**Associated Students of Willamette University**

**Senate Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, November 6 • 7 p.m. • Montag Den**

1. Call to Order (VP Smyth)

Meeting called to order @ 7:04pm

1. Roll Call (Clerk Hladick)
2. Approval of the Agenda

**Motion to approve the agenda**

**Ekstrom/Tran**

**Approved 21-0-0**

1. Approval of the Minutes

**Motion to approve the minutes**

**Ekstrom/Tran**

**Approved 21-0-0**

1. Officer Reports
   1. President Oswill

P Oswill: The external programs committee met this past week and had Zane come and speak with us. We got a lot of information, including how the Collegian website works in terms of the website costs. The website is free, and the only money that goes into it is to buy a unique URL. We aren’t paying a monthly fee to maintain the website, but we are paying the student employee that manages it.

At other schools, school newspapers are often independent. It typically happens this way at larger schools. The Collegian is a dependent paper, it prints 1400 copies a week. They have three major places they stock papers: the library, goudy, and smullin. It is difficult for them to count use because students sometimes disperse the papers to new locations. The estimate is that no more than 200 don’t get picked up each week. They have inserted a visitor counter on the website to gauge their visitation.

Tran: Is there a way for them to endorse their website?

P Oswill: We talked about how the Collegian is connected to the Willamette website in any meaningful way. His focus has been on the quality of the articles and the print readership, but Zane said that’s something the web manager might be able to take on as a project. The campus safety summer focus group report is almost ready to disburse, after it gets looked over by a number of people. Late night eats also has an update. Last night, only 84 people purchased food for a total of $344. Yulya thinks that the article in the Collegian might have confused people, since students might have misconstrued the article to assume Late Night Eats was no longer occurring. A student e-mailed me expressing bike concern on campus, and had also heard from other students that they have also had their bike stolen. I am thinking about starting a student forum of some sort to gather input as to what should be done.

* 1. Treasurer Ebert

T Ebert: This week we are starting our third and final allocation. I think it is going well, and I think clubs are relatively dialed into the process. Expect to be hearing from a few next week. Other than that, I am still dealing with some past allocations.

* 1. VP Smyth

VP Smyth: I am working on elections right now. We have four people interested in the junior senate seats and three people interested in the senior senate seat. Other than that I have been working on the senate historian and building bridges job descriptions. We have departmental support from the history faculty, and have an advisor agreeing to supervise the position. If you know of anyone interested please let me know.

1. Judicial Report (Chief Justice Cusick)

Cusick: I was notified that one of my justices is not going to be seeking re-confirmation, and that is Maggie Boucher. We will be replacing myself and her through the reapplication process. We are also starting another project.

Anderson: We are looking into offering a different impeachment process. We talked to Emily and she said that an alternative process might be useful. The current guidelines pretty much have clubs go through us, but we are looking into some different options.

Cohen: Part of our motivation might be that if your friends with someone in the club it might be awkward to impeach them.

1. Presentation from Senior VP Monica Rimai

Rimai: Good Evening! I appreciate the opportunity to come and talk with you, and it is great to be here to talk to you about my new role here at Willamette University. I have been on campus since August, and the purpose of creating a senior vice president to oversee administrative services, is an effort around improving customer service. As you’ll see in other slides, students are the most important group here. The areas of responsibility that I have include managing the budget and finances. The person that used to be the chief financial officer retired, so this position was redesigned slightly. In addition to the budget and finances, I am also responsible for WITS, Campus Safety, Human Resources.. and then there is a whole area that is a catch all that includes housing, food service, facilities, the bookstore, and whatever was left over. That was called administrative services. One of my first tasks was to look at the organization of departments so that they might work better together. What needed a lot of attention was facilities and campus planning. The one that is most significant and excited about is the housing operations, which was formally split between two positions. Residence life is part of campus life, but the operational side lived in my world, and that just isn’t a great formula for having a responsive housing program. In collaboration with Dean Douglass, we were able to merge these two functions, and I think this is really good news. I think it will be a much better experience for students living in residence halls. So that is a quick overview of the departments I am responsible for. I am also the treasurer for the board of trustees, and am responsible to report upon a number of things regarding finances.

