**Student Government Association Minutes**

February 23, 2016

1. ROLL CALL: Tyquan Robles was absent. Dana Kilby and Brianna Pelloso were excused and Andrew Morin sent an alternate.
2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM February 16, 2016: Minutes were approved.

1. PRESIDENT’S REPORT: *Evelyn Dina*
2. I am pleased to welcome President Torrecilha to his first Westfield State University Student Government Meeting. Welcome President Torrecilha.
3. **President Torrecilha**:At some point, we’ll do a selfie. Hello everybody, thank you for having me, I’m delighted to be here, and yes, you all look so good. For those of you that are looking at the calendar, I just completed my first month at Westfield, and I’ve never felt better about a decision I’ve made professionally and personally. We came to Westfield and we really hit the ground running. We were able to attend Governor Baker’s first State of the Commonwealth Address, and then Senator Warren was on campus.
4. I sent out a survey to students, faculty, and staff. I hope you had the chance to look at and complete the survey. The survey is really part of my first 100 days in office, it identifies aspirations, challenges, and opportunities that members of this community think and have in their hearts and minds. If you haven’t done so, please complete this survey.
5. The other thing that happened and I think it’s indicative of my commitment to students; the Cabinet had a discussion about how to spend an extra $246,000 that we received from the state. In my mind, there was no question that these funds should go to the students. Research has shown that high impact practice is a good investment because when students participate in high impact practices, internships, student research, civic engagement, chances are that you’re going to graduate faster and either go to graduate school or find a job in the near future. We invested all of this money in creating a very exciting Center for Student Research and Creative Works. This is part of our initiative that we are calling the Westfield State Experience; the third year of this initiative is all about high impact practices. There’s more to be done,
6. I’m spending a lot of my time getting to know members of faculty, members of staff, and all of you. There’s 6,000 of you, and I can’t quite remember all of you since I don’t know all your names, but eventually I will. If you see me around campus, stop, shake my hand, introduce yourself, tell me where you came from, tell me what you’re doing and where you’re going, and most importantly, tell me about your experiences at Westfield State University. You are the reason why we’re here, and your success is our success. I know a lot of you are seniors, so this is a little bittersweet because you’re going to be marching on, but remember that Westfield is your home. You need to come back, keep involved, and you need to give back to Westfield with your talent and time. I’m hoping that Westfield has changed your lives, and there will be a point in your life where you’re going to make a gift, think about Westfield, and change Westfield. Thank you. I understand that some of you may have questions for me.
7. **Haley Batchelder**: Hello President Torrecilha, as a soon to be graduate, I’m curious if there are any future graduate programs that you’re looking into, maybe an MBA?
8. **President Torrecilha**: Very good question. We know what’s going on with demographics in the country as a whole. We know that the number of traditional age college students is going down. If you want to see what’s going to happen with education, Higher Education included, take a look at birth rates and subtract 18, 24 years. You’ll see what the student population will be. It turns out that more students are seeking graduate programs and opportunities. There was a time in this country that having a high school degree was sufficient, no longer. We’re just at the cusp where a Bachelor’s degree is still the degree to have. Pretty soon, you’re going to need a graduate degree in order to compete and arrive at places that you want to go in your life. As we begin to think about Westfield, the student-program ratio is 90% undergraduate students to 10% graduate students. We do need to develop more graduate programs, and we do need to think about professional fields as well as academic fields. It turns out that Massachusetts has a lot of jobs that we cannot fill, not because we don’t have the people, but because we don’t have the people with the right skills and education. Going forward, we will be thinking about developing additional graduate programs.
9. **Evelyn Dina:** Last week, we were lucky to have the director of the Counseling Center, Tammy Bringaze, come and speak to senate, as well as one of their outreach counselors, Julia Nedry. They gave us powerful information, and you were at my speech so I’m sure you know the numbers, the counseling center is very small. I know that space is such a necessity on campus especially with having both the Counseling Center and Career Center in Lammers. With that, I know it may not be a priority, but I was wondering if it was on your radar or if there was any talk to expand in the future?
10. **President Torrecilha:** I do understand that our Counseling Center is really stretched, just like advising. In a way, I think when you look back when I went to school; there was very little awareness of psychological, mental, and emotional issues. We’ve done a better job in educating the population as a whole that those issues are real and impact people’s life. Now we have to have the resources in order to respond. While the issues have increased, the staff that takes care of the issues has not necessarily increased. You’re correct, we are running an institution with the budget of $100 million, and our needs are much greater. We need to make room to hire more staff and faculty. To your point, I am aware of it, we will get there, I don’t know when but it’s an issue that I care about. I lost somebody to suicide so it hits home, it’s something that matters a lot.
