**STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION MINUTES**

**February 25, 2020**

1. ROLL CALL: Daniel Armany, Lindsey Dalrymple, Hunter Hassett, Ariana Torres, Steven Lyttle, Valerie Eckenroth, Jason Phillips and Marilyn Maison were absent.
2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM February 18, 2019: Minutes were approved.
3. PRESIDENT'S REPORT: ***Kaytlyn Mekal***
4. Good evening everyone. I hope you’re all having a great start to your week. Tonight, I have the honor of welcoming Representative John Velis from the 4th Hampden District. He is a member of the House Committee on Ways and Means, the Joint Committees on Financial Services, the Judiciary, and Ways and Means, and he is the Vice Chair of the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs. Along with all of this, Representative Velis also serves as a Major in the US Army Reserves. Currently, he is in the race for the Massachusetts State Senate seat from the 2nd Hampden-Hampshire District. The special election for this will be held on Tuesday, March 31. Now, without further ado, please welcome Representative John Velis.
5. **Representative Velis:** It's always an honor to be here, the last time I was here was March 20 so John Velis, State Representative wanting to be the next State Senator.
6. As usual just kind of talk, no agenda, just throw things out there and then open it up for you guys. I am much more concerned and much more interested in what you have to say than what a lot of what I hear on a daily basis in Boston to be very honest with you.
7. If you participate in some of the discussions that I participated in today you would say “oh my God I will never go into public service this is just awful,” kidding a little bit.
8. Where are we right now 2020, running for the State Senate and I kind of want to just give you my thoughts about where everything is right now and then kind of go from there. I don't know how much I touched up last year when I was here in March but this is something that this past year has shown me more than anything, thinking unless you're living under a rock you have to share some of these observations. I don't want to have a negative tone tonight and I certainly don't want to do that around you know people who are students right now in college and all that but, I also think that I have to kind of tell you as I see it because in all respects I’m looking at the future leaders right here. I'm just going to kind of give it to you the only way I know how, straight from the heart.
9. We are in a very difficult political time right now, you see it all the way from the top Washington DC, you see it here at the state level, and you see that at the local level. I don't know if I said this last time I was here so, if I did interrupt me but, I am in the service so I’m a Major in the United States Army and with deployment last time that I was there I arrived in Afghanistan and I'm going to bring this back to our politics just bear with me for a second. I was part of this, President Trump in 2017 gave a speech called the South Asia speech where he essentially outlined what America's policy was going to be in Southwest Asia. As part of that some of it was going to be that the United States for the first time ever was going to attempt to resolve the war in Afghanistan to essentially get to a peaceful settlement in Afghanistan. So, I get to Afghanistan, I get orders in 2018 and low and behold I find out that this team that was created as part of this Peace of Reconciliation Team, I was going to be on and it was kind of an oxymoron to me. You know here you are in Afghanistan that literally the day before I arrived in country got voted by the United Nations as the most violent country on Earth and I was going to be on this Peace and Reconciliation Team. So, that took some mental gymnastics if you will to figure out but anyway so I get over there and as part of that process being on that team and I firmly believe that I was selected to be on that team because one of the General Officers or who's over there found out what my day job was, State Representative. I think it was as simple as that anyway we were in Afghanistan, would be in Afghanistan then fly to Qatar where the political headquarters is of Afghanistan right near Saudi Arabia. We go from Afghanistan to Qatar and a lot of these negotiations took place there, something that I observed there stuck in my mind and sticks in my mind to this day. You know the Taliban is a group that a number of occasions has killed many of my friends, has maimed many of my friends, had obviously in Afghanistan counterparts but when I saw what I observed what I've read since I've been home but I've read is that the Taliban was more willing and has shown more of a willingness to compromise and give concessions and their negotiations with Americans, then I see in our two parties today. Their willingness to compromise it give concessions with each other and it scared me it really scared me that in the most violent country in the Earth these groups who the day after we were negotiating would go back to Afghanistan or give orders back to Afghanistan and continue to kill more Americans but in those negotiations would give concessions about the future of Afghanistan.
