WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS STUDENT UNION SENATE MEETING

DATE CONVENED // November 19, 2019
LOCATION // Simon 105 and Simon 113 (Joint Session)
RECORDING SECRETARY // SENATOR Nkemjika Emenike

TIME CONVENED // 8:02 pm -- Speaker Kish Calls to Order

AGENDA 11/18/19

Senate Session
1. Announcements
2. Need Blind Report Feedback
3. Project Updates/Open Forum
4. Constitutional Amendment Proposal (Joint Session with Treasury begins)
5. General Budget Process Update
6. Kognito Update
7. Open Forum
8. Exec/Advisor Updates

Attendance

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<tr>
<td>Dylan</td>
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<td>Adya</td>
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<td>Chloe</td>
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<td>Nkemjika</td>
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<td>Zachary</td>
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<td>Anne</td>
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<td>Kevin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allyson</td>
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Ruchika Kamojjala present
Philip Keisler present
Matthew Kim present*
Steven Kish present
Kristina Lee present
Nicole Leers present
Amaan Mahadevan present
Eric Miller present
Rohan Rai present*
Sophie Scott present
Mason Simmons present
Gaby Smith present*
Olivia Vella present

*denotes tardiness

Announcements

- Setting up Slack
- Setting up Senate mentorship
- Committee reveals

Need Blind Report Feedback

- WUFUSED has been making an effort to hold WashU accountable to being more equitable, sent out a survey and is meeting with Chancellor Martin
- Report sponsored by Senate, WUFUSED, Roosevelt Network
- Current State of Affairs: focus on WashU’s relation to other universities, recent administration opinions on need blind vs. need aware, the current resources on campus to support students of lower socioeconomic status
- WashU has received negative responses for both the small population of students of lower socioeconomic status and the lack of resources for lower socioeconomic status
- Peer Institutions: many schools don’t have dates on when they became need blind, presenters want feedback on what to add to tables
- Adding a section on how proportional a school’s endowment is to what it is investing in students
- Adding more qualitative paragraphs describing how schools who have recently gone need blind navigated that process
- Data Analysis: took results from WUFUSED survey, included quantitative data as well as comments from students and alumni- looking to cut down the number of quotes so that they are both representative and valuable to cause
- Will be adding economic graphs and data as well as a literary review
- Financial Analysis: very little transparency regarding WashU’s financial information, hopes to model after Vanderbilt, based on Vanderbilt model going need-blind would cost WashU an extra 67.29m (2.36% of endowment and 0.84% if restricted endowment)
- Recommendations: when forming a committee for the need blind initiative having a student representative, student advocacy groups creating a task force to further need-blind initiative
- Fundraising Campaign- a pledge for WashU so donor funds will be directed towards need-blind admissions policy
- Focus on advocating need-blind for U.S. students, issue of feasibility for making WashU need-blind for all students
- Becoming need-blind vs. meeting 100% of demonstrated need
- WashU has already made the commitment to go need-blind, report is so that the school goes need-blind sooner rather than later
- Q&A
  1. For the financial analysis, would the cost increase every year after that? Though the cost for the university increases at first, the cost will soon level out with the cost it would be if the school didn’t go need-blind
  2. Student connection to alumni and donors? Donor priorities are set by the chancellor, will have the ultimate say to where donors put their money
  3. Why were schools that are on similar par and are also not need-blind not included? Reasoning for choosing schools was to choose schools that WashU wants to emulate, wants to emphasize point to go need-blind and it
  4. Why including year of becoming need-blind if the data is so vague? If the date is old, then it proves need-blind is sustainable, if a university went need-blind then it shows that a school recently went need-blind and so can WashU
  5. Why not push need-blind for all students if Chancellor Martin has already stated interest in going need-blind? Not sure if Chancellor Martin was including international students in his promise, also complications when considering federal grants and support
- Discussion
  1. Include more descriptive information from the New York Times article
2. Information about endowment and non-restricted funding
3. Add information about percentage of endowment that goes towards financial aid
4. Year becoming need-blind change could not find to not available
5. Emphasizing shorter quotes
6. Maybe removing student quotes section, seems unnecessary
7. Rebuttal: student quotes would be important to add more a personal element
8. Change the paragraph that bolds 28 percent in favor of bolding the 80 percent
9. Vanderbilt expected aid graph is a bit unclear on how they came to that data
10. Compare tuition costs at both Vanderbilt and WashU
11. Having a committee and a task force might be too repetitive- a task force will be made up of students while a committee will be a group of administrators and would be more school-wide that would include a student representative