11. **Ryan Losco**: You’ve been here for a month now, so based on your first impressions of the University and seeing things out, what are some things that you’re looking into changing or things that could work better on campus as you’re drafting your plan?
12. **President Torrecilha**: The initial 100 days, my plan is really to stop and take a look at the institution to discover, find, and deliver. I’m giving myself some time to think great and freely. That is to say I don’t want to make any decisions in terms of change, institutional change, organization change, that may have an adverse impact on the institution and my administration down the line. I’m really taking my time listening to members of the community, that’s why that survey is so important to me, because that’s the way of engaging with members of the community about your thinking and where you think we should go. I’m trying to soak it all in without necessarily tweaking things because there are a lot of things that I don’t know. It’s essentially a getting to know phase.
13. **Jon Cubetus**: I’ve heard that you’d like to move your office on to campus, I was wondering if there were any developments on that?
14. **President Torrecilha**: That is true. One of the things that I’ve learned in life is to trust my feelings. Every time I trust my feelings and go with my gut, most of the time I get it right. When I came for the interview and they took me to where the President’s office is in Horace Mann, I felt disconnected from the campus. It was too far, it was away from the students, the action, the faculty, and the staff. I actually said that during my interview process, so when I came and took the position, I made it known that eventually, I would like to move that office back to campus. Not only that, but I would like for the President’s office to be in the library. Libraries are important, and you all spend some time in the library. That’s the closest I can get to you, I can’t be in your classrooms, but I could be in the library. I also think it sends a message about the priorities of this institution.
15. **Justin Connolly**: Upon assuming your presidency, how are you adjusting to Westfield or Massachusetts itself, and after being here for a month or so, could you tell us something that you didn’t know about Westfield that has really surprised you and that you really enjoyed?
16. **President Torrecilha**: First of all, telling myself that transition period is happening not just for me, but for a lot of people. There are members of my office that any given day don’t know what I’m going to do because they don’t know me and I don’t know them, and I’ve heard that the workload has increased three times in the office because I’m very structured, but I’m trying to be mindful of that. I was told that the winters here are very harsh, it hasn’t been that harsh. It has been nice; actually, I went to school and did my PhD in Madison, Wisconsin. That’s cold. The one thing that I have noticed is the fact that the institution is still healing from what has happened a few years ago. Just being mindful of that and thinking about processes that I may have taken for granted somewhere else can be really important here.
17. **Cameron Swan**: What made Westfield stand out in your eyes when you were looking at schools?
18. **President Torrecilha**: A very important aspect is institutional fit, very similar to the process you went through as a student. You were asking yourself if you would see yourself at this place and if you’d really want to go here. The thing that stood out from the very beginning was the commitment of the University to the students. By the way, there’s a new book called “*It’s One Thing”*. It’s been in the New York Time’s Bestseller list for quite some time now, and in that book, it talks about the one thing in life that is really important and really matters. When I think about Westfield State University, I think about student success. This institution is committed to student success. We have a really venerable history, and we are building that history. It’s precisely student success that keeps us going day in and day out. That spoke to me from the very beginning.
19. **Ashley Deleon**: I do work in the President’s office, and I have noticed that it’s been crazy but in an amazing way. There have been things going on that I didn’t expect in the first month, and we can all see how hard you’re working. Even if I go to the DC, I can see you eating lunch with students and it’s really nice to see, I do appreciate that and how much you’re putting in is definitely noted. A question I have is what has been your biggest hurdle so far?
20. **President Torrecilha**: I would say that I haven’t had a big hurdle. There’s a honeymoon period where people really like you until they have some buyer’s remorse. I haven’t had that; I haven’t had a hurdle. I think not knowing how the organization really works is not a hurdle, you just really have to do it and learn it.
21. **Christian Capalbo**: How important to you is student involvement in some of the bigger projects that are going on such as capital projects and working with some of the departments on campus?
22. **President Torrecilha**: When we look at committee structure on campus, I think there is a student representative on every committee. You are one of the largest student organizations in the State of Massachusetts. Clearly, you care about the institution and take the time to get involved. We’ve wanted to make sure that the student’s voice and participation is a common trend in everything that we do. Granted, there are some decisions that should be made by faculty, staff, or administration. The demarcation about decisions that all should be involved in are very clear too. Student involvement and voice is very important. Your perception and experience should be informing what we do, and it should be informing our priorities. It doesn’t mean you’re always going to have your way, because life is not like that, but we should be hearing from you.