10. That stuck with me, that stayed in my mind and I came back here and I guess what I can say is it furthered my resolved and how I go about politics. In my version of politics, for many of you have heard me speak on any number occasions, I think is a little bit different than most, my approach is pretty simple. How I've heard my head playing it over and over in my mind how are today's politics, today every single time you have a vote in politics today in Washington DC, Boston and all the other state capitals, local governments throughout. There is no thought in anything anymore, if you are a Democrat look at a vote for the lens of what would a Democrat do and if you are a Republican you look at a vote for the lens of what would a Republican would do. Simple as that and you look at it through that lens and you would adjust your opinion to fit the narrative of your respective party. What's good about that? It's a question, I don’t know.
11. What I've done the entire time I've been a State Representative, which I would strongly suggest as something people in this room may want to consider about how to go about politics and analyzing everything. Be a thinker, we're human beings, we're not robots. When issues come up look at that face on the facts and the merits of the case that is in front of you. We had a vote about a month ago that I still can't get over and I was talking to a bunch of my colleagues from Western Massachusetts and we had all said this bill is the dumbest thing any of us had ever seen. It was just stupid. It was stupid in the sense that as we were driving down to Boston the bill said one thing and then it changed when we got there. So, every single one of my colleagues myself included said that we’re done, we are going to vote against this thing and then the roll call got called. I sat there and I laughed at all of my colleagues who had just said this is the dumbest thing in the world and we're going to vote against this. Then going to the machine and voting green, voting for it and I kind of had an epiphany if you will. I just said I can't do that I can't do that and I went up, I voted red, voted against it and the reason I voted against it was twofold because I think it was stupid, which is say no more there, but I want to start, if you will revolution, that's a big word in politics today start a revolution but the revolution that I want to offer that I think people need to bring forward to look at a little bit differently is starting to say hey do you want to know what I'm such and such and you want to know what, you tell me your opinion, I'll tell you mine and let's compromise. If the word compromise is not brought back into our political lexicon far as I'm concerned another person may come up here and tell you something completely different that now is the time we should both kind of hunkered down into our respective positions but, in my opinion we hear a lot about political discourse and what's important out there and everything that's going on and what both parties are saying right now. But, I firmly believe that we are at a state in our nation right now that if we don't start to embrace that word compromise again I truly believe that America will collapse from within. If you look at, if there's any students of history in this room, if you look at all the various empires all the various fill in the blanks most of them have one thing in common that they collapse from within and it wasn't an external power that caused them to collapse. I think it's that serious.
12. When people knock on my door asking for my support for their candidacy I asked them one question. Before you get going and I apologize about interrupting your Patriots game, but I want to know one thing I don’t want to hear about how you're going to do all of these things that we all know isn’t going to happen if you can't compromise. I want to know how are you going to work with the other side but, more importantly I want to know if you are willing to compromise with the other side on any issues and if the answer is no, respectfully speaking thank you for coming by my door but, you don't have my vote. That's how serious I think this is right now. I have a question for the group when is the last time you saw a presidential candidate talk about the need to work with the other side and compromise. I may have missed it, I don’t think it is happening. What I see when I turn on the TV is one side talking about how bad the other guy is and then one side calling the other side socialists. I don't see anybody willing to say you want to know what, let's sit down, let's chat, let's solve this problem, and let’s drink a beer, a coffee. Let’s solve this problem. That's what I can offer, that's my politics in a nutshell so, again my revolution. I try to bring forward.
13. This is, by the way, one of my favorite events of the year to talk. I feel really bad that I was late. One of the reasons why I really like coming here selfishly speaking has to do with what I'm talking about right now because I do think much of this is generational. When I knock on the door and a lot of times, this is just an anecdotal observation, but a lot of times when I knock on the door and a certain someone falls into a certain age bracket and many respects, they are set in their ways and they're not willing to modify their position. My dad, my Uncle, my Aunt, everybody, I'll pick up myself. I almost think that it's, I don't want to say it's a waste of a time because I've been pretty successful at getting people. I mean I'm the Democratic State Rep in a Republican city I wouldn't be here if people didn't think that I would compromise and take votes with the other party. So, there is any number of people that upset and will crossover for you but, I think you folks, students, I need to be honest even younger than your age. Needs to really start to embrace that. That's the revolution that's what I'm talking about. That's what I think should be the worthy endeavor for all of us to want to get into politics and public service. Let's sit down, let's stop this nonsense, and let's start working together again and with that I’ll open it up.
14. **Kaytlyn Mekal**: What is one piece of advice for someone looking to go into public service other than compromising?
