Wayne State University
Student Senate
General Body Meeting
Thursday, February 20, 2014
6:00 p.m.
Presiding: Adham Aljahmi, President

1. Call to Order – 6:01
2. Roll Call
   b. Late – B. Singh (6:14)
   c. Absent – M. Hanna, N. Shangle, D. Washington
3. Approval of the Agenda – moved, Madhu; second, Ashraf
4. Approval of the Minutes – moved, Rohit; second, Brandon
5. Business
   a. M. Roy Wilson – Wayne State University President
      i. Update on smoking committee
         1. Committee has been set up; only thing missing is Academic Senate representative
         2. Faculty did a survey on smoke free campus about two years ago; results came back negative – preferred smoke free buildings with better enforcement
         3. I’ve done this twice before on different campuses; not easy work when everyone isn’t on board. We’re about a month behind on the committee, but we have five searches going on that are dean level and above, so this is partially a workload issue. Before beginning an initiative like this, need to do due diligence.
         4. Personally, I think we should be a smoke free campus, but it’s a process – cessation programs, funding, what exactly is the corridor of our campus
         5. Julie Miller, secretary to the Board of Governors, is chairing the committee
      ii. Update on release of student evaluation of teaching
         1. Spoke to the provost – it is moving along, and I support it
      iii. Continuous tuition increase – will there ever be a freeze on it?
         1. I’ve never said there shouldn’t be a continuous tuition increase; I said it can’t be 8.9% every year
         2. I just came back from Lansing; if the governor’s budget passes, even though higher ed would get a 6% funding increase, that doesn’t mean every institution gets that amount.
            a. I’m supporting the governor’s budget despite the fact that we would have the lowest funding increase because he’s including Pell grants as a performance metric. Our incremental funding will increase from 0.29% last year to 4% this year as a result of the Pell metric.
         3. 80% of the funding from the total budget comes from tuition – basically true of all the public institutions
         4. A lot of the student services that we’ve been able to put into place like the increase in advisors were a result of the tuition increase
         5. Report from the Senate’s fiscal agency said that about 80% of the tuition increases have been from cuts in state funding
6. Many of the schools have been putting the money into student support services, which are very expensive programs.

7. Even if we put in place a 3.2% tuition increase, our liabilities still exceed our revenues by $11 million as a result of commitments to salaries. We’re going to be taking a look at a two-year budget to look at cutting programs that aren’t efficient and to examine the little things that we can do better.

iv. Concerns about exchanging or disposing of old lab equipment
   1. Rohit: Issue was brought up by faculty and PhD students; they have a lot of obsolete lab equipment that they don’t use anymore, but they don’t have any way to get rid of it or exchange it with other labs.
   2. This was also raised by Dean Parisi; according to current policy, if med school did fire sale of lab equipment, it goes to the general fund, but there’s an exception; I just haven’t had a change to talk to her about it.
   3. Other issue in the past was that you used to have to pay Facilities to come and take care of it. I talked to the provost and she’ll talk to the deans; we’re going to make the exceptions to the policy so that the departments can keep the money.

v. Art building – what can be done about adding an elevator?
   1. I looked at Jim Sears’ answer and talked to the provost: if there’s a student who wants to take classes held on upper floors with no elevator accessibility, those classes are being moved to the lower floors. It’s not an ideal situation, but it’s been working so far. It is the responsibility of the Art Department and Student Disability Services to accommodate those students.

vi. Everything that I talk to students about, I do take seriously, and I’m interested in their concerns, as well as what’s happening that is good.

vii. Brandon: update on President’s Fund to help individuals on the verge of graduating?
   1. I put in $25,000 from one of the presidential accounts, and we personally contribute $1,000 per month. Other checks have been going into that fund as well, so it’s probably around $40,000.
   2. It’s already helped around four or five students, and the process is very flexible. Requests come to my office, and there is a committee that reviews the students and their situation. I’m particularly concerned about students who can’t register based on the amount owed.