**Project Updates/Open Forum**

- Senators Nkemjika Emenike and Sophie Scott will meet with Questbridge tomorrow to go over initial mental health assessments
- Senator Gaby Smith gives update on Health and Wellness committee, has been working with other student groups to plan mental health awareness week/month, will be working on POC mental health initiative, Kognito update
- Senator Zach Fisher will have meeting about Bear Beginnings focus groups- will focus on bringing mental health conversation and student preparedness
- Senator Anne He updates on four-year advisor matching survey, Senate will provide questions and DevStac would help code a survey that would provide both student and faculty responses, DevStac voted yes to take on the project
- Senator Allyson Hollie Printer Credits Report is done, survey will be going out to off-campus students, is currently unaware of which office handles printer credits
- Cultural Fair, data availability form will be sent out to student groups
- Senator Ruchika Kamojjala did a walk through with the Student of a campaign/platform, online toolkit for student’s transition to college, WashU is looking into providing it to all students- good idea but critiques about execution
- Culture Night will be collaborating with SPB, will be happening at one of the Happy Hours during February
- DevStac has set aside funds to work on projects that Senate
• Senator Sophie Scott brings idea about academic equity, working with constituent about mental health narrative project
• Senator Amaan Mahadevan will be working to expand late night food options on campus
• Senator Mason Simmons updates on a potential “meal point bank” for students who need extra meal points, more food security
• Senator Philip Keisler updates on CRE working on projects involving healthy food options

**Constitutional Amendment Proposal**

• Senator Dylan Cassilly presents on Section 4: Election and Appointment of Senators
• As it stands for Senate the top candidate from each school is guaranteed a spot in Senate (ex: if one person from a school runs unopposed they are guaranteed a spot, regardless if someone from another school gets more votes)
• Proposal to change it so the candidates with the highest number of votes will be elected- this would regardless of school
• Argues that Senate’s current goal is to be more Senate-constituent oriented
• Hopes to publicize student union elections, in order to improve voter turnout across schools
• Senator Adya Dhuler raises questions about voter turnout, how do we plan on increasing how many people run from specific schools?
• Senator Dylan Cassilly’s ideas: more tabling, more poster campaigns, spreading the word about elections
• If the statute were to pass it would go into effect during Restructuring Task Force (RTF) special elections in January
• RTF voted to move school councils to Category 1 group status
• Change will encourage other candidates from other schools to run
• Senators, despite what academic school, have a responsibility to represent all schools
• Concern on how this statute change would affect General Budget as this statute is the only one that ensures that every school can have a voice in that vote
• Academic Affairs Chair has been currently making efforts to reach out to other representatives from other schools
• Encourage constituents to join committees to they can have a vote on Senate affairs
• Motion to vote by Senator Gaby Smith, passes with ⅔ vote
Motion to vote by Treasury Representative Jake Sassmannshausen, passes with ⅔ vote

General Budget Process Update

- Speaker of Treasury Alexa Jochims and VP Finance Ariel Ashie explain General Budget Process
- General Budget is the annual session how Treasury, VP Finance and Senate will divide the collective student activities fee (3.8 million dollars)
- Block Funding: a way for Student Union to support high cost and long lasting student programs (ex: Campus Y, Uncle Joe’s, Emergency Support Team)
- SU Operating: Salaries, Floaters Insurance, Advertising
- Allocation Boards/Appeals: Treasury and Executive Appeals, Trending Topics, Green Projects Fund, Advocacy Appeals, SU CatI-IV Reserves
- School and Class Councils: First-year through Senior, all the Academic Schools
- SU Entities: SPB, Senate, Treasury, Engage 360, Con Council
- SU Programming: SUp All Night, Inauguration, AC and BC meetings, Activities Fairs, SU Retreats, Tuition Forum, Game Days
- Students and Student Groups: Office Supplies, Requests from University Departments, Opportunity Fund, Mental Health Fund, Newspaper Readership, Conferences and leadership retreats
- The importance of general budget- allows for change, supports student groups on campus, vital for Treasury doing their job, the place to decide where students want to put their money behind in order to shape the student experience, where Treasury and Senate as a governing body decides where the money goes and what we prioritize
- General Budget Task Force formed after FY19 General Budget Session
- Goals: to gather feedback from reps, student body and administration
- Feedback from FY19: clear understanding for both Senate and Treasury, big-picture perspective, where funding limits should be applied, allowing both students and departments to have a voice in the room, critical thinking, avoid getting caught up in minute line items
- Proposed General Budget Structure
- Timeline:
  1. November: Proposed plan to Senate and Treasury, formation of GB section teams
  2. December: Begin section teams preparations, positive discourse training, release section teams, teams hold kickoff meetings
3. January: Section teams meet with all requesters, weekly meetings and holding Q&A discussions, weekly updates in Treasury and Senate

4. February: Section teams form recommendations with a full recommendation report released one week before joint session, joint session held at end of month