15. **Representative Velis**: This political thing has got really dirty, have thick skin. One of the things is social media, don’t even look at it, you have to but, whatever social media you subscribe to, participate in it. However, don’t go looking for stuff of people saying bad things about you because they are going to, have thick skin because it is a tough business in politics and there are any number of things and when I first got elected back in 2014 and this is probably better. I wanted to have Saddam Hussein numbers, Saddam Hussein in his last election before we invaded Iraq and they overthrew him, he got 99.99999% of the vote and like three people didn’t vote for him and I wanted those numbers. I wanted everybody to like me and what I have come to realize and appreciate is that not everybody likes you. Going back to Abraham Lincoln, 30% of the people are always going to find fault with you and I used to always try to make it better and you can be with them 99 out of 100 times. That one time you aren’t with them, that’s when they are going to give you the middle finger and talk bad about you, so be yourself. It’s who you do best and never let any other human being steal your emotions or character.
16. **Samuel Tsongalis**: Two years ago, the first year I saw you come speak in this exact room and I thought you were the coolest person ever. The thing you mentioned back then was compromise and that’s what I want to do in this world and I want to thank you for coming down again.
17. **Representative Velis**: You’re very welcome.
18. **Lindsey McNulty**: My boss at home is actually a State Representative and I’ve actually seen him try to balance his other job and family. I was just wondering how you balance your other job with your position.
19. **Representative Velis**: Great question, so with me the problem is with my job and I get deployed to Afghanistan. So, there is conflicts, it’s tough to balance it but, you have to have that balance. On April 1, I don’t care what happens on March 31, I’m hoping to be on a plane and I’m going somewhere. It’s like a cellphone, you have to say every third Sunday, I’m taking my kids to the park, I’m bringing my girlfriend to the movies, I’m shutting the world off. At the end of the day certain things need to be non-negotiable, your family, whatever your beliefs are, never compromise your beliefs. Which is another important lesson. It’s tough, I would be disingenuous if I didn’t tell you, myself someone has dropped me off at Stop & Shop or Big Y and I’m doing office hours. Be flexible. It’s tough you have to find that balance. I have some colleagues that just go away for two weeks and come back when we take a vote. For those of us that go at it hard, who truly believe that this is a seven day a week job. It’s tough but, if you get into it for the right reasons which public service, I believe, is a noble column which is why I want to fight so dearly for it. You just do it, make that sacrifice. You go into it eyes wide open knowing things like privacy, the other day I was at the gym running doing a hills workout, dying. Some guy came up to me asked me again the same topic, my thoughts on marijuana, as I am basically throwing up. I honestly wanted to punch him in the head but, you can’t do that. You have to have positive outlets but, it’s tough
20. **Olivia Houde**: I was just wondering what you think a benefit is to being in the western part of the state? Since we are so far from Boston and I see a lot of tension and we see a lot of funding goes to projects in Eastern Mass.
21. **Representative Velis**: Yeah, you can avoid the traffic, you can avoid the congestion. I mean I’m kind of a Western Mass guy through and through. I know a lot of folks are Eastern Mass. I kind of like the laid back pace, which is odd because I am anything but laid back. I think the benefits are it’s arguably the most beautiful part of the state. If I was born in Eastern Massachusetts, I would love to go to Western Massachusetts. I always tell people I have the best job in the world, I get to live out here and then drive to Boston and work. Cost of living obviously is a benefit. Dinner in Boston costs so much money, you can get it much cheaper. Brings up another big debate that we are going to get into, I just had a phone call as I was coming back. Real big revenue debate coming up, I think we can all accept the notion that Massachusetts transportation needs to be fixed. Real big question of the debate is how we fix it, we need revenue. The first question is do we need revenue. That’s a lot of back and forth but one of the problems is as a Western Mass official is much of the scuttlebutt that we are hearing is that this bill is going to involve a gas tax. A lot of people perceive the gas tax as a regressive tax that disproportionately affects lower income people but, also as a Western Mass person, we drive more. I don’t want to offend anybody that uses the MBTA all the time but, here in Western Massachusetts we still have a big issue with how much of our tax dollars funded things like the big dig. So, one of the concerns that I’m raising is will Western Mass get its fair share. I don’t want to see a gas tax, it’s a big problem.
