**Student Government Association Minutes**

February 4, 2014

1. ROLL CALL: Connor Swan, Ashley Erskine, and Amy MacDonald were absent. Cleston Flemming was excused used.
2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM January 28, 2014: Minutes were approved.
3. PRESIDENT’S REPORT: *Taylor Fote*
4. Hi everyone, I would like to welcome Dr. Elizabeth Preston, Interim President of the University.
5. **Dr. Preston:** Good afternoon. I’d like to thank Taylor Fote for a great State of the Campus speech. And Lou Cimaglia and Stephanie Close are here: Lou, who inaugurated the State of the Campus address and Stephanie who gave last year’s speech, nice to have them back on campus again.
6. I came mostly to answer questions. I just wanted to say briefly, I think we’re trying to do a better job communicating with the campus. Earlier today, you probably got the agenda for the Board meeting, which is next Thursday, February 13th. I want to make sure information like that is distributed to the students as well as the faculty and staff. You will notice on the agenda, unfortunately, a lot of the items on the agenda relateback to the investigation of the Inspector General and the legal issues the university has. I like to think that those are, slowly but steadily, moving into the background and other things can move to the foreground. The inspector general’s investigation has not yet concluded. As of last week, they were still interviewing some folks. We’re hoping to get the report around the beginning of March, but it’s unclear when exactly they will be done with their work. As I’m sure you know, the former president, Evan Dobelle, has filed a couple of law suits in the federal and state court against the University, some members of the Board of Trustees, and some other parties, but those law suits are preceding. There’s a hearing on the motion to dismiss on the federal law suit that will be happening March 17th in Springfield. Those issues aren’t going away any time soon, but I think more and more we are hoping that those things will be happening, out of sight and out of mind, and that we can concentrate on what’s happening here on the campus. We’ve done everything we can, to keep most of the campus sort of insulated from those issues and I hope that in your day-to-day life, you aren’t feeling much of an impact. Academic budgets haven’t been cut, student affairs budgets haven’t been cut and its life as normal, I hope for most of you and I hope it’s not impacting your experience here. We’ve tried to see that it wouldn’t.
7. The other thing I want to mention, we are in our 175th anniversary year and we’ll be having a big gala, unfortunately, the same night as the Mr. Westfield Competition, which is unfortunate scheduling, so I know where you all will be. The Gala will be a more formally kick off of the 175th Anniversary Celebrations. When the weather is nice, we’ll be having a number of activities on campus. We’ll be having an Art Competition for the representations of the University through two dimensional art, paintings, and photographs. We have a number of things planned that we will be watching in the upcoming weeks. I meet regularly with Taylor Fote, Rebecca DiVico, and Andy McCormack, so if you have thoughts for interesting ways to celebrate the University in its 175th year, please let them know. One other thing we’re going to do, is email students studying overseas or interning, our alumni, and presumably all of you, an image of the 175th logo and basically give you an opportunity for a “selfie”, someplace interesting, while holding the logo and basically representing all of the places in Westfield.
8. **Justin Connolly**: What’s the biggest obstacle you’ve faced as the new president?
9. **Dr. Preston**: I think the challenge has been dealing with the fall-out from last semester. It’s definitely a big challenge, not so much an obstacle, but it’s the most difficult on any given day because it gets in the way of the other things you want to be doing. I think we’ve turned a corner and are getting away from that challenge.
10. **Steve Mailloux**: I’m just curious if you can clarify some information released by the Westfield News recently regarding two University employees, Waleska Lugo DeJesus and Nancy Salvidio. I’m just curious. It said they were escorted off campus and their names were removed. Can you comment as to what was related to this or clarify if there were any errors in the reports?
11. **Dr. Preston**: After that story appeared in the paper, I sent an email to the faculty and staff distribution list saying that we do not comment on personnel actions. I will say that story was full of factual inaccuracies and we worked very hard the night the story appeared, to get them to withdraw the story, simply because it simply was not accurate. I can’t comment on what is accurate but I can say that story was factual inaccurate in a numbers of aspects.
12. **Courtney Keddy**: Can you give us a status update on the academic building?