- Section teams (8-9 legislative members): SU Operating+Allocation Boards+Appeals, SU Programming, SPB, other SU Entities, Campus Contributions
- Section teams responsibilities: joint facilitations on healthy discourse, improve understanding of each legislative bodies perspectives, emphasize big-picture approach to requests, weekly meetings from January 13-mid February
- Section Team Report: includes thorough explanations of all recommendations, summary of requests, voting results for each recommendation and rationale, explanation of dissenting opinion
- Joint Session: extensive procedural training, enforcement of speaking caps, placard up/down, objections, section team report released one week before joint session, time set aside to discuss report, VPF and Section Team leader walk through requests based on each report, Q&A and discussion on each event, vote on recommendation or amend if warranted
- Proposed General Budget Section Order: SU Operating, Allocation Boards and Appeals Accounts, SU Programming, SPB, Other SU Entities, Class Council, School Councils, Campus Contributions
- Potential Risks of Proposed Structure
  1. Time commitment (15 hours over the course of 1 ½ month or 2-3 hours a week)
  2. Emphasis on engagement during Joint Session
  3. Majority of circular discussion/dissent will take place in section team meetings
  4. Straw poll to amend recs prior to amendments being proposed
- Improvements of new structure
  1. Year-round engagement
  2. Distributed responsibility, helping VPF with responsibility
  3. Senate and Treasury will help managing $3.8 million budget
- Section Team preference form sent out tonight, November 19 with teams released Tuesday November 26, Section Team training post-Thanksgiving break, Kickoff meetings pre-winter break
- Q&A
  1. Have several extensive trainings for members before Joint Session
  2. Concerns about getting people to be able to meet all at the same times
3. In time distribution, the goal is to distribute time over a month rather than a weekend then culminating in a 6-8 hour session
4. Concern about people not being cognizant of the space they are taking up, using section leaders and trainings to facilitate and manage this problem

- Discussion
  1. Budget Committee should be working independently of looking at each request
  2. Proposed restructure allows time to be spread out and allows representatives to be more prepared
  3. Individually preparing for each section team is important for success of GB
  4. Establish key principles and ideology around budgeting
  5. Question raised around being conscious about how much money has been spent

**Kognito Update**

- Kognito is a facilitation program that gets faculty better trained on dealing with at-risk students with a focus on mental health
- Trying to find different ways to market this program
- Google sheet will be sent out tomorrow, November 19, with a list of faculty and teachers where representatives will sign up their names next to a teacher they would feel comfortable contacting
- Professors will be more willing to take the programming if it comes from a student they know rather than a computer-generated email
- Goal is to have a ripple effect throughout campus- one teacher getting training can help many students on campus
- List needs to be updated so that it will only include teachers who have not received the training
- Encouraging department heads to talk to teachers in their department in taking the trainings

**Open Forum**

- Motion to bring articles of impeachment against Election Commissioner Randal Walker

**Articles of Impeachment**
• Treasury Representative Fadel Alkilani presents articles of impeachment under article 6 section 5 of the Constitution of Student Union
• In November of 2019 in Petition for Recall of Election Commissioner
  Constitutional Council finds Randal Walker in gross negligence of her duties as Election Commissioner
• Constitution states all constituents may cast as many votes as seats open but may cast only one vote per candidate
• There was a brief time period during which voters could and did vote for more than 11 candidates, the number of open seats
• Discussion
  1. Urging representatives to look at case in the context of evidence given by Con Council
  2. More than 5 people have approached Treasury Representative Fadel Alkilani on the ballots not being randomized
  3. Questioning whether or not it is beneficial to have this conversation without Commissioner Walker to answer questions
  4. Treasurer Fadel questions why Randal isn’t here in the first place
  5. Election Commission Member Destiny Jackson defends the fact that Randal did not know this conversation would be happening
  6. Treasury Representative Jake Sassmannshausen feels it is worth noting the section on ballots not being randomized as many constituents took time and energy to voice these concerns, as representatives we should be representing these students voices
  7. Pressure from some representatives to table the discussion until everyone reads in the 15-page report written by Constitutional Council
  8. Candidates also feel there wasn’t enough transparency between Election Commissioner and candidates during the election
  9. Representatives claim that many students have approached them saying they were not available to vote; it is cited that currently only one known student was unable to vote
  10. Recess at 11:15PM to allow for representatives to go over 15-page Con Council document, recess lasts until 11:20PM
  11. Questions on the message it sends to constituents if we table the discussion when the job of representatives is to represent the voices of students, some representatives feel the voices of the students are clear
  12. The job of Senate and Treasury is to represent the voices of students and it has been voiced that multiple students had trouble voting, therefore we should vote
13. Both Treasury and Senate motion to vote on whether to bring articles of impeachment

### Senate Votes: Y (yes); N (no); - (not present); abs (abstained)

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### Treasury Votes

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Exec/Advisor Updates

- Majora Carter - Trending Topics
- Fill out Spring WILD Survey
- Presidential Advocacy Board meeting
- SUPr members hiring, reach out to Beth for more information
- Forms for Section teams will be sent out
- Restructuring Task Force is cancelled this Thursday
- Recenter on values