23. **Albert Fava III**: What made you decide that Higher Education was where you wanted to be?
24. **President Torrecilha**: There’s a story to that. I came to the US as a migrant worker and I went to Portland State, which is very similar to Westfield State. At the time I went, there were around 5,000 students. There was a faculty member in sociology, and when I took a course in sociology, I felt as if I found my intellectual home. This particular professor said to me that I can do what she does. She was the first person in my life that said I was smart enough to do what she could do. When she said that, the world became much smaller as it allowed me to see possibilities where before I didn’t see anything. That relationship with a faculty member turned me into sociology and academia. I have no regrets, it’s a great sector, and for sociologists in the room, it’s a great discipline.
25. Thank you again President Torrecilha for taking the time to come and meet all of us senators. To begin, I would like to quickly highlight our SGA spotlight Club of the Month for February, the Biology Club.
26. The Biology Club hopes to provide club members with fun and exciting biology related activities as well as connecting their experiences to the classroom.
27. In recent years, the Biology Club struggled with attendance, fundraising money, and keeping their meetings focused on biology interests. This year they gained an entirely new executive board and continue to thrive with new members. They had a successful plant sale and brought students on a trip to the Cadaver Lab in Springfield, MA this past fall. Currently the Bio Club is planning a New York trip to visit the Museum of Natural History and the Zoo. Additionally, they are also organizing a trip to Amelia Park’s Children’s Museum in order to conduct science experiments for children to better educate and involve them with science. Thank you to the Biology Club for all they do.
28. Last week, we had the pleasure of Tammy Bringaze and Julia Nedry in SGA, and you may remember them talking about the Counseling Center’s “Fresh Check Day” on March 24. This event is 11:00am to 3:00pm throughout Ely and really will be promoting college students checking in with themselves and knowing the importance of mental health awareness. I am hoping that SGA can come together on this day to support our friend and peers who may be struggling with mental health or to be active in such an important discussion. I’m looking for volunteers to help out with the event registration table throughout the day from 10:30am to 3:30pm. I have created a sign-up sheet for those who would be available to volunteer during these hour slots. The registration is a big responsibility and Exec will also be helping out alongside all of you, so please if you are available, your help is greatly appreciated. Volunteering for one hour will be considered one unit and you will get a t-shirt.
29. **Haley Batchelder**: Point of information: for the Fresh Check Day that is cosponsored by CAB, so if you signed up for the CAB table already, that’s the same table so put your name down and if you are in CAB, it will count as Cabbie points.
30. A couple of other fun things for you all we will be having out first ever Bring a Friend to SGA Day, to promote awareness of what SGA is and to encourage your friends and constituents to come to a meeting and see what we do. I think it would be a great opportunity to show our friends the work we do in SGA, as well as maybe spark new interests for some of them. Bring a Friend to SGA Day will be on Tuesday, March 29. You will get a unit if you bring a friend. We will have additional seating for everyone, since they won’t have room to sit next to you all.
31. Also on March 29 following the SGA meeting, yourselves and your friends are invited to attend our second SGA Bonding event. We’ll be hosting Movie Trivia; there will be three categories of movies being Horror, Comedy, and Animated Film and there will be pizza. I’m going to pass around a sheet, please just check off your name on the list if you are interested in going so that I can gauge how many there will be in the interest of dividing up teams. Teams will be randomized so that we can all better get to know each other, and there will be no more than five people per team. I’m working on prize ideas, so I’ll let you know what we decide next week.
32. Our WSU Chapter of MASSPIRG will be hosting a Mock Caucus or a “Maucus” next Monday, February 29 at 8:00pm. The event will be held in New Hall 141A and 141B and is an opportunity for students to debate issues and learn more about the candidates the day before the primary elections. If you have any questions you can speak Emily Swanson from MASSPIRG.
33. If you plan to vote in the presidential primary and need an absentee ballot there is still time. Emily Swanson, our new MASSPIRG chapter rep, and I are going to be passing out applications for anyone that would like to request an absentee ballot. If you complete the application and hand it to Emily after the meeting, she will mail them out for you.
34. On the application, fill out both requests for an address; one will be your home address and the other your address at school. After checking which address you want the absentee ballot sent to, you will receive the ballot and you’ll be required to complete it and mail it back to your town or city hall right away. Ballots need to be received in your hometown before closing time on Super Tuesday, March 1.
35. If you are already a registered voter in Westfield, please go to the Dower Center (previously Juniper Park School) during voting hours for the primary election. Polls will be open from 7:00pm to 8:00pm.
36. I accept the resignation of Tyquan Robles as Representative to Davis Hall.
37. Items not listed on the agenda.