22. **Thalita Neves**: I am wondering if you can talk about Higher Education clearly it’s an issue, we all have a stake in. State appropriation are staying the same and not increasing and obviously we have a lot of things that are increasing, including student fees. So, I was wondering how you advocate for higher education.
23. **Representative Velis**: By running for the Senate. So, I have to be honest, one of the main motivating factors of running for the Senate is the main difference between the State Senate and State House is in the Senate you can immediately be an impact player. That is something I really want to take up, we had this conversation before. I think I’ve told this story before but, the Secretary of Westfield State, three or four years ago, asked about how Higher Ed, we are 48th, 49th, or 50th in terms of state money for Higher Education, that is absolutely reprehensible. The way we get around that is by saying we have the best Colleges and Universities in the world but, obviously you’re talking about Harvard and MIT. Make no mistake about it, I’m a state school guy. My law school and undergrad debt is a mortgage payment for me. It’s awful, fortunately I am able to take some benefits under the GI Bill. It is morally reprehensible that in 2020 our students have to make these decisions. Some don’t go to college and some sit in debt forever and what I can tell you it that a big priority of mine in the State Senate, it is in the house too but, the way the house is set up it is very difficult to do the type of things I want to do. I consider myself a leader and leaders look for those chances to lead, it’s an issue that quite honestly we have failed. It’s ridiculous that fees and tuition go up. When you go overseas and talk to your buddies in Great Britain and Australia they don’t have to pay and they don’t understand how making a decision to go to college could alter your future. Might prohibit you from getting a car, a house, whatever. So, I don’t think I’m being outlandish when I say it’s a national tragedy.
24. **Lucas Spearing**: I want to bring up that you want to compromise with people if they don’t want to compromise you leave. I recommend to keep making the effort and a lot of people that don’t want to compromise, they are traditional and older. So, you should be aware that whatever they believe and perspective they have was given to them by their parents. Trying to compromise with them is hard to do overnight. I recommend to keep putting effort in them because it’s easy to compromise with people that are accepting but, it you compromise with people that are harder you get more supporters.
25. **Representative Velis**: Thank you.
26. **Riley Gregoire**: I wanted to comment on the history that you brought up and that you were bringing up the facts which is great for politics. Right now you are talking informally with us but, how do you switch your language when talking to different audiences.
27. **Representative Velis**: Approach is everything, I find. I think it has less to do with age and more to do with subject matter. There is a lot of people that have certain values, beliefs, religion, or otherwise. If you are dealing with some of these issues or know that the people in question are steadfast in their beliefs, my approach is always non-confrontational. I’m Greek and I’m Irish, we believe as Greek there is nothing you can’t solve over food and Irish there is nothing you can’t solve over a drink. If you combine the two we can solve some problems. I don’t change the way I talk to people, obviously I was at a senior citizens center today, I might be a little more deferential. That has to do with how I was raised by my parents but, I don’t want to say I’m informal all the time because I’m not. I fundamentally believe that human beings pretty much across the world are decent. Sometimes you need to move aside the cobwebs or talk to them longer but, I fundamentally believe that human beings are decent. It’s funny I was just having this conversation yesterday. I will knock on a door from Easthampton, which is a very progressive city but then people here from Westfield or Southwick are more conservative. When I knock on a door from Easthampton it’s we need to impeach this guy today. When I knock on a door in Southwick it’s can we change the Constitution so he can be president for life. So, it’s about listening to people, it’s a big part of it and which is why I like to open it up to you all. I stay true to myself but there are some very contentious things out there. Guns, on both sides good luck navigating that debate. Some of the reproductive access, right now in Massachusetts there is a huge bill but, good luck to that one. Any matter like that, I deal with it frequently, I’ll go to a church and then I’ll go to some of these interest groups on the other side and I’ll just sit down and say something basic and I found this out, if you strip aside the pretense and are human being to human being you can accomplish a lot. That has always been my experience.
28. **Chloë Sanfaçon**: What advice would you give someone that is not planning on becoming a political leader but, that wants to help better our political environment?