In talking about finances, one of the places where our world should intersect is around tuition. In order to understand where tuition lives, you need to know what the bits and pieces are of the university budget. At the 10,000 level, what are the sources and uses? I want you to have a general sense of what that is to talk about the future. This is the money coming in (on the projector). We have approximately 144 million dollar gross budget, which includes the discount rate. Even if you aren’t into finance or money, it is pretty obvious that the biggest part of our revenue budget comes from tuition. That’s important. You are the most critical constituency at this institution. If we aren’t running the way you want us to, you should have a voice in influencing how we make decisions. All of my experience in higher education is in public institutions. Most of financial aid comes from the government. In this next slide, you can see that most of the financial aid at Willamette comes from the operating budget. We forego the collection of tuition for many students that come here. We reduce the sticker price, and that is a form of financial aid. This concept is called the discount rate. This is how most institutions operate. The reason I say that is because it is tution not collected, so you really have to subtract that budget. You can’t spend tuition that you don’t collect. Our net operating budget is about $90 million therefore. The whole discussion about how much we discount our tuition is important, because it is importantly money we can’t spend. Our tuition, compared to other institutions in the area, shows that we collect about half of what we mark as tuition. We are in the ballpark of our peer institutions, are in the same neighborhood, so our behavior is not out of the norm.

The is the expense side of the budget. This comes from requirements that we have to report data to the federal government. They expect us to keep statistics about how we use our resources. These are the definitions of how we should be talking about instruction, research, academic support, student services, institutional support, operations and maintenance, and auxiliary services. Those of you who are fascinated with university budget could spend a lot of time talking about this with me.

What you’ll see is that we spend most of our revenue on instruction (35%), which you would hope. This slide shows that we spend most of our revenue on people, next on non-people expenses, and lastly the benefits that we pay for those salaries. Universities get most of their work done through people, so that’s what makes sense. This slide tells you in a summary fashion, where the money is generated, and where most of it goes. It makes sense that CLA generates the most revenue and occupies most of the expense budget.

How do we decide what the budget will be? It starts with forecasting what enrollment will be. Really, we start the process with the following year, and where we think we will end the current year. I would say that within the first few years, we don’t need to worry about transforming our budgeting process. It starts with the president and the vp enrollment management team. We solicit advice from faculty, and the CLA budget advisory committee. What we do is through the leadership of those units, solicit priorities, if we had new revenue, and what we might do with that. You are among the constituency that we might solicit to spend new revenue. Here is what I can tell you: we have some assumptions built that tuition will go up, and a litter higher than the consumer price index. Right now what we are forecasting, that it will raise by 3.5%. The other thing you must keep in mind is that we will maintain the same level of discount. At the end of the day, we only collect half as much from students.

Ekstrom: Do you use that same index to determine housing?

Rimai: I think it makes sense to look at our costs and what they’ll be, since housing is not the whole history that we should be looking at.

I want to say a little about the endowment. The endowment is a significant, permanent source of support for the university. These are gifts that have come to the university over the many years we have been in existence. This is to have a pot of money to support the priorities of the institution. How is it that you can do this? You are always trying to grow it, invest it, and only spend a percentage of the income that is invested. Our endowment is just shy of 230$ million. Our policy is to spend 6% of the income that is generated. Thats about 13.5 million dollars that comes into the operating budget every year. The more money we have, the more money that comes into the institution directly. A president’s most important job in a sense is raising money for the endowment. A lot of conversations are being had at other schools about socially valued investments. That’s basically making policy decisions in ways that resonate with the equity values that the institution has. Sometimes, socially responsible investing means that your return as not as high as what you spend. A big chunk of those investments come back to the university in the form of scholarships. So we also have a responsibility to maximize returns. It is very complicated, and our trustees have to be part of the conversation. We are in the process of hiring a new firm to help us manage these investments. By the end of this month we will hopefully have a new company to help us manage these investments.

Our budget is an educated guess on how we think money will come in and how we will spend it. I check this monthly, and expect others to know quarterly, how we are doing and how we are spending against our revenue. If these numbers are off, it is important to know. We show this document to the board of trustees, the president, and the deans.

There is a whole asset allocations, from investments in the stock market, real estate, US companies, Global companies etc. there is a strategic asset allocation and we work with an advisor who helps us maximize our return and minimize our risks. The specific companies we work with managers on to help us figure these things out.

Changing environment integrated technology, and environment in facilities will drive a lot of work that I’ll be doing in the coming years. To put it bluntly, a lot of our systems our antiquated. By definition, we are in an environment that is hard to keep up with. Its been about 35 years since Willamette looked at our systems, and we make data driven decisions. As a community, we need to think about changing our business practices. I am in the process of putting together a committee that would welcome your participation. There’s a lot of detail behind things that we would benefit from. The second has to do with our facilities and the campus spaces, and our priorities. Really the goal is to make decisions about where we spend time and money improving space, and to make those decisions more transparent. We are starting a committee of students who will really be helping us make recommendations about improving our spaces. I think you should start thinking about your priorities around student space. It is important to plan first with big ideas and visions and not worry about the money. What do you want your legacy to be?

Please let me know how we can communicate and what information you need. I always welcome e-mails from campus leadership and would love to hear your ideas.

Pate: I was wondering, as far as ideas of building new housing, I know a lot of concerns have been living on campus longer, and more so the costs that go behind that. What efforts have been made so that students might be more financially capable of living on campus longer?