viii. Raj: the law school champions itself on joint degree programs, but there are gaps between the law school and other graduate programs with respect to credits transferring between programs and pass/fail credit limits; is there anything your office could do to help facilitate this?
    1. I’ll look into that

ix. Will: we’re having a lot of issues at residence halls with stolen bikes, and we were wondering about security cameras
    1. Madhu: for example, at UT, the cameras are on the right side, but the bike racks are on the left side.
    2. President Wilson: I’ll look into that and talk to Chief Holt

x. I just have a comment: students can have a very powerful voice with the legislators, and I don’t think we necessarily utilize that enough. For example, we don’t like tuition increases; we’re committed to accessibility, but the government’s budget has an impact on that.

xi. Raj: since so much is based off the standards, what standards would Wayne State benefit from?
    1. Pell grants
2. Because we’re a top research university, our peer group is the top Carnegie institutions like Harvard, MIT, Berkeley; that’s not really fair. We get 2 points for comparing with our peer group and 1 point for improving. Next year, I want more points for improvement because we’ll never get to a standard like Berkeley.

3. This is a long shot, but we really need to have a more appropriate peer group like Virginia Commonwealth, UC Denver, etc. – urban, with a medical center and a student body like we have here (work part-time, commute, nontraditional, etc.)

4. We get no credit for our professional or graduate schools, even though we train nearly 40% of the doctors in the state of Michigan.

5. What is most important this year is that the $80 million to higher ed gets passed by the legislature with the Pell metric included. That might not happen if too many university presidents try to lobby their own cases.

xii. Madhu: as a smoke-free project group on Student Senate, we have put together a smoking survey that we were hoping to send out campus-wide before meeting as a task force
   1. I don’t mind if you send it out, but my suggestion is that you meet with the task force

xiii. Ahmad: Academic Senate Research Committee discussed the peer group comparison at our meeting earlier this month; is there anything that I can take back to them to help solve this issue?
   1. Wayne State benefits greatly from its research classification, but the fastest way for us to get more state funding is for our research productivity to decrease because we would probably be at the top of the next highest research group and get maximum points. But we do derive a benefit from being compared to Berkeley and Michigan. Peer group is likely not going to change, and the Carnegie classification is easy to understand and externally validated.

xiv. Maya: what happens if the budget doesn’t pass?
   1. Last year, the Pell grant was included in the budget all the way through the House and Senate and governor’s approval, but it was taken out in conference committee; no one knows why. It was probably as a result of legislators lobbying for their own districts.
   2. It’s important not only to make sure that the budget passes but also that we know who the important people making the decision about what’s included in the final budget.

b. Gift of Life Challenge – Mrs. Butler
   i. Wayne State is two-time defending winner for Gift of Life Campus Challenge, and we’re in the final week of the 2014 Campus Challenge. We have a substantial lead over Michigan State, but we’d like to ask you all to share the link and register as many people as we can.
   ii. If you don’t have a driver’s license, you can use your address, international students count too, and registrants don’t even have to live in Michigan.

c. Faculty Award – Sam
   i. Nominations for March are open from today until next Tuesday; faculty member, staff, or student organization who has not only done their job exceedingly well but also served students well.
   ii. Our two winners for February are:
      1. Dr. Eric Montgomery – Nishanth
         a. Senior lecturer in the Honors College, emphasis on involvement with Detroit and
b. Dr. Kim Dunleavy – Sam
   i. She’s the director of the physical therapy program and has helped the PT students organize a lot of different initiatives, even on her own time.