13. **Dr. Preston**: The funding for the Academic Building is back on track from its prior suspension this academic year, but we’ve certified the study and formally entered the design phase as of two weeks ago. We’re on an aggressive schedule to get that fully designed and then we will be breaking ground in September. It takes some time to build a building but the architects have informed us of something called “Construction at Risk” where not all the final details need to be in place before the building starts being built. So, there might be some design aspects planned after the construction begins.
14. **Jennifer McDiarmid**: I just wanted to say thank you for keeping the student body informed over break and even today. It’s nice to see what’s going on. My question for you would be what are your plans after being interim President?
15. **Dr. Preston**: For a long time, I was a faculty member of the Communication Department, and it’s feeling like a somewhat distant past, because I’ve been away from faculty for so long now, but I certainly anticipate being back on the faculty at the end of this, which will be an interesting transition, I’m sure, but I very much look forward to it.
16. **Joshua Clark**: Hi, I’ve had a chance to talk with you in the past, and last semester you had Pizza with the President. Do you know of any plans for an event like this coming up this semester?
17. **Dr. Preston**: I’ve had this conversation, and Rebecca DiVico was suggesting “Pierogi’s with the President” and she was kind of stuck on the letter P, but I think whether it’s pizza or pancakes with the President, I want to myself and the administration to be able to talk with the students at the event rather than just see how fast we can serve bacon. Please feel free to pass along suggestions.
18. **Olivia Dumas**: How has your transition been from Academic Affairs to the President’s office?
19. **Dr. Preston**: It’s amazing how fast Academic Affairs began to feel like home. I walk back in and I don’t want to leave. I think people have gone out of their way to make it as easy a possible, so I’m really appreciative of everything everyone’s done to make me feel welcome in Horace Mann and help me with the transition. It’s a different world than I’m used to and Academic Affairs was very comfortable and familiar after working within that department so there are certainly different sets of challenges and things to learn, but I’ve gotten a new perspective of the University and learned a new way to see everything, but it’s endlessly interesting.
20. **Stone Koury**: Dr. Preston, I have a comment and a question. My comment is that I really appreciate the improvement of internal communication. I really like that the Board Meeting goes out there, because often I’m asked by many people, so that’s nice for information to be more available.
21. **Dr. Preston**: I’m going to interrupt you, I think sending things that I’m aware of over email is better than posting on the website, and we’re working to have these things communicated through channels ;you all prefer, such as social media, so it’s sort of a small step forward.
22. **Stone Koury**: My question, Governor Patrick and his administration released their proposed budget recently. I’ve only briefly skimmed it, but I know one of the pinpoints is investing in education. I haven’t really delved into it, but is it looking like we’re going to be in the same position as we were last year?
23. **Dr. Preston**: Yes, it’s a little unclear. Obviously the goal we all share is to have sufficient funding from the state, so that we won’t need to raise fees. The Governor’s budget does not get us all the way there, but there seems to be support in the legislature, for getting us the rest of the way. I think we’re all fairly optimistic, but until the whole process plays out, there are no guarantees.
24. **Rich Darrach**: Hello President Preston. I just want to thank you for stepping into the role of Interim, President it’s definitely a heavy one to come into. My question for you is if there have been any updates on the search committee for a permanent president?
25. **Dr. Preston:** The Board of Trustees sets up that process and they have not yet done that. It’s not part of their formal agenda for the upcoming meeting but I would imagine they are talking about it. Stone Koury might actually know more about that than I do at this point, but I think the expectation is that this Spring, we knew we’d still be making our way through the aftermath of last semester and that the right situation to be earnestly searching for a new president. We want to get past that before we start the process, so that doesn’t distract us. It’s also difficult to recruit the most qualified people in that environment. The comptroller will be assisting us in solidifying our policies and procedures before we proceed with the search. We’ll probably be starting the search in the fall and timing for a new president would be expected around July 2015, so you’re stuck with me for a little while.
26. **Tori Landry:** I just want to thank you as well for sending us emails. I would rather have a million emails than not be aware of what’s going on. As far as strategic planning and things like that going on, do you see how that might affect the students right now or the future maybe?