29. **Representative Velis**: Support candidates that do. That was a weak attempt at getting a campaign volunteer. Just in your political discussions, I said this last year. If you like Fox, watch CNN tonight. If you like CNN, watch Fox tonight. When you are having these conversations, people are saying politics are so divisive that friendships are being ruined, families are being ruined, f\*\*\* that. Life is too short, have a conversation, agree to disagree. Disagree without being disagreeable and beautiful things are capable. Just be willing to listen to people, listening is so important. I will frequently, when talking to friends on the other side of the isle, certain areas where we work together and areas where we can’t work together. People from all walks of life go right to where they can’t agree, start where you can agree. Get those compromises out of the way because something is going to happen. The other reason our politics are so segregated right now is because we don’t give ourselves enough time with each other. Even politics in Washington D.C., there was a day and age where Tip O’Neill and Ronald Reagan would battle and then go together for a drink. Tip O’Neill was the Democratic Speaker of the House and Reagan was the President. Right now in Washington people are voting then going home to their districts. Get to know your fellow human beings, talk about what you do have in common before you get to the areas you don’t have in common. What’s going to happen, in my experience is that, when you resolve those things where there is areas of compromise, those areas where you didn’t think was compromise you will come together. Still participate, if you don’t want to go into politics, still participate in the process. There is nothing that drives me more insane than a human being that says they don’t vote. It drives me absolutely insane. I don’t care who you are, where you are from, vote. Enjoy what you do, I think we are reminded on a daily basis how fragile life is. Every day I wake up and I say to myself every single day is a gift. I don’t care what you do, from working at McDonalds to President of the United States and everything in between. Do it with honor and treasure it.
30. **Kaytlyn Mekal**: I know I asked you, I think last year, but is there anything going on right now that supports K12 school districts that are under receivership right now.
31. **Representative Velis**: Holyoke, right. Do you follow the Student Opportunity Act at all? So, we just passed landmark legislation in Massachusetts, so in 1993 until three months ago, K-12 education had been drastically underfunded. We hadn’t updated it since 1993. We just updated it and what is being hailed nationally as trailblazing legislation so take a look at it. Governor Baker signed it and there was really four things that we were after for in that. Funding for Special Education, funding for Low Income Districts, English as a Second Language, and Healthcare for teachers. I guess all of these things were on the table and one of the things, the Holyoke Rep Aaron Vega, was a dear friend of mine, we are losing his belief and what he talked about in the caucus is that if you increase this funding and invest in education these grades are going to start going up and out of receivership. Check it out, you’d be really interested in that law.
32. **Mitchell McKittrick**: What of the problems that I know in Western Mass is the internet access especially going deeper in. I am wondering what is being done to fix the issue of internet access because I know sometimes it comes off as we don’t need internet. Today we need internet to apply for jobs online, scholarships online, so I was wondering if there is anything currently in the works to improve internet access.
33. **Representative Velis**: I did a Town Hall in Granville, one of the hill towns in the district that I’m running for. I had a lot of parents strongly encourage me to go up to their one tower that they have at 8:00 pm on any given night and they told me I’ll be shocked at what I see. What I’ll see is a bunch of students in vehicles parked around that tower for the very simple reason that that is where they get access to the internet. Governor Baker to his credit has pledged, a lot is being done on it. That was very eye-opening to me and that’s one of the issues that we take for granted, we just assume that everybody has it. I was overseas and my cellphone didn’t have internet access but, this is America in 2020 everywhere should have internet but there is a lot of areas that don’t. Since the Governor has been in, and we as a legislature I think 45 out of 100 districts that did not have that broadband internet access now do so, it is something that has a lot of movement. It is something that I will be passionate about in the Senate because four of the 11 cities and towns in the Senate district have that same problem. I’m learning more and more about some issues that are unique to more rural areas. That’s the biggest one.
34. **Aaron Lessing**: I have grandparents now falling on hard times and my Pepe was in the service. I was kind of around the Veterans Affairs committee and I was kind of wondering what you guys are trying to accomplish recently.
35. **Representative Velis**: There is a lot going on. In Massachusetts based on the Valor Act, and the Brave Act, we are the only state in the country which has a VSO, a Veteran Service Officer. So, I always tell people that right there puts us far above everyone else. That’s the first place where veterans should be going to for a positive experience. Constant legislation, one of the biggest threats outside suicide and homelessness is the post-Gulf War exposure to a burn pit. Anyone know what a burn pit is? In Iraq and Afghanistan the way we get rid of waste is that we put stuff in a big pit and burn it, including batteries, and plastics and we are inhaling all of that. It’s going to be our generation what Agent Orange was to Vietnam Veterans. That’s another area, tuition in another area. Every person that served should be taken care of.
