

WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

32nd Student Government Association

10th Meeting of the Thirty First Undergraduate Student Government

Association To be held in Innovation Studio 203

6:00 p.m. – March 22nd, 2022

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of the Minutes
- III. **Public Comments**
 - A. SocComm came in to share that Big Show is next Saturday with Bia and the Wrecks. It will be \$20 in Harrington at 7 pm.
 - B. Amanda Laungani, the director of the Career Development Center, came in to do a presentation to introduce their work and ask for feedback. They discussed their core values of empowerment, education, collaboration, and technology in regards to networking, and interacting with employers. Handshake is the career service management platform they utilize in order to communicate with employers and for scheduling purposes. The staff is structured into two teams: the employer team and the career services team. They are currently looking for an assistant director to make their work more inclusive and study data analytics. The topics covered in meetings include:
 1. Resume and cover letter writing
 2. Internship, Co-op, and job search
 3. Interviewing
 4. Networking and career fairs
 5. Negotiation
 6. Graduate School Advising
 7. Career advising
 8. Career change
 9. Other Topics on request
 - C. Their services include:
 1. Handshake
 2. Workshops
 3. Career advising
 4. Self-Service resources
 5. Networking events
 6. Employer Advisor Council
 7. Recruiting Strategy Calls
 8. On-Campus interviews
 9. Employer Education Sessions
 10. Table Sitting
 11. Career fairs
 - D. According to their data analysis from the previous years, looking forward, they are looking to implicate:
 1. Group style Advising
 2. Hybrid student and employer engagement

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3. Graduate student services
4. Increasing Appointment availability
5. Nice industry and population-based events
6. Redefining success through resilience and failure programming
7. Collecting internship data

Questions / Feedback:

Senator Schroeder shared that they are in favor of group-style counseling, especially when writing a resume can be intimidating.

Secretary Damon shared that first-year student outreach can be a bit stronger.

Amanda shared that the internship application process can be intimidating to first-year students.

Senator Levitan emphasized that college is more for exploration of their career in terms of technical development.

Treasurer Muhlenburg shared that there could be more emphasis on how to write about an abroad experience.

Senator Schoeder asked where someone can report their internship.

Answer: Amanda shared that there is a survey link on Handshake.

President Wilde shared that the niche industry events would be a bit more beneficial to students who are not engineering majors.

Amanda shared that you can email her with any feedback if you have anything you wanted to mention that you did not get to today.

IV. Special Orders

V. **President's Report**

- A. Past Sunday, there was a Worcester student Government Association meeting that President Wilde and Treasurer Muhlenburg attended. This organization has significantly declined in participation due to COVID over the past two years.
- B. Chat 2 Connect will be this Wednesday regarding the environmental ethics and innovation from 12-1. There is an RSVP QR code that was sent via slack, and Chair Gopal will be one of the guest speakers.

Questions:

Treasurer Muhlenburg asked what a Chat 2 Connect is

Answer: It is an event that allows people to connect with industry professionals, and a panel discussion with small group conversations lead by the I&E center.

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- VI. Vice President's Report
 - A. No Report
- VII. Secretary's Report
 - A. No Report
- VIII. **Treasurer's Report**
 - A. "This Week in Financials" was shared with all of the clubs coming into financial board on Wednesday in the CC Morgan Room from 6-7:30 PM.

Questions:

Secretary Damon asked how many more financial boards there will be this term.