27. **Dr. Preston:** It’s an ongoing thing. I think the University has not had the best history in terms of taking seriously the implementation of its strategic plan. It really does set some important priorities for the university so in order to make those more tangible they need to drive things like budget decisions and hiring decisions. So we’re trying to hold ourselves accountable, if you will, for implementing a strategic plan. At the end of February there’s going to be an on-campus retreat where we look at how far we’ve come in implementing the strategic plan. All the different divisions had to submit what their strategies were to reach those goals and we will review that and have a conversation about how that will sort of drive our budget process, this spring. In doing this, we’ll consider any changes that need to be made to the Strategic plan.
28. **Tom Durkee:** I’ve realized in my grad search as a senior that some of our graduate programs aren’t as expansive as some of our sister institutions. Are there any plans in place to add any additional programs or kind of expand that area?
29. **Dr. Preston:** Those are driven primarily in the academic departments, and I’m not aware of any in the pipeline at the moment. One thing we have been looking at is expanding some of the liberal studies and professional studies, which would happen outside of specific academic departments. In the long run, the Nursing program will probably start expanding into the graduate program.
30. **Rich Darrach:** I saw on the Trustee agenda that the first thing is the introduction of Commissioner Freeland. Will he be actually, physically, joining us for this meeting?
31. **Dr. Preston**: He will be joining us. The Board of Higher Education has a new office called the Office of Trustee Relations and they have been trying to work more closely with the University Boards of Trustees, as well as doing state-wide professional development for trustees. They had a big conference in Worcester in November, to train trustees to be trustees. Part of this is the Commissioner, making an effort to attend at least one meeting at each university, so this just happens to be our turn.
32. **Matthew Carlin**: I had a question about administration, I know you can’t speak much on this, but we have a lot of interim positions. Can you comment on the future of the administration on campus?
33. **Dr. Preston**: That’s a slightly difficult question to answer, and it’s not optimal, but ultimately it’s hard to guess if the interim positions will choose to stay a year from now, and a new president coming will also have an effect on who is placed in those positions.
34. **Kevin Soucie**: Have you thought about running for President?
35. **Dr**. **Preston**: Unless things change significantly, the conversation I had with Commissioner Freeland, when I agreed to be interim president, was that it would not be an option. We had an understanding that one of the conditions of accepting interim Presidency is that you would not be a candidate for the permanent position. I think that the assumption is that you’re busy running for the job rather than doing the job, and it’s not a level playing field and so forth.
36. **Steve Mailloux**: What role in the president search will Commissioner Freeland play? It seems he wants to force his hand in this.
37. **Dr**. **Preston**: You’re very perceptive! The Board of Higher Education has changed their role in the way that presidents are selected. So they do have a somewhat formal role now in the selection, but they’ve always had a role in the process, but they have gotten more active. They need to approve the short-list of people who are brought to campus in the preliminary cut. They just did a search at Framingham State and representatives from the Board of Higher Education were on the search. They are more active in selection of the Trustees now as well.
38. Thank you again Dr. Preston.
39. I’d like to thank all of you who attended the State of the Campus Address.
40. I accept the resignation of Scott Seskevich as SGA Representative at Large.
41. For the members of Constitution review, we will be meeting tonight.
42. Items not listed on Agenda.
43. BOARD OF TRUSTEES’ REPORT**:** *Stone Koury*
44. Hi everyone, after this meeting I will have a brief meeting about the March 5th State House Day. If you have any interest at all, please come, I think most people who have gone will say they enjoyed it and learned from it.
45. Our next scheduled meeting is on February 13th at 6:00 pm in the Horrace Mann Center.
46. All University Committee**: No Report**
47. Neighborhood Advisory Board**: Victoria Landry**
48. We met yesterday in the Horace Mann Center with our neighbors. As of right now we are still fielding “concerns” about the strong student presence downtown w/private houses and Landsdown Place. Some of the problems do include vandalism, noise late at night, and underage drinking. Just student to student please remind friends and classmates to stay respectful of the people’s homes, especially downtown.