Rimai: I think its a market responsibility. We have to think carefully about requiring a different approach. It may limit our ability. At the end of the day, we have to get to the price issues, and really discuss the market. I will say that this is a conversation that has been heard at the highest levels.

1. Old Business
   1. Endowment Bylaw

**Move to approve the new bylaw**

**Ekstrom/Brownlee**

**Approved 21-0-0**

1. New Business
   1. Senate Historian

**Motion to approve the Senate Historian position**

**Wright/Sader**

**Approved 21-0-0**

* 1. Building Bridges / ASP Mentor

VP Smyth: This would combine the director position with ASP mentor. Adding them together allows for the possibility to offer a half credit.

**Motion to approve the Building Bridges/ASP Mentor position**

**Steff/Tran**

**Approved 21-0-0**

* 1. Code of Conduct Bill

VP Smyth: This is not something we will be voting on tonight because Judicial Branch needs to review it. But if you would like to discuss or propose any changes that the committee can look at, you may do so at this time.

Kaptanian: No disrespect to anyone who worked on this, but I don’t see myself voting for this because it seems unnecessary.

Ekstrom: From my understanding, this document is to try and underlie some formal guidelines and expectations for behavior, rather than just saying something seemed rude.

Pate: I was looking at this with the mindset that it will never hurt us to be more kind to one another. We talked about the term professionalism in the senior caucus. What I thought is that some of these clauses come across as not having any positivism in ourselves. I think that we need to hold ourselves accountable, but still give us some credit. When conducting official business, we need to hold ourselves accountable to a certain standard. I just think we need to accurately articulate some of these things.

Kaptanian: I agree, and I think that there is a lot that encompasses the standards of Willamette University. I don’t think we need to be in a position to clarify what can be used to justify an impeachment. Its equally as vague as not having anything in writing.

Whitaker: As it is currently written, could a senator be impeached for being a minor and drinking at a party. If the intention is to explicitly outline what can be intervened upon, I think that this needs to be more specific.

Gill: Would your needs be addressed if we limited the code of conduct to “in meetings”?

Pate: I don’t think it necessarily is a bad thing, but I would just like things to be a little more specific.

Ekstrom: The general consensus seems like we need some more specificity. I think it would be more likely to be rephrased.

Wright: I would like to touch on ambiguity of some of the terms in the document. I think this document is necessary, but perhaps we should define some terms such as professionalism. I guess the point is “what is professionalism?” Whomever is the judicial body has the discretion to determine what is professional, so they could impeach someone on those grounds.

Kaptanian: I don’t want to get into a conversation about specifics or vagueness, but I am equally frustrated with “indication of discontent” and I think it is important to say something about respect. But when you lay down eye-rolling or glaring, the document seems condescending. I think we need to think about what this document is meant to do. Is this something that we are using to govern our out of senate conduct?

Cusick: I think what we had in mind was more of an ethical guideline, and not necessarily a specific conduct. I also kind of see preambulatory statements as not necessary, but could be rephrased to not call out negative behaviors, but say this is what we are trying to accomplish. We aren’t looking for ways to impeach you, and we have our own ethical guidelines that would keep us from doing so just on the grounds of professionalism.

Gill: I think you are making good points, but perhaps those who have issues would like to come to our meeting so that we can hear your voice in this, so that we can get your two cents.

**Motion to close the speakers list**

**Sader/Brinster**

**Approved 21-0-0**

Sader: We can decide to what extent we want to uphold these standards. I don’t know if I’m crazy but I think we have had lack of professionalism and compassion in prior meetings and this might sometimes seem ridiculous, but frankly this happens and I hear these concerns. I think this is very important for us to keep working towards, and that we maintain a healthy environment.

**Move to close discussion and have all other concerns brought to the committee**

**Saiki/Brownlee**

**Approved 21-0-0**

1. Senate Reports

Tran: GIF got 12 proposals on Monday so that is a good thing. We are looking forward to going over them over, and will get back to you on what great ideas we have proposed.

1. For the Good of the Order

Ekstrom: I just wanted to extend a warm welcome to Becca’s parents.

Pate: I work with the amnesty international chapter on campus, and we are doing a big event on campus and would love for you to come and write letters. Thursday 5pm on November 20, in Smullin 159.

Symonds: Cameron and I went to our first tobacco free initiative meeting. I thought it went very well. Please talk to your friends and get some input because it would be great to get some more opinions.

Steffy: The PR committee finished our posters, so look for those up around campus. We are also working on our swag for you.

1. Adjournment (VP Smyth)
   1. Next meeting will be Thursday, November 6 at 7 p.m. in Montag Den

**Motion to adjourn**

**Wright/Tran**

**Approved 21-0-0**

Meeting adjourned at 8:17pm