in the S&A?" Vigil said "trying!".

Previously in a conversation with Bueno, Busic brought up the club conferencing fund (FXXCLC). The increase is due to moving funds from Grants & Loans. Due to conferences starting back up and some clubs not being fully active, she wondered if they could do a slight reduction. Vigil said she is hesitant to reduce further when they have already offered a reduction, and recommended coming back to this area after discussing others first.

Vigil wondered if KUGS could cover the \$800 publicity (FXXKPB) with their Foundation account where donors have contributed funds. Crandall asked if it would be a one-time reduction.

There is a large increase to the Outdoor Center due to the operationalization of two Grants. It is a 57.7% increase. Magnuson is looking at the reductions in wage budgeting at this point based on this being the first year for the new way of calculating. Crandall doesn't feel that they should be reducing the Excursions budget based on the values of the AS at this point.

Vigil had a conversation with Magnuson about cutting the Challenge Course in order to maintain the services for the rest of the Outdoor Center. This would mean cutting the programming and the student position for the Challenge Course. They have had a reduced effort in this area for the last few years. The course is not very accessible to even get out to the course. Magnuson felt that he would be willing to cut this program and put funding into Excursions in order to provide free trips and development for the student trip leaders. Crandall trusts his judgement. This means cutting services for the Challenge Course and zeroing the budget of \$3,783, as well as cutting the budget for the student position. The other thing that was discussed was for the excursions budget that there was no allocation to purchase food for the one-day trips, but for the overnight trips there will be food offered. There is a possibility that they could also charge a nominal fee for the overnight trips. Crandall said there are more discussions to be had, and he is open to further talks. Leija asked "If you're charging for overnight trips, would there be space in the budget to fund students who can't pay for the charge but still want to attend?" Joefield seconded the question, and added the question of if students would be expected to bring their own food for the day-long trips or if there would be a place for them to get food. Crandall said in the time he has been the Coordinator, they have been operating under a model of how they can reduce barriers and provide everything they can for a trip. They have been partnering with Leaf & Ladle to get everyone a meal for certain excursions, and Crandall knows that it is an important component to many students. But he also wonders how much of a role the OC should play in addressing food insecurity vs how much that falls on other offices in the AS. If we were to take food away from the non-overnight weekend trips, then students would need to bring their own lunch and snacks. There is the Impacts Grant which has been sporadically funded by alumni, and that could potentially be used to fund food for students that couldn't afford it, but he thinks that if students have to ask for an additional service that is another barrier that could get in the way of their participation. He doesn't know how feasible it would be to pull from that fund. Vigil said she would support what Crandall mentioned, plus there has been a recent donation and now there are funds sitting in the foundation account that have been freed up to support trip signup. The OC could access the foundation account to help pay for that if needed. Gilbert asked, "Is the coordinator position we're considering cutting currently in the process of being hired?" Vigil said, "Not sure". After removing the Challenge Course operations and the Challenge Course Coordinator the OC Budget is at \$130,866. Vigil said that cutting the Challenge Course sends the message that the AS is not able to fund this, and if this is of value to the institution or the VU, other sources of funding will need to pay for it.

For the ASP budgets, Vigil said there was \$10,000 in potential revenue from poster sale. That wasn't accounted for in the original request, and it now \$3,000 of it appears to be accounted for in the Marketing and Promotions and the Volunteer program. Vigil wondered where the rest was being applied. Monger said the rest was in the ASP Admin budget. The total projected is \$9,450 and it split between the three aforementioned budgets. Vigil asked if Monger has a sense of if the AS Productions Administrative account fully spends their allocation for staffing or if it is similar to the Board & Senate of being over budgeted.

Joe field left the meeting.

Monger said they added back in the Assistant Director of Logistics. Vigil wonders if for ASP, could potentially look at a 5% reduction if all their hours weren't being used. Monger said this year they're at \$60,000 out of the \$100,000, so it does seem in line with the other changes that were proposed. Given this, Vigil recommends a 5% reduction to account for the overbudgeting of positions and position hours. Vigil said that the AS wouldn't be expecting them to cut services, and that there is a reserve account to pull from if the hours are fully utilized. Gilbert, Leija, Johnson, and Reyes gave a thumbs up to the proposed reduction.

Crandall left the meeting.

Another potential reduction previously suggested by Basic would be ASP films. The increase for this budget was due to increased costs for licensing. With all these reductions, the current AS proposal is \$157,424 overbudgeted.

VII. Action Items

VIII. Other Business

- A. Prep work for the next meeting

IX. Adjourn

The Meeting was adjourned at 12:56 p.m.