36. Thank you again for joining us. I have a few things for the rest of you guys.
37. I wanted to remind all of you that our Town Hall is this coming Monday, March 2, in this room from 5:00 pm-6:00 pm. We will be having pizza, so please bring your friends or any of your fellow peers who have any concerns they would like to address.
38. I would like to extend a huge thank you to Katie Pinney and Cam Kelleher for volunteering to take part in the next Dean of Students search. We have the utmost faith that you guys will do what’s best for the students.
39. I just wanted to let you all know that I will be going to a Student Advisory Committee meeting this Thursday, February 27 at Worcester State, so I will let you all know what we talk about next week.
40. For guest speakers next week, we will be having Tom Convery with some announcements, Julia Nedry to talk about Fresh Check Day, and our very own Cam Kelleher with a presentation. As far as the Fresh Check Day conversation goes, I just wanted to give you all a trigger warning. Julia will be bringing up tough topics related to mental health, so if these topics are sensitive to you, please just email either myself or Liz Ferrara and this can be an excused absence. That’s all I have, and have a great rest of your week.
41. Just a reminder next Tuesday, March 3 is Primary Election Day, so please remember to go vote.
42. Items not listed on Agenda:
43. BOARD OF TRUSTEES' REPORT: **Thalita Neves**
44. All University Committee**: No Report**
45. Student Advisory Council: **No report**

1. VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT-STUDENT LIFE:**Gift Madu**
   * 1. Student Affairs Committee: **No Report**
     2. Diversity/Inclusion Committee: **No Report**
     3. Food Services Committee**: Kelson Burke**
2. I just wanted to let everyone know that the new Director of Dining Services, Bill Connor is officially on campus. He arrived last Tuesday and has been transitioning into the Westfield Life nice and smoothly**.**
3. Some of the biggest ideas so far that Bill wants to implement for Westfield State is making the Marketplace much more dinning dollar friendly and expanding the Wilson Café.
4. Lunch with Lauren is tomorrow, February 19 and the Marty Gras Dinner is tonight, February 25 in the DC and will be going on until 8:00 pm.
5. **Ethan Goodfellow**: Kelson, have you talked to Kaytlyn Mekal at all to see if Bill will be down this semester?
6. **Kelson Burke**: Correct me if I am wrong but, I am pretty sure it is April 7th.
7. **Joey Joyal**: I just want to say Bill is the man, he came on, he has high energy, he has a lot of great ideas, and he cares a lot about what students have to say. Along those lines if you have any suggestions for the DC he says to get it in by two weeks because they need to submit it to the Board of Trustees for approval, so for next year we have to get the ideas in like two weeks, if you have any ideas let Kelson know.
8. **Kelson Burke**: Please do, or you can email Bill at wconnor@westfield.ma.edu.
9. **Samuel Tsongalis**: Hello, at grab & go the lids keep melting for the soup, like when you get a bread bowl or pasta it melts the top.
10. **Kelson Burke**: We did tell them about it. I will bring it up again because I don’t think they ever got back to me. I do agree that it is wrong.
11. **Alex Dotiwalla**: I don’t know if this has been brought to your attention or not but, I was informed that two students last week told me that they reported food poisoning from Wilson Café from the chicken wraps. They are also saying that the noodles in the DC, they would prefer that they are cooked longer. One of them went to the hospital.
12. **Kelson Burke**: That is a serious issue. I will definitely bring that up. You said that was in Wilson?
13. **Elizabeth Ferrara**: Do you know it was the chicken wraps? They always ask you to prove it.
14. **Alex Dotiwalla**: That’s what they said they ate.
15. **Kelson Burke**: I will definitely try to get more information from the DC staff because they should know.
16. **Aaron Lessing**: I would like to say Kelson that I personally had the student interview with Bill. I personally loved him so, I think he will be doing great things for University in the coming months.
17. **Kelson Burke**: I agree and he also wants to make change such as: dining dollar options in the marketplace and Wilson café expansion.
18. **Chloë Sanfaçon**: More apple crisp. Everyone I have talked to agrees they only make one pan.
19. **Kelson Burke**: I will let them know.
20. **Joey Joyal**: Would you like to talk about the finishing touches and spice table?
