

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

AGENDA

Tuesday, March 19, 2024 @ 5:30 pm
Ely 017 (SGA Room)

- I. ROLL CALL: Kaitlyn Egan, Scott Doan, Crystal Mills, Benjamin Burnham, Savannah Souza, Gavin Fazio, Fabian Morales, Miles Jordan, Maggie Roberts, and Daniel Lyons were absent.
- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM: **Approval of minutes was tabled**
- III. PRESIDENT'S REPORT: **Nicholas Smith**

I hope you are all doing well and had an amazing and safe spring break! I got a new book, which is very fun, and I have been enjoying it quite a bit. So I hope you also did something to take care of yourself over break.

Today, I have a few different things for you!

First and foremost, I want to let you all into a conversation we have been having as an executive board that we want to help implement next semester. With elections coming up and papers coming out to get your signatures next Monday, March 25, we have been discussing giving you all more of a purpose as a senate. This was something we have been wanting to implement by creating a more centered committee within SGA to help focus on certain areas; for example, if you were to join a team with Elizabeth to help with our making of content or posting on our Instagram page, make nad or hand out flyers. Or we would make committees that help focus on certain initiatives we are working on. We think this would help spark more interest in the senate, so for our friends that are returning, which is hopefully many of you, we will be working towards this so you can feel more focused on certain interests you have! This also means that if you have any ideas or thoughts about being a senator or being on the senate, I encourage you to meet with me and discuss what you think the features of being a senator or a member of the senate should be! SGA is an adaptive body, which is one of the beauties of this organization.

The next thing I want to highlight is, as we have been talking about, there is a relay taking place on campus this Saturday, March 23rd, from 12 pm-12 am, meaning noon to midnight. This is a super important event the Campus Activities Board has been planning, and I want to take a second to thank the Campus Activities Board for all their amazing hard work on this. Relay for Life is an amazing event and a chance to celebrate cancer survivors, as well as remember those who we have lost from the disease, and raise money for cancer research, advocacy, and support for patients. We have some amazing teams that have started, and if you want to join a team, donate, or support, please come find me after the meeting, and I can connect you through the process. There is also a chance for you to help set up, so we will be sending around a paper to sign up for hour slots; if you want to help longer, feel free to sign up multiple times. This is also one of the most important parts of the event because an event that runs for 12 hours can be a lot, so we need as much help and support as possible. I promise it is for a great cause and will be an amazing event.

Dan and I meet with the president next week, so if you have anything you want us to mention or talk about, now or next Tuesday would be the time to let us know so we can plan to mention it to her.

Fresh Check Day is coming up on April 11, my favorite day on campus. Fresh Check Day is a fantastic day where we celebrate mental health on and around campus. As a student leader and psychology major, mental health is something I find very important, especially as it pertains to the areas I focus on. During Fresh Check, We talk about some more challenging themes, like mental

health and suicide and suicide prevention, to start to destigmatize these more challenging topics. Many events happen at the same time, and many booths that you can participate with. SAIL is supporting the 9 of 10 booths, which a booth that discusses the idea that one out of ten college students have contemplated suicide. The point is to pledge to be one of the nine students who

want to support those who are having a more challenging time. Fresh Check Day is a fantastic event, so I hope you offer to help if you can or even stop by and learn more about mental health!

SGA is having a dress-up meeting in April, which is before the break; I wanted to inform you if you need to get clothing from home. Again, if you need help getting clothing for these meetings, please talk to someone on Exec you feel comfortable with or any staff member in the room like Laura Cafaro or Ryan Meersman, and we can walk you through that process. The dress-up meeting will be with Senator John Velis and President Thompson on April 2nd. We have invited Senator Velis to SGA for quite a while now, and he is always happy to come back and speak. We are super excited to have Senator Velis back, and I hope you are happy to hear from him.

Again, that date was April 2nd.

There is an accepted student day this Friday, so we will be sending around a signup sheet. It goes from 12-2 like the last one, so if you can make it and are willing to help out and discuss SGA with accepted students, I encourage you to sign up and stop by and help out. If you can not sign up for a whole time slot, for example, if you can only do 11:45-12:15 instead of the half an hour, that is perfectly fine; just write that on the paper we are passing around.

April 16th is the SGA Senate bonding trip. This also means we will be canceling the SGA meeting that day, so you should all be able to go. Laura will be sending an email soon with more details, so look out for that. I will not tell you what we are planning yet but it'll be super fun.

Daniel Currier: Please do some research about what Senator Velis so that you have some questions to ask him.

A. Director of the Library and The Head of Collections and Content: **Thomas Raffensperger & Becca Brody**
Thomas Raffensperger and Becca Brody gave a presentation

Daniel Currier: I think that it is super important to get those course tabs knocked out as soon as possible.

Chris Piro: In the context of student engagement do you do any programming in the library.

Tom Raff: We are looking into what is successful. We have tried faculty talks, we are discussing student art in the library. We have tried a few different things.

Nick Smith: I want to echo the fact that more study spaces are definitely needed.

Tom Raffensperger: We are looking to trying to get 6 more white boards at the moment. We also want to optimize the space to what students would like.