1. BOARD OF TRUSTEES’ REPORT**:** *Justin Connolly*
2. The Board of Trustees had a full board meeting on February 11 from 3:00pm to 5:00pm.
3. The Trustees began with a few student presentations about their internship experiences here at Westfield. It was really great to see how these opportunities have impacted these students and how these practices will develop as them as professionals.
4. There was a motion brought forward to the board regarding the purchase of five patrol rifles for the Public Safety Department here on campus. Along with this purchase comes the proper training program for our officers. This motion didn’t come out of nowhere. Back in 2008, The Board of Higher Education released this very large book on best practices for University Campus under Public safety. It takes that it is the best practice for our public safety be properly supplied, which includes specialized fire arms in the event of a campus emergency.
5. All University Committee**: No Report**
6. Neighborhood Advisory Board**: No Report**

1. VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT-STUDENT LIFE**:** *Matthew Carlin*
2. Student Affairs Committee**: No Report**
3. Multicultural Committee**: No Report**
4. Food Services Committee**: No Report**
5. Health Committee: **No Report**
6. Parking Control Board: **No Report**
7. Student Athletic Advisory Board: **No Report**
8. Substance Advisory Committee: **No Report**
9. Community Relations/Fundraising Report**: No Report**

1. VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT-ACADEMIC LIFE: *Jon Cubetus*
2. I have a few quick updates in the realm of academic life for you. At some point this week, the classes available to be taken next semester can be seen online. If you go to MyWestfield and use the Look up Classes function the classes are available through there. Additionally, either Friday or Monday, the paper books will be available on campus at various locations, such as the Advising Center, The Registrar’s Office, and various academic departments. As soon as they are, I will put some in your mailboxes.
3. On March 8 the next Office Hours with Marsha Marotta will take place in Ely 020 at 4:00pm. I would truly appreciate if some of you came, as it will be a unit opportunity. Our last meeting did not have a great turnout, but I appreciated the people who did go.
4. There will be a little reconstruction with committee seating, especially with reps at large. We are having trouble finding students to sit on these committees in the first place. Justin Connolly and I are looking to see all of the reps at large at the end of this meeting.
5. **Shayna Arnott**: Do you know when summer classes will be posted online?
6. **Jon Cubetus**: I’m not sure, but I will check up on that and let you know next week.
7. Academic Policies Committee: **No Report**
8. Curriculum Committee: **No Report**
9. Enrollment Management Committee: **No Report**
10. Academic Technology and Information Services Committee: **No Report**
11. International Programs Committee: **No Report**
12. Writing Liaison**: No Report**
13. VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT-PROGRAMMING: *Haley Batchelder*
14. Programming update**: Haley Batchelder**
15. This Friday, February 26 is Bingo at 10:00pm in Scanlon Banquet Hall. For one dollar, you can purchase an extra Bingo card and all proceeds will benefit Relay for Life.
16. Just a reminder we have ice skating next Friday, March 2, with a $3.00 fee for rental skates.
17. If you are going to the Celtics Game next Wednesday, March 2 please remember to stop by SGA to sign a travel waiver.
18. CAB will be meeting Wednesday, February 24 at 5:00pm in the Owl’s Nest.
19. VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT-FINANCE: *Brandon Trafford*
20. Finance Report: **No Report**
21. Foundation Report: **No Report**
22. SERETARY’S REPORT: Brendan McKee*/Jacob Lotter*
23. Executive Secretary Report: **Brendan McKee**
24. Cotillion tickets will be going on sale for Senators starting tomorrow, February 24 until Tuesday, March 1. Kim Hosmer will be in the SGA office until the beginning of the SGA meeting next Tuesday, March 1, so you’ll have up until the meeting starts to purchase your ticket at half price. During this time, tickets can be purchased for $16.50 in the SGA office through Kim Hosmer, cash or checks only with exact change being greatly appreciated.
25. I would like to reiterate that you are only able to purchase your own ticket over the next week, whereas tickets for your date or others will go on sale March 2 for $33.00. Barbara Hand will get an email out with this information for the Campus.
26. Legislative Secretary Report: **Jacob Lotter**

1. PARLIAMENTARIAN REPORT: *Ryan Losco*

Rules and Regulations Committee: Ryan Losco

1. I move to pass the following amendment to the SGA Constitution. Motion Carries.

The following amendment shall be added Article IV, Section 2 of the Constitution of the Westfield State University Student Government Association.