Answer: 2

- IX. Parliamentarian's Report
 - A. No Report
- X. **Cluster Reports**
 - A. **Student Services Cluster**
 - 1. Chair Langille shared a presentation on the SGA Meet and Greet next week on the 21st. People will meet to discuss projects from 11 am to 3 pm. Poster guidelines were reiterated, and there will be times allocated on Wednesday from 12 pm-2 pm and Thursday from 10 am-12 pm to work on the posters together. She also reminded everyone that there is a survey for attendees which requires one survey question made into a QR code for each poster. The answer must be somewhere on the poster board. The winners will be raffled off bucket hats, superfans, and an ultra fan. Every senator should sign up for at least one slot.
 - B. **Internal Services Cluster**
 - 1. The Sticker Competition has 4 different selections, and the Senate voted on their favorite design by Senator Barry.
 - C. **Financials Cluster**
 - 1. No Report
 - D. **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Cluster**
 - 1. The DEI senators shared an awareness presentation on advocacy and leadership bias. The first step in advocacy is awareness. We all come from different backgrounds, and we should not assume that we understand anyone's situation unless they share it with us. Bias and racism come into play without people realizing it. Understanding this will allow people to accept change. Implicit bias is having a certain attitude about others due to stereotypes and the effect it has on the way you treat them. Unconscious bias causes people to identify with people similar to them. Examples of this include people of color being complimented on their English skills when English is their first language. They shared a list of resources that the senate can utilize to have a better understanding. In order to be an effective advocate and leader, first, know your responsibilities. Give others the resources on how to be an advocate, which is the proper use of

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social media. As a leader, you should not fear calling out uncomfortable situations and educating others. The next step is to listen, learn, and understand intersectionality. Take some time to educate yourself on people of oppression, from the perspective of minorities. Understand that all struggles are intertwined, and you cannot separate them. Third, you should know your limits. Listen to those who are oppressed, and take what you hear to implement change. Also, stay open-minded. There will be a form put in the important links slack in order to share any questions, comments, and concerns regarding this topic.

2. A representative from the Office of Multicultural Affairs shared that she is very happy that we took the initiative to have this presentation. She also recommends that feedback is open as possible.
3. Chair Jerusal shared that this information was compiled from the OMA website.
4. Senator Giancola shared that she found this really important. She shared that she often needs to remind herself when to listen as opposed to speaking, as someone who is very passionate about DEI.
5. The presentation will be sent out to the senate to keep those resources in the slack.

XI. Faculty, Institute, and Special Committees

XII. Old Business

XIII. New Business

A. S.5 - Financial Request Access - \$24,000

1. Purpose of Funds

- a) ACCESS (Awareness, Community, Collaboration, Empowerment, Support, Success) aims to support students on campus with disabilities and amplify student voices to raise awareness. They are looking to establish a Food Pantry with THRIVE for WPI students or Worcester community members lacking food or personal care items.
- b) A 2019 IQP found that 24.3% of WPI students identify as food insecure. ACCESS and Theta Chi are currently volunteering at the THRIVE site. They are asking for 24K for the facility ren for 6 months, and THRIVE will cover expenses thus further.
- c) Aim to be fully functional by 2022
- d) The Graduate Student Government has approved a one-time collaboration of 12k if SGA donates.
- e) Food insecurity means that people are unable to afford balanced meals, or that students eat less than they thought, skip meals, or run out of food. Minority groups were more likely to experience food insecurity than their white peers. This data follows the national trend. The most common causes were:
 - (1) Difficulty balancing the course load with healthy meals
 - (2) Not affording the food
 - (3) Lack of accessibility of dining resources.
- f) In 2019 Worcester State ran similar studies, and of 514 students, they found that there was a strong correlation between access to healthy food and academic performance.

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- g) As of now, in 2 weeks ACCESS has helped 15 students get 10 additional meal swipes. From that program, students responded that on-campus food is expensive and people do not have time to go home and eat. There is a lack of time to work with academics to pay for food. THRIVE works with young adults with developmental disabilities, which is why ACCESS is paired with them.

Questions:

Senator Watson asked how students from the WPI community would interact with the program.

Answer: It is a no-questions asked to process, and students will arrive and take food. SNAP shuttles will send run to this location

Treasurer Muhlenburg asked if Graduate Student Government is their only funding.

Answer: THRIVE is looking for contributions elsewhere. This money is only for the rent of the location, and not the food itself which THRIVE will take care of.

Senator Boyer asked where Grove street is

Answer: By the freshmen hotel.

Clarification was asked for future funding.

Answer: Thrive will take care of it. They are looking for funding now for start-up fees.

Senator Patten asked if this was related to the survey in the CC from a few days ago.

Answer: This was regarding the recurring IQP on food insecurity.

Secretary Damon asked how they plan to market this to the student body.

Answer: They currently have surveys for bringing awareness for the need for the food pantry. They will also put posters around, work with freshmen orientation leaders, post information on the website, and send emails. It is also an open opportunity for work study students to volunteer.