Sarah Harrington: I have the suggestion of trying to maybe soundproof the study room spaces.

Tom Raffensperger: The ones upstairs are soundproofed but we will see what we can do with the downstairs spaces.

IV. BOARD OF TRUSTEES' REPORT: **Daniel Currier**

Pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A, Section 21, a special committee of the Board of Trustees met in executive session this afternoon to discuss the reputation, character, and complaints filed against a staff member of the University. This special committee has been created by the Board to investigate these complaints in a timely manner. As with all matters discussed in executive session, I am unable to disclose any further information to you all at this time. Please know that the Board of Trustees takes its role as stewards of the institution seriously.

Kaolin unfortunately could not be here today, but I would like to remind all of you that our Give a Hoot campaign will take place between Wednesday, March 27th and Thursday, March 28th. I encourage each of you to spread the word about our fundraising campaign to friends, family, and other supporters of Westfield State University. Small donations – even \$5-\$10 to initiatives such as the Student Emergency Fund – help to support our fellow students. For more information, please visit the Give a Hoot website at westfield.ma.edu/give.

A. Strategic Planning Committee: *Daniel Currier*

The Strategic Planning Committee's three subcommittees met at noon yesterday to begin preparing a list of objectives and SMART goals for their respective strategic priorities: culture, student value, and finance.

The Finance Subcommittee, of which I am a member, has settled on three key objectives: financial foundations, growth mindset, and capital improvements. Our goals have been discussed, but will be finalized at a later day. Objectives and goals are subject to review and approval by the full committee.

Please stay tuned to your inbox for an email from the Strategic Planning Committee regarding upcoming Caffeinated Conversations and a town hall on our proposed strategic plan. This is an opportunity for you to provide your valued feedback on our draft. The caffeinated conversations will occur in the Owl's Nest, so I encourage you to have your office hour during one of those periods and simply make your way across the hall for a conversation on the strategic plan over a free cup of coffee.

V. VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT-STUDENT LIFE: *Jack Guindon*

This week the Student Affairs Committee has started our event of having staff and faculty tour res hall buildings to show how students live. This is the start of something that I hope this committee keeps doing going forward. That being trying to bridge the campus community together. There have been a few professors who have reached out and said they like the idea and hope we do it yearly or something like it yearly. I hope this committee in years to come keeps this goal in mind. One other update within the committee is our goal of building a tradition here at Westfield state. The Owl Statue is still a project we hope to do, as I still need to reach out to someone in that class who donated it to make sure they are ok with this. There are staff members who have drawn interest in this and are helping the committee.

The next thing I have is big news Bill is leaving Westfield state Dining. This is something that I will be working on the search committee for. Me and Jacob Constant are going to be the student representatives on this committee. I plan on keeping both food services and the rest of SGA in the loop on any developments going forward.

Joseph Bonilla: Are you and Jacob the only people who are on the search committee in terms of students.

Jack Guindon: Yes, Steve has only given us a total of 2 seats for this committee and I tried to keep it inside food services who have a greater understanding of dining operations.

Joseph Bonilla: I know that it has become a priority

Jack Guindon: I think that there only two student seats but I will make sure to advocate for those specific issues.

Chris Piro: Will there be open forums in terms of the search committee to get student input.

Jack Guindon: It is honestly very recent in terms of the process so I don't have that information at this point.

Maggie Balch: Friday is his last day. Also please grab a luminarium bag.

Austin Morgan: Grab a luminarium bag so it is a sort of celebration of life type of thing and I encourage you to make one for the meeting hour.

VI. VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT-ACADEMIC LIFE: **Sarah Harrington**

Hi everyone! Today I had my monthly meeting with the Provost. We started off with a discussion of the common hour. This has been our main conversation for the past couple of months. I asked about the current common meeting time and why adjuncts were able to be held during this time. He said that it is practice, if departments have no other times they can hold their courses or adjuncts can't meet those times, they are allowed to hold their class or labs on Fridays 1:40-2:55. However, this is only a handful of professors. We discussed the idea of adjusting the course schedule to start at 8 and have 10-minute breaks between classes, allowing for a whole extra course block to be added. This was just a conversation and recommendation he will be making when he leaves. Let me know your ideas and opinions about that. We then changed the topic of discussion about the provost search committee. Justin will give you a more indepth update about that, including times for the upcoming student forums. I asked him what questions he would recommend me to ask. I am only able to make it to two of the days, March 26 and 27, if you are planning on going the other days, March 25 and April 4, please let me know. I would like to be able to ask all of the candidates these questions so if you are willing to ask the ones on these days some questions for me that would be amazing. Finally, I asked him about the Criminal Justice Department. You may have heard a discussion of professors canceling classes and Daniel Price no longer being chair. The new chair will be Kimberly Tobin who is strongly dedicated to the apartment and excited to step into this position. I asked for a general statement, since a lot of the details are confidential he said "The department is making adjustments to help them move as smoothly as possible after the personal changes that have been made." He would like everyone to know that academic affairs is in support. If you need me my office hours are Tuesdays 1-3, Wednesdays and Fridays 12:30-1:30. My email is vpacademiclife.sga@westfield.ma.edu.