d. Induction – Amal Shah


e. LegCon Conference
   i. Brandon: you guys got an e-mail a few weeks ago about a conference for the United States Students Association (USSA) in Washington D.C. which would help our students learn how to get more involved with other student governments and the state legislatures. I’m asking for three students to go: one upperclassman who’s been involved in projects like this, one underclassman, and one student who wants to serve on SAM next year.
   ii. Ryan Marchand: From the contacts we’ve had in activism, we’ve learned that we need to have a list of demands that’s not only qualitative but also quantitative, and we have to be actively involved in lobbying the legislatures.
   iii. Anthony Wagner: USSA was responsible for creation of Pell grant predecessor program in the 1970s and for a $16 billion increase in the program in 2010. Southeast Michigan has a lot of unique issues that the national legislature is not hearing because we’re not telling them. I spoke in front of the state legislature, and they said they don’t hear from students ever. If we don’t tell them that we need more funding, they’re not going to know that that’s what we want.
   1. If Wayne State sends students, that cuts the cost for all Michigan attendees in half.
   iv. Ashraf: do we have a rough estimate of how much it would cost?
   1. Brandon: it would be in total less than $5,000.
   v. Kelsey – our total budget is $60,757.43
   1. Total expenses so far: $18,305.49
   2. Remaining funds: $42,451.94
   3. We have separate $10,000 budget for technology
   4. SAM has used $7,894.42
   5. Other conferences: $1,025.85
   6. Bought blue books, custom stamps, office supplies, padfolios, journals, reimbursement for banquet photos
   7. Other big expenses: bus transport to U of M game $2,448 plus t-shirts and foam fingers $2,012.20 but a portion of that is coming back to us
   8. Dean Strauss: rollover goes back to general fund, so you really have about $32,000
   9. Kelsey: we haven’t been billed for Zimride yet, plus technology expenses
      a. Dean Strauss: you don’t pay for technology
   10. Rohit: are there any significant foreseeable expenses this year?
      a. Brandon: No, just the banquet s
      b. Ryan: it’s probably closer to $2,000 or $3,000
   vi. Brandon: Ryan and Naomi are going.
      1. Adham: anyone else who’s interested e-mail Brandon
   vii. Kelsey: why are we sending two underclassmen?
      1. Brandon: Senate needs to get more involved in lobbying
   viii. John: are we going to get an exact estimate of what this would cost, and what’s the precedent for paying for it?
      1. Brandon: It won’t be more than $3,000, and we’re not a traditional student organization.
   ix. John: But what about paying for similar things in the past?
1. Brandon: It’s happened with ASGA and SAM conferences but not this specific one.

x. Ashraf: so four people are going from southeast Michigan?
   1. Ryan Marchand: it’s cheaper that way plus we’re already underrepresented. It’s like a foot in the door for next year.

xi. Ashraf: we’re only paying for Wayne State students, right?
   1. Brandon: yes; we just need two separate rooms for males and females
   2. Dean Strauss: we’re very aware of gender identity and work with student organizations to arrange that

xii. Ahmad: what exactly will we be lobbying for?
   1. Anthony Wagner: we’re all bringing our own agenda with issues that are important to our student governments. Also, in response to an earlier question, flights about $250-$300.

xiii. Brandon: if we approve the $3,000, that’s the maximum.

xiv. Brandon: I’d like to take a vote on approving the $3,000 max allowance for the three people going – Ryan Marchand, Naomi Shangle, and one other person – for the conference from March 14-17.
   1. Funding approved

f. Appointments – Brandon
   i. If anyone is interested in joining the Promotion and Tenure Committee or President’s Committee for Excellence in Teaching, please e-mail Brandon.

6. Reports
   a. Executive Board
      i. Kelsey: I started a budget work group with Rob Kohrman; if you’re interested in attending the March meeting, let me know.
      ii. Kelsey: I’m also starting a group to plan our Senate banquet
      iii. Erika: At the last Board of Governors meeting, Dean Parisi did a presentation on the medical school, which has been doing very well with academics and research. Monica Brockmeyer also presented the annual report on student retention and graduation. The numbers are going up, but they’re still very low. One of the problems with the metrics is that they only consider incoming freshmen who start full-time and totally ignore transfer students. Budget and Finance talked about Wayne State’s fiscal year 2013 results, which were about $11 million short because enrollment dropped more than expected, research funding went down because of the sequester, and there was some one-time spending for contracts and transfers to departmental facilities budgets.
      iv. Marwan: I’ve been e-mailing back and forth with someone from a printing company interested in bringing free printing to Wayne State; we’re meeting with Tim Michael and his people tomorrow at 3:00 p.m.
         1. The only catch is that there are coupons at the bottom of the paper, but they’re perforated and can be tailored to the local establishments.
         2. Rohit: if printing is free, people are going to print a lot.
            a. Marwan: each student would have an individual ID, and there would be a limit on the amount per period.
         3. Dean Strauss: I was on that conference call; we need to investigate it some more.
      v. Brandon: we started our blue book giveaway! Will and I have talked to the residence halls about setting up a system to give them out. If it works out, maybe we can expand it to the library system and maybe Scantrons as well.
      vi. Adham: I met with Matt Oulette regarding the SET scores and brought up the idea of the FOIA. He’s built a roadmap for getting them released this semester
and we’re having a meeting Monday, including a timeline and memorandum signed by the university.

