

Student Senate Meeting
Tuesday, May 5, 2009 **VU 567**

Present: Annie Jansen (Chair), Brianne Kumar, Justin Van Dyk, Danielle Dickson, Patty Hastings, Jadon Berry, Nick Gaddy
Absent: Wyatt Ho, Nikki Brown, Chelsea Bourdess
Advisor: Greg McBride, VU Operations Manager
Secretary: Lauren Leatherberry
Guest:

Annie Jansen, Student Senate Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:03P.M.

S-09-S-09	Approval of the minutes of Tuesday, April 28, 2009
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I. Approval of Minutes

MOTION S-09-S-09 by *Danielle Dickson*, seconded by Jadon Berry
Approval of the minutes of Tuesday, April 28, 2009
Vote: 5 - 0 - 0 Action: **Passed**

II. Revisions to the Agenda

None

III. Public Forum

None

IV. Information Items

A. ACC: ACC is currently looking into changing several policies. The policies currently being scrutinized are: course withdrawal, graduation with honors policy, course repeat and GPA calculation, and course attendance policies. Senate members reviewed the policies individually and offered the following opinions:

- a. Course Withdrawal Policy:** There is concern that students don't completely understand the meaning of receiving a "W" on transcripts. The Senate believes that the meaning of a "W" as well as graduate school perception there of receipt of one, should be more obvious to students. As it currently stands, a student has three weeks to drop a class before receiving a "W" on their transcript. The "W" score does not affect the student's calculated GPA in any way. The senate believes that the "W" is stigmatized. Annie Jansen commented that while the "W" is stigmatized for a reason, it is not necessarily inherently bad. Danielle Dickson believes that there should be a difference between receiving a "W" and a "hardship withdrawal." However, Jadon Berry is appreciative of the "W" because he believes graduate schools have the right to know that a student took a

class and chose to drop it the fourth week because they were performing poorly. Berry believes that the purpose of a transcript is to show what occurred academically while the student was enrolled in classes. The senate also discussed the purpose of receiving a “Z” on a transcript; receiving a Z is failure due to attendance or if a student did not incomplete the class in the allotted time. Receiving a “Z” affects a student’s GPA as it is calculated as an “F” score. If a student does not complete a class due to some legitimized reason, the student will receive a “K” on their transcript; receiving a “K” does not affect a student transcript unless they do not finish the class in the allotted time. In such cases, the students will then receive a “Z.”

- b. Graduating with Honors:** Concerns with Graduating from the honors program and studying abroad were discussed. The Western Washington University honors college is separate from receiving University Honors. Students who are enrolled in the honors program cannot graduate with honors from the honors program if they choose to study abroad. The primary concern with this is that in order to receive the honors, you must spend your last three quarters as a Western Honors Student on Western’s campus. Senate members believe than an exception should be made because well-rounded students should have to opportunity to be able to study abroad and still receive credit for their academic successes.
- c. Course Repeat and GPA Calculation:** Several students and senate members have concerns about the Course Repeat Policy and how repeating a class should be calculated into a student’s cumulative GPA. Senate members believe that the policy as it currently stands is, “ridiculous” and that the new grade should replace the previously earned grade. One argument for this change in policy is that if a student is not getting rewarded for more credits, then they should at least get the new grade replaced. Another argument was that students are still paying tuition to be taking that class and should not be excluded. The final stated argument was that the whole point of retaking a class is to meet the learning objectives and outcomes. If a student goes back and meets the new outcomes, the student’s grade should show such. Senate member’s also expressed concern for Biology Majors. Biology majors must take the biology and chemistry series and receive a 2.9 in the combined classes. Students can opt to retake just one of these courses and if after taking that course they still have not received a cumulative 2.9 in the six-class series, they are not accepted into the Biology program. Senate members should like to see revisions made to this policy as well.
- d. Course Attendance:** Senate members agree with the course attendance policy as it currently stands. While several classes do not even pay attention to this policy, the senate feels that if a student is not responsible enough to contact their

professor and let them know they will not be able to be in class on the first day, then the student's spot should not be held.

V. Action Items

None

VI. Discussion Items

None

VII. Senator Reports/Concerns

- **Patty Hastings:** Patty Hastings came from the budget meeting. Hastings reported that there is an art project in the tunnel to Fairhaven and she hopes that this will be an ongoing thing. Hastings would like to see late night shuttle postings in Downtown Bellingham. While WTA is working on making the schedule more visible online, she recommends that the schedule is also more visible through MyWestern.
- **Jadon Berry:** Berry did not have a report nor did he have any student concerns.
- **Justin Van Dyk:** Justin Van Dyk would like to see a bulb-mirror installed outside of Haggard Hall. Van Dyk is concerned that students are running into each other at the T-intersection.
- **Brianne Kumar:** Brianne Kumar is concerned about the Kikadelli program this weekend for residents. Kumar also reported that there will be a four hour budget meeting next Tuesday.
- **Danielle Dickson:** Dickson reported ASTEC met and discussed what transportation will look like for the 2009-2010 Academic Year. Dickson commented that they discussed accessibility on buses. Facilities and Services Council met to approve a vehicle replacement cycle in order to have money to purchase vehicles.
- **Nick Gaddy:** Nick Gaddy does not have a committee to report on. Gaddy reported that Students for Specific Engagement is hosting a panel discussion on May 15th from 4:00-7:00PM and Erickson will be there. The non-partison club will be having the panel in the Communication Facility room 120. Gaddy requested that questions should be forwarded to him or to Nikki Brown.

VIII. Other Business:

Jansen requested senate members to email her any agenda items that they might have. Additionally, the issue of the month will run until mid May. Following this issue, another issue will run through summer quarter.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED BY ACCLAMATION AT 6:40P.M.