A. Provost search committee: **Justin Wald**

The provost search committee recommended 4 finalists to the president and she has given us the green light to bring them to campus. We have confirmed times for them to come onto campus in the next two weeks. The search committee has its own set of questions which we developed together.

Nick Smith: Thank you for all of your work on the process.

Chris Piro: Is this going to be similar to last year.

Justin Wald: Yes it will be similar to last year with each candidate getting their own day and questioning period.

Daniel Currier: You should receive an email from H/R about the times and will receive emails the day prior to the meeting with the candidate which will include the CV of the candidate.

Justin Wald: Ask the hard questions because the committee has not had the opportunity to ask those questions.

VII. VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT-STUDENT EQUITY: **Joseph Bonilla**

I hope that you all are returning refreshed and ready to finish out the semester.

On Thursday, March 7 at 1:00 PM the Bias Education Support Team convened to discuss the current state of the committee and what next steps look like from an educational and response front. This committee is now chaired by Richard Lenfest as charged by President Thompson and is developing internal working groups for the strategic and efficient roll out of various committee initiatives.

During this meeting, committee members discussed potential standardized training for the group at-large to develop appropriate and current language as well as best practices

used within the DEI space. This training is hoped to provide members with the skills necessary to better support students at Westfield State University.

Additionally, committee members discussed various potential projects aimed at providing campus-wide educational campaigns that we hope to implement in the near future pending appropriate trainings and further discussion. These will be spearheaded by committee members John Zocco, Sierra Alexander, Tony Casciano, and myself.

The committee will reconvene this Wednesday, March 20 at 1:00 PM. Should you have any questions feel free to either address them after this report or forward them via email at vpequity.sga@westfield.ma.edu.

VIII. VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT-FINANCE:

IX. VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT-PUBLICITY: **Elizabeth Mercer**

A. Owl Ball Committee: **Elizabeth Mercer**

Hey everyone,

I hope you all had a good break. Just a reminder if you haven't all ready, to get your Owl Ball tickets. This is a fun, annual tradition that over 200 students attend! We will have great food, caricature artists, photo booths and more! Everyone also goes home with thank you gifts! Transportation is provided. Link to purchase tickets are in our IG bio! If you have any questions, please let me know- this is such a fun excuse to dress up! I'm excited for the dance and all the hard work the Owl Ball committee is putting into it.

X. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY REPORT:

XI. PARLIAMENTARIAN REPORT:

XII. COMMUTER COUNCIL AND CLASS COUNCIL REPORTS:

A. Class of 2024: **Kaitlyn Egan**

I hope that you all had a relaxing spring break. I wanted to update you all on what is coming up for the senior class.

Our 50 Days to Commencement celebration is coming up next Thursday, March 28th from 6-9pm. Please help us spread the word- we have lots of fun activities, including Vlad's Pizza and Ice Cream Emergency food trucks, caricatures, a tropical photo booth, s'mores, disposable cameras, appetizers, a raffle, and a free Class of 2024 koozie. I hope that you all will consider hosting a 50 Days celebration in addition to 100 Days. We are also working on a Senior Weekend to replace senior week scheduled for May 7-10th. More information to come on this. Finally, at our Class Council meeting yesterday we spoke with representatives from the Commencement Committee about their plans for graduation and are looking forward to May 17th.

If you have any questions for me about my report or if you are interested in being a class president and want a first-hand perspective, please let me know. Have a great first week back.

B. Class of 2027: **Jakayla Leary**

Quick update on the class of 2027. We are doing a fundraiser where we are selling goodie bags available for anyone on campus. They will be available for purchase in the DC from 11 to 12. These are to wish good luck to your fellow classmates.

C. Commuter Council: **Desiree Brown**

Commuter council had our spring social event on the 6th. We had a good turn out, and connect with many students, a few were interesting in joining for the fall semester. Students enjoyed the breakfast provided and many took part in our bracket and keychain making craft. We'd like to thank CAB for assisting us in providing stuff a plush, that the students really enjoyed as well. Our next meeting is this Wednesday at 3pm via room where we will go over the event and talk more about what we'd like to do next.

XIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

XIV. NEW BUSINESS: (Requires majority vote to be opened)

XV. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Dan Currier: Presentation by an Army General is on Thursday as part of 185th year anniversary.

Haley Kane: If you would like to join the honors relay for life team talk to me.

Jack Guindon: Join team Gwinwin if you need a relay for life team.

John Zocco: Reslife is hosting JTASH and housing info drops tomorrow.

Matt Dellea: Chosen names will be on involve by the end of week instead of Owl whatever your last name.

Isabella Catao: 59 days until commencement.

XVI. ROLL CALL: Kaitlyn Egan, Scott Doan, Crystal Mills, Benjamin Burnham, Savannah Souza, Gavin Fazio, Fabian Morales, Miles Jordan, Maggie Roberts, and Daniel Lyons were absent.

XVII. ADJOURNMENT: Adjourned at 6:38 until our next meeting on Tuesday, March 26th.

Please note that for accurate record-keeping purposes, SGA meetings are recorded and kept on file by the SGA Executive Secretary.