21. **Kelson Burke**: I wasn’t there when you talked to him about it but, if you would like to, I would absolutely love to heart it.
22. **Joey Joyal**: I mean I guess, another one of his ideas was to have a finishing touch tables with a bunch of different spices so that if you don’t like the food it would have like parsley. I can’t think of anymore spices off the top of my head but more spices than salt and pepper so that you can put your own touch on things. It’s just a little thing but I think it’s a really good idea and it’s the little things that count.
23. **Kelson Burke**: He said he will have it by this Friday. Quick and efficient.
24. **Samuel Tsongalis**: It would be great to have adobo.
    * 1. Parking Control Board**: No Report**
      2. Student Athletic AdvisoryBoard**: No Report**
      3. Substance Advisory Committee**: No Report**
      4. Veteran’s Affairs Report**: No Report**

1. VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT-ACADEMIC LIFE: **Samuel Tsongalis**
   1. Academic Policies Committee: **No Report**
   2. Curriculum Committee: **Olivia Houde**
2. The Committee motioned to remove four previously tabled items within the Art Department from the table for further discussion.
3. The Committee requested that the Art Department withdraw the proposals, edit them, and resubmit the proposals after the recommended adjustments are made.
4. The next scheduled meeting is March 7 at 1:40 in the Mahoney Conference Room.
   1. Enrollment Management Committee: **No Report**
   2. International Programs Committee: **No report**
   3. Academic Technology and Information Services Committee: **No report**
5. VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT-FINANCE: ***Kelson Burke***
6. Finance Committee: **Kelson Burke**
7. Finance Committee received a Finance Proposal from the Graphic Design Club earlier this month. Outlined on the projector are the funds that the club is requesting. The reason they are asking for this money is to help pay for half the transportation for the club to go on a trip to the Cooper Hewitt Museum. They amount they are asking for is $800.00 which would be 50% of the bus they will be taking. Upon review of the requested amount, the Finance Committee has endorsed this proposal.
8. I move to allocate $800.00 to the Graphic Design Club. Motion carries.
9. Finance committee also received another Finance Proposal from the History Club. The money they are asking for will help them go on a field trip to the Franklin D. Roosevelt home in Springwood on March 28. The amount they are asking for is $400.00 for admission and $412.00 for half of the cost of transportation. The total amount of money they are asking for is $812.00. Upon review of the requested amount, the Finance Committee has endorsed this proposal.
10. I move to allocate $812.00 to the History Club. Motion carries.
11. **Katherine Pinney**: Just curious how much will be left after we do both of these?
12. **Kelson Burke**: Earlier this month we took out some money from the MTG line item because they were not using it, which was about $3,300 so, if we endorse both of these we will have about $300 coming from the operating budget and then the money we took from the line item will be gone.
13. Foundation Report: **No Report**
14. Student Organization Council: **No report**
15. VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT-PROGRAMMING: ***Cameron Kelleher***
16. Campus Activities Board: **Cameron Kelleher**

1. LEGISLATIVE SECRETARTY: **Elizabeth Ferrara**
2. Neighborhood Advisory Board: **No report**
3. Community Relations/Fundraising Report: **No Report**
4. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY REPORT: **Aaron Lessing**
5. The Owl Ball committee met yesterday on the couches at 3:00 pm and we decided on the glass for Owl Ball. We are going to go with a stemless wine glass this year. There is going to be a design on it with a mask saying Owl Ball 2020. Next, only 22 people have bought Owl Ball tickets and I think that’s kind of bad, as the Senate we have to get people and you guys to buy Owl Ball tickets before selling is over on March 27.
6. **Ethan Goodfellow**: Have you created any flyers or anything to advertise the Owl Ball? I know you sent out an email but maybe more email spamming.
7. **Aaron Lessing**: We are going to get flyers out and I just don’t want to spam people.
8. **Ethan Goodfellow**: Spam them, go for it, and go for blood.
9. **Bradley Harvey**: Is there going to be a special guest at Owl Ball?
10. **Aaron Lessing**: That is up for senate to decide. If we want to have an Owl with a mask on, we don’t know who the Owl is because they are behind a mask. Its Nestor guys.
11. **Randi Robbins**: For the special guest part, there is a rapper performing in Northampton that weekend, could I try to see if he could come?
12. **Aaron Lessing**: Who is the rapper?