49. We are looking into hosting and event at Lansdown on March 24th for the public to attend. We would really like a strong student presence there, so there will be more information for that in the future.
50. We also discussed the Relay For Life on April 4th and 5th. That will be affecting our neighbors on Overlook Drive, so we will be working with the club to test all of the light and sound for the event to see how it will affect those bordering houses to the Woodward Center.
51. **Courtney Keddy**: Have you guys thought about having the surrounding neighbors join the event and make a team so that they won’t be negatively affected by the event?
52. **Victoria Landry**: Various representatives from the neighboring streets are aware and we have contact information for all the surrounding neighbors, so we’ll be sending them information and invite them to participate as well. Regardless, we’ll be turning the music off at 10:00 pm and we’ll be testing to potentially turn off half of the lights.
53. If anyone is in need of a committee or is interested in speaking with members of the community, please come see me.
54. Our next scheduled meeting is on February 10th at 5:30 pm in the Horace Mann center
55. VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT-STUDENT LIFE**:** *Rebecca DiVico*
56. Just a reminder applications for orientation leaders and Residential Assistants are due February 5th to Residential Life and Group Process will be on February 9th, location to be announced. Applicants will be notified on February 27th**.**
57. If you want a lottery number for housing sign ups please pay your $200.00 housing deposit by February 28th. A reminder that Josh Hettrick from Residential Life will be down next week to speak about the online housing sign ups**.**
58. **Joshua Clark:** Let’s say you’re a commuter and are interested in on-campus housing. How would you, hypothetically, go about getting information or a lottery number for this?
59. **Rebecca DiVico**: You can talk with Residential Life and I can also get you or anyone interested some information.
60. **Courtney Keddy**: Request of Information: A lot of people have been complaining about the earlier deadline for the $200.00 deposit, but it you talk with Joshua Hettrick about your situation, you can get an extension and still get a good lottery number.
61. Student Affairs Committee**: Rebecca DiVico**
62. Hello everyone, last Thursday, January 30th we had our first Student Affairs Committee Meeting. We all caught up and discussed our goals for the semester.
63. We will also be reviewing some policies which I will be bringing down to SGA in the coming weeks**.**
64. Multicultural Committee**: No Report**
65. Food Services Committee**: No Report**
66. Health Committee: **No Report**
67. Parking Control Board: **No Report**
68. Student Athletic Advisory Board: **No Report**
69. Substance Advisory Committee: **No Report**
70. Community Relations/Fundraising Report**: No Report**
71. VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT-ACADEMIC LIFE: *Andrew McCormack*
72. As a reminder for graduating seniors, diploma order forms are due by March 1st. Forms are available outside the registrar’s office.
73. I met with Dr. Marsha Marotta last week and discussed civic engagement as a graduation requirement. She also wanted to get some student feedback about it.
74. So with this, there would be the option of creating a designated certification for courses that meet the requirements and students would be required to take a civic engagement certified course. There would be no more courses added, students would just need to take one of the courses. All of this would be dependent upon what the state requires.
75. The other option would be to encourage students to take these courses but not have it required. So would students support it as a requirement or encouragement? What are your thoughts?
76. **Rebecca DiVico**: Do some courses already count?
77. **Andy McCormack**: They do, but they want to make it so there are more courses offered.
78. **Sarah Hegarty**: I like the idea, my only concern that the common core is confusing enough already.
79. **Ashley Deleon**: Can you clarify what is meant by civic engagement?
80. **Andy McCormack**: Community involvement.
81. **Brittney Moniz**: I really like the idea, and I think a lot of the J-Term courses would fit with this component. Also, it would be helpful if we could count the community service people do outside of the courses.
82. **Ryan Losco**: I’m in a class like this right now and it’s great. Maybe it would be better listed as various Special Topics courses that can change over time.
83. **Victoria Landry**: Do you know what courses exist for this already?
84. **Stone Koury**: There’s a micro-finance and business course.
85. **Ryan Losco**: Point of Information: “Laws, Courts, and Politics” counts for civic engagement.