b. Committee Chairs
c. College Representatives
   i. Ahmad: I met with Mike Hawthorne about Library Services; they’re still tackling the no food in the UGL issue, but they rearranged the eating area and it has helped somewhat.
   ii. Maya: Social Work is still complaining about Old Main; I called the number in the minutes but no one responded, so we’ll keep trying.
d. Members-At-Large
   i. Ashraf: At Winterfest, dean of students from Experiencia Academy was asking if we could do some type of community outreach.
      1. Brandon: I’ve worked with him; I think he wants us to talk about what we do as a university senate.
      2. Adham: if you’re interested in participating, let Ashraf know.
   ii. Ashraf: a concerned student who’s also a parent using the parent resources here wanted to know what to do since only two year olds and older can go there
      1. Dean Strauss: there are two daycare centers – 1 from Merrill Palmer Institute and one run by the College of Education at University Tower based on financial need. I sent her those links.
e. Appointees
   i. General education oversight committee – Zachary Rich
      1. Looking at having critical thinking more integrated within your major or you can just take the exam; we’ve changed the exam (made it more about critical reading) and made the passing requirement lower
      2. Also looking at computer literacy exam – it’s not really relevant to what students actually need to know; we’re looking at totally overhauling it
         a. Rohit: there’s only a limited number of clicks to do something, and so you “fail” but only because you exceeded the number of clicks
         b. Brandon: shortcuts don’t work, and it asks really basic things as well as how would you look for a book about Bill Cosby (subject, author, or title) and “hover your mouse over the My Computer icon”
         c. Brandon: it also discriminates with Mac versus PC
      3. Joe Rankin is looking for people to participate and survey about the exam
f. Advisor
   i. RFC – Greek versus non-Greek organizations with regard to insurance
      1. Chris Nolan said that Greek organizations had to have insurance for all events, even those with just Wayne State students, so I talked to the general counsel and risk oversight
         a. Whenever any registered student organization – Greek or non-Greek – wants to use the RFC for only WSU students, they don’t need to present proof of insurance and will pay the same rental fee (university-affiliated rate). If you’re using it for a fundraiser or profit, there’s a different rental cost.
         b. If non-students are invited or involved, then any organization needs to show proof of insurance.
         c. There’s no delineation between Greek and non-Greek.
         d. The issue used to be that Greek organizations were being considered as non-university if they invited other orgs.
      2. Karthik: does this apply to facilities in Matthaei? No.
7. Announcements
a. Brandon: May 1 is our scheduled transition meeting, but that’s also graduation. Proposed date is Friday, May 2, at 1:00 p.m. Just need to confirm with reservations.
b. Brandon: Yesterday was Winterfest, and only four senators came.

8. Gallery Comments
   a. Ryan Marchand: can I get some of these for the apartments?
      i. Brandon: we’re piloting in residence halls only first
   b. Ryan Marchand: Thank you for letting us present about if you have specific issues you’d like to bring to USSA, email them to Adham so I can take them to the conference
   c. Ryan Marchand: we want to put together a short presentation handout for the BOG town hall with a couple of slides
   d. Adham: I expect everyone to be at that town hall and to bring students

9. Adjournment – 8:02