13. **Randi Robbins**: Jack Harlow.
14. **Aaron Lessing**: I don’t know rap, could you send that to me?
15. PARLIAMENTARIAN REPORT: **Matthew Michalik**
16. Rules and Regulations Committee: **No Report**
17. Constitutional Review Committee: **No Report**
18. ADVISORY COMMITTEES:
19. Advisory Committee on Facilities Planning: **No Report**
20. Advisory Committee on Academic Planning: **No Report**
21. Advisory Committee on Budget Planning: **No report**
22. Advisory Committee on Affirmative Action: **No Report**
23. Advisory Committee on the Westfield State Experience: **No report**
24. Search Committee for Dean of Students**: No Report**
25. COMMUTER COUNCIL AND CLASS COUNCIL REPORTS:
26. Commuter Council: **Alexa Sullivan**
27. At the last Commuter Council meeting on February 24, we talked about a few different things.
28. We are going to change the name from Commuter Services, most likely to Commuter Student Services, because the students think that it is only for people who use the PVTA busses or need decals, but it is for all Commuter Students.
29. Officer Brian Kowal attended our meeting, and we talked about:

* Issues with resident students or people without commuter decals parking in commuter students’ spots when they are not supposed to.
* Officers are ticketing more to stop people from parking in those spaces without a decal.
* It is also important to know that if you do not have a decal, and you keep parking in spots that you are not allowed to park in, you will get ticketed and have a greater chance of getting towed.

1. We received the results for our Commuter Survey that 640 students filled out. There were 32 questions, and we have 113 pages of responses from the survey. We are still going through all of the information because there was a lot there. There were some things that were brought up several times in the responses.
2. Many commuter students wrote that they would like more free events like Pet Therapy. Crafting events, or gym events like Free Yoga Fridays.
3. This semester we changed the days of the events and luncheons so that rather than having all the events on Tuesday/Thursday schedule, we have them on Monday/Wednesday/Friday schedules as well.
4. Many students also wrote and have said that they would like the times of the events to change. Right now, our luncheons are from 11:30 am until 1:00 pm. We are looking at changing some of our luncheon times to 12:00 pm until 2:00 pm and our event times to 1:30 pm until 3:30 pm, so more people can attend.
5. The majority of the people are leaving the parking lots at 2:00 pm, so we are hoping that these times will allow people to come to events after they get out of class and before they leave.
6. Our next scheduled meeting is March 2, at 4:00 pm in Ely 020.
7. Senior Class: **No Report**
8. Junior Class: **Joseph Joyal**
9. The Class of 2021 has been floating a couple ideas around recently.
10. The idea that we are currently pressing is one tto address the current conversation on campus about our schools culture and climate. We are brainstorming ways to improve our schools culture and we feel like a big piece of the puzzle that is missing is school spirit.
11. We often say that you will see more apparel from UMass or UConn around campus than you will from Westfield State, and student’s turnout at sports games is just not where it needs to be compared to other schools.
12. To address these problems, we were trying to think of a way to incentivize students to come out to games.
13. We know that our girls Basketball team is very good and loved so we were thinking that for their first playoff game we should offer students free t-shirts for coming.
14. We thought it would be a good idea to have a section boxed off for student fans. I went to the first football game with my friends this year and there was actually a good turnout, however the students were broken up among the crowd and mixed in with families and kids, just not a space to get rowdy and have fun.
15. I reached out the the Athletic Director with this idea, and he got back to me in less than an hour at like nine at night, very excited about the idea of getting more students involved a athletic events. We met yesterday and the first thing we realized was that we were not going to be able to do this with girl’s basketball, as their first playoff game is Thursday, February 27.
16. We got to talking about next year, the football team and the pep rally. An idea that came up is bringing back the bonfire for the day of pep rally, which was Westfield State tradition for many years. We also want to have this all be the day before the first football game, to get students excited for the game and set the mood for the year. At the game, they are very open to the boxed off fan section and free t-shirt idea.
17. The reason I am speaking is because we could use your help. What can your councils do during pep rally or the first football game to help increase our school spirit? We are hoping to link up again soon to start planning more in depth for next year and I extending the invitation to all of you to be a part of it.
18. Our next schedule meeting is February 27 at 6:00 pm in Ely 003.
19. **Samuel Tsongalis**: Real quick enrollment management