86. **Steve Mailloux**: I don’t think it should be a requirement so that people can choose to be involved rather that feel forced to support something, other than for student conduct purpose. I think it should be recommended.
87. **Lauren Grams**: Would this be an additional requirement to what is already expected?
88. **Andy McCormack**: It would just be an added option, not additional.
89. **Tom Durkee**: Would it be a double dipper if it met multiple core aspects?
90. **Andy McCormack**: If it met requirements, yes.
91. **Dana Kilby**: I think it would be better if it were part of your major, so that the topic you work on is of interest and relevance.
92. **Andrew Morin**: Every nursing major has to do civic engagement hours, so I would rather see it within a major instead of nursing majors having to do it for their common core and their major.
93. **Richard Darrach**: In regards to double dippers, I recall talk of doing away with double dippers. Is this still a consideration?
94. **Joshua Frank**: Request of Information: It was brought up and ultimately dropped when I was a member of the Curriculum Committee.
95. **Matt Carlin**: Is there a retroactive way we took the course and all of a sudden net semester, it’s worth a civic engagement requirement. Would we be credited for it?
96. **Andy McCormack**: I’m sure it would work so that it would only apply to the year it started and therefore, so your requirements are specific to the year you started here.
97. **Stone Koury**: I know in the Strategic Plan, there’s a specific term that talks about Civic Engagement and this seems like a really tangible way to apply that. It’s a weird concept, but I think in this case, Civic Engagement might need to be mandated.
98. **Olivia Dumas**: I’m not sure how civic engagement courses now work, but if we do add them, I think there should be some specification between courses requiring hours or writing letters. Because there are different forms of civic engagement that might appeal to different students.
99. **Courtney Keddy**: I think it’s important to have the Civic Engagement apply to the student’s major rather than just be another course they don’t care about and just sleep through.
100. **Kevin Soucie**: Are there triple dippers?
101. **Steve Mailloux**: Point of Information: there was a class that applied for triple dipper status and was quickly denied.
102. **Richard Darrach**: I’m really not a fan of forcing civic engagement because it should be a choice, but what if we offered civic engagement courses that count as a free credit just to encourage it?
103. **Matt Carlin**: Is this going to go through a certain committee?
104. **Andy McCormack**: It will still need to go all through the committees; this is in the early brainstorming phase.
105. **Brittany Walters**: What if we offered more events like “Hoot Day” that is offered to freshmen and have that count towards it?
106. Academic Policies Committee: **No Report**
107. Curriculum Committee: **No Report**
108. Enrollment Management Committee: **No Report**
109. Campus Technology Committee**: No Report**
110. International Programs Committee: **No Report**
111. Library Advisory Committee**: No Report**
112. Writing Liaison**: No Report**
113. VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT-PROGRAMMING: *Steve Kligerman*
114. Programming update**: Steve Kligerman**
115. The Anti-Valentine’s Day event is this Friday at 6:00 pm in the Owls Nest. There will be and ice cream sundae bar and Stuff a Plush animals with the CAB Logo on their t-shirts. At 7:30 pm comedian Duo Dave and Ethan will be in Dever Stage.
116. February movies are on the movie channels 80 and 81. They are “Despicable Me 2”, “The Butler”, “Smurfs 2”, “Little Giants”, “Fast and Furious 6”, “Crazy Stupid Love” and “Don Jon”.
117. Our next meeting is scheduled for February 6th at 5:00 pm in the Owls Nest.
118. VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT-FINANCE: *Joshua Frank*
119. Finance Report: **Joshua Frank**
120. I have one Finance Proposals to present tonight.
121. The Finance Committee met with Academic Pursuits who are looking for funds to attend Shakespeare and Companies production of Private Lives. These funds will cover half the ticket cost for 12 students.