A few senators asked for clarification if this was only for WPI students.

Answer: It will be open to the Worcester community.

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Treasurer Muhlenburg asked for data from other universities with food pantries.

Answer: They don't have this information at the time, but they know that other campuses with the food pantries on the campus is a lot of work and hard to maintain. This also makes people reluctant to utilize this resource given that they may fear public opinion.

Secretary Damon asked if this went against our bylaws since it supports non WPI community members.

Answer: Senator Schroeder shared that it is only a rule of thumb, and it is indirect since it is just to start up the location.

Senator Zeolla asked if they contacted administration.

Answer: Dean Snoddy has been the point of contact.

Senator Kaushik asked if there is a precedence

Answer: No

Secretary Damon asked what the cost of the meal plan is?

Answer:

Points of Information:

There could be a program where we use the leftover meal swipes.

Chartwells is currently losing money due to the takeout boxes in Morgan.

We currently have 1.2 million dollars in reserves.

Chartwells is not super accommodating to dietary restrictions.

If we were to invest this money into meal plans it would account for 8 students and that is only for a semester.

The food pantry at Worcester State has been open since 2019.

Pros:

It is relatively close to campus, so while it is not on campus directly it will be a feasible solution.

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It is only a one time fund.

25% of the student body is food insecure.

Off campus location helps with anonymity.

This will be beneficial to student life.

We have a surplus of funds due to COVID.

They will regulate it to ensure the WPI community has access despite public access.

Something that could benefit a quarter of the students is very important.

Opening this to the Worcester community will bring us closer to our Worcester community members at large.

Opening this to the community will strengthen our image in the Worcester community.

The 2019 data point is more representative because of data accessibility before COVID.

There are a lot of students struggling and it is our responsibility to advocate for them.

This will provide more balanced meals than they offer on campus.

This is a one time fee that will be more of an investment than a recurring payment from an internal plan.

The student life fee isn't solely for fun activities.

They will not get the contribution from the Graduate Student Government unless we invest.

This is the intended purpose of reserves.

Since mental health has been such a big issue especially, this will be really impactful.

This will be more impactful than Big Show.

This is an immediate outcome to a long term problem.

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Cons:

This is not the original intent of the student life fee. We used to have a meal swipe program.

It may be better to invest in something to keep people on campus.

Since students will be working there it will not be anonymous.

Food insecurity is an issue, but there could be a more direct solution.

It is important to be critical of the 25% insecure because it is pre-pandemic, and there are more current IQPs on this topic.

We could resolve the food crisis internally.

We should not be using the student life fee to fund something for the general public.

There should be a higher urge to utilize the meal plan.

2. Vote

3. Outcome: Passes

XIV. Questions, Comments, and Ideas

XV. Announcements

- A. Secretary Damon shared it is Senator Schroeder's birthday.
- B. Senator Giancola shared that tomorrow from 2-4 pm there will be a climate fair and there will be a Divest rally tomorrow at 5 pm.
- C. Senator Patten shared that there will be Go Green table sitting 2-4 pm tomorrow at the climate fair.
- D. Senator Schroeder shared that there is a Hackathon on Tuesday April 19th for students to come together at Kaven Hall to come up with the best ideas to communicate our resources to all students.
- E. Come to the SGA office tomorrow from 12-2 pm to make posters!
- F. Monday is retreat from 2-5 pm. It is the responsibility of all senators to attend.

XVI. Advisor's Remarks

- A. Advisor Sharry reminded everyone to attend the Hackathon and it will help impact the first-year experience. There is also a food truck tonight. This weekend, the Green Team will lead exfoliants and scrubs, And Saturday there will be bamboo and frisbees. She reminded everyone to appreciate the impact they can make at senate and the opportunity to touch on the student experience. She encouraged everyone to share these conversations with peers. She also reminded everyone to reach out if they need anything.

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XVII. President's Remarks

- A. There will be table sitting tomorrow as well as on Friday. Chair Cormier sent out a message in Slack. Please sign up through the link in Slack and also vote for Superfan Slogans and Campus Hearing Board elections. She also thanked everyone for the conversation regarding the funding request.

XVIII. Adjournment

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