“*One (1) student representative who shall be appointed by Veteran Affairs. This representative need only be an undergraduate student and not a representative for any particular class. This representative he must also meet any and all requirements set forth by the Veteran Affairs Office and will act as a liaison to SGA*”

Such amendment shall become Nine (9) of the previously noted article and section.

The amendment, should it be passed by the Rules and Regulations Committee and the Legislature of the Student Government Association, shall take effect immediately.

Respectfully submitted to the Rules and Regulations committee on the Sixteen of February 2016.

1. **Morgan Suddeth**: Could you talk a little more about who would fill this position?
2. **Ryan Losco**: It’s an undergraduate student that would represent students who are veterans or those affiliated with the Veteran’s Office. It’s just a way to make sure they have proper representation in SGA.
3. **Morgan Suddeth**: Is this representative going to be a Veteran?
4. **Ryan Losco**: Absolutely, it’s worded in the amendment so that they meet the requirements form Veteran Affairs office and they act as a liaison between SGA and the Veteran Affairs office.

1. COMMUTER COUNCIL, CLASS AND HALL REPORTS:
2. Commuter Council: **No Report**
3. Senior Class: **Ryan Losco**
4. Senior Sweatshirts have shipped today and will be in s soon.
5. We will be announcing Senior Fest soon. Alcohol Review Board will be given our application by the end of this week.
6. I have a meeting with Advancement and University Relations to discuss the next stage for leave you mark this week. Thank you all who pledged.
7. Our next scheduled meeting is February 29, at 7:00pm.
8. Junior Class: **No Report**
9. Sophomore Class**: Maddie Creamer**
10. I accept the resignation of Rhynell Christopher as SGA Rep to the Class of 2018.
11. We had our Buzz Off for Cancer Kick Off party yesterday. We had a few people show up and sign up to buzz and volunteer for the event. We’re still looking for more people to buzz, so if you are interested, please let me or any other Class of 2018 members know.
12. Our t-shirts are on sale online until March 11.
13. Our next meeting is scheduled for February 29 at 7:00pm in the SGA Club Room E021.
14. First Year Class: **Xavier Carmona**
15. The first year class will be hosting a Town Hall meeting this Thursday, February 18 in the SGA room E017 at 5:30pm. There will be Trivia, a raffle, food and refreshments and it will be an all-around good time. It’s meant for first year students, but all are welcome.
16. Apartment Complex: **No Report**
17. Courtney Hall: **Karina Sallaway**
18. I move to appoint Rhynell Christopher as a Representative to Senate for the remainder of the 2015-2016 academic year.
19. Our next meeting will be next Thursday, March 3 at \*;15 in the RD’s Office.
20. Davis Hall: **No Report**
21. Dickinson Hall**: No Report**
22. Lammers Hall: **No Report**
23. Lansdowne Hall**: Alina Bracken**
24. New Hall**: No Report**
25. Scanlon Hall: **No Report**
26. University Hall**: No Report**
27. UNFIISHED BUSINESS**:**

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1. NEW BUSINESS:
2. ANNOUNCEMENTS:
3. **Justin Connolly**: Huge developments, we’re getting a globe. I would like to get your feedback on which one we should pick, so we have a few options chosen and after the meeting I’ll put up the pictures and have you all tally which you’d prefer.
4. **Dan, MassPIRG**: We will collect the applications for your absentee ballots over here, and make sure you circle which ballot you’re registering for.
5. **Rebecca Kennedy**: Can I see everyone on the Maintainer Appreciation committee after the meeting?
6. **Maddie Creamer**: Please go to the Shelter in Place event in University Hall at 9 PM tonight.
7. **Andrew Manchino**: Please take the spring Sodexo survey, it came out yesterday and you’ll get an email about it soon.
8. **Brandon Trafford**: Can I see Finance Committee after the meeting?
9. **Jon Cubetus**: Can Justin and I see Reps at Large after the meeting?
10. **Sue LaMontagne**: Please do Haven if you have not or you’ll have a hold placed on your account.
11. **Jacob Lotter**: There are four units due by 3:30 PM next Tuesday.
12. **Justin Connolly**: This globe will have all the continents.
13. **Jacob Lotter**: Please nominate fellow students for the Blue Key award.
14. **Karina Sallaway**: Come to The Wedding Singer this weekend!
15. **Michael Janchuk**: 88 days until commencement.
16. ROLL CALL: Tyquan Robles was absent. Dana Kilby and Brianna Pelloso were excused and Andrew Morin sent an alternate.
17. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 6:26pm.