122. I move to allocate $240.00 to the Academic Pursuits Club. Motion seconded, and carried.
123. Foundation Report**: No Report**
124. SERETARY’S REPORT: *Alexis Wagner*/*Sarah Hegarty*
125. Executive Secretary Report: **No Report**
126. Legislative Secretary Report: Sarah Hegarty
127. The unit lotto winner is Jennifer McDiarmid.
128. PARLIAMENTARIAN REPORT: Jennifer McDiarmid
129. Rules and Regulations Committee: No Report
130. COMMUTER COUNCIL, CLASS AND HALL REPORTS:
131. Commuter Council: **No Report**
132. Senior Class: **Brittany Moniz**
133. Seniors should have received Senior Fest information in their on-campus mailboxes or at their home addresses. You may purchase a Senior Fest packet by mail or by coming to SGA**.**
134. This Thursday, February 6th is the 100 Days to Commencement Champagne Toast at 5:00 pm in the Owl’s Nest. We are encouraging semi-formal attire, but that is optional. Valid ID is required**.**
135. Looking further ahead, we have our senior trip to Mohegan Sun Resort Casino on Saturday, February 22nd. We have two buses reserved. Tickets are on sale for $20.00 and can be purchased at the Service Window**.**
136. Our next scheduled meeting is on Thursday, February 6th at 4:30 pm in the SGA Conference Room**.**
137. Junior Class: **No Report**
138. Sophomore Class**: Ryan Losco**
139. We are holding our Buzz Off welcome meetings tonight at 8:00 pm in the University Hall lobby. We are going to show people how to use the fundraising page and get a number of people who are going to participate.
140. You can sign up tonight, see me after the meeting.
141. Our next scheduled meeting is February 10th at 6:30 pm in conference room 003.
142. Freshman Class: **No Report**
143. Apartment Complex: **No Report**
144. Courtney Hall**: Albert Fava**
145. Davis Hall: **No Report**
146. Dickinson Hall: **No Report**
147. Lammers Hall: **Andrew Moring**
148. We are currently in the process of planning a Valentine’s Day craft event that will take place on Wednesday, February 12th in Lammers Hall.
149. We are very interested in an idea shared by Courtney Hall council to form a committee to plan a collaborative, end of the year event and encourage other halls to contact Al Fava as soon as possible if they are interested.
150. We are still desperately looking for an SGA Representative to Senate and a Secretary for our council. If you know of anyone in Lammers who is looking to get involved, please have them contact me.
151. Our next scheduled meeting is on February 5th at 5:30 pm in the 4th floor study lounge of Lammers hall.
152. Lansdowne Hall: **No Report**
153. New Hall: **No Report**
154. Scanlon Hall: **No Report**
155. University Hall**: Justin Connolly**
156. Great job Taylor Fote on your State of the Campus Address.
157. I move to appoint Andrea Hicks as SGA Representative to Senate for University Hall for the 2013- 2014 Academic year. Motion carries.
158. UNFIISHED BUSINESS**:**
159. NEW BUSINESS: It was moved and seconded to open new business.
160. Joshua Clark: I received a call from a Westfield Resident last Thursday, January 30th about two Westfield State Students who had been good Samaritans. Apparently, Last Wednesday, January 29th, when she was shopping, she accidentally left her purse at the Westfield Big Y, by Amelia Park, and she called the store to see if anyone returned it and they said “no”. About an hour later, they called and said that they found it. When she got there, she checked and found that all $300.00 in cash, her charge cards, and checkbook were there and untouched. She was so impressed that she wanted to offer a reward but the two students did not leave their names. If you or someone you know was a Good Samaritan last week around 6:00 pm, come see me.

1. ANNOUNCEMENTS:
2. **Tom Durkee**: If you are a Resident Assistant, please see me after the meeting.
3. **Sarah Hegarty**: Four units are due for February.
4. **Steve Mailloux**: Correction to last week’s report: Curriculum committee meetings are Thursdays at 3:45 pm this semester, not Tuesdays.
5. **Ryan Losco**: Sign up for the Buzz Off tonight in University Hall.
6. **Stone Koury**: If you have any interest in State House Day, come see me by the couches.
7. **Taylor Fote**: Reminder that Constitutional Review is meeting right after this in the Conference Room.
8. **Mike Mazeika**: How about one more hand for Taylor Fote.
9. **Tom Durkee**: 101 Days until Commencement.
10. ROLL CALL: Connor Swan, and Ashley Erskine were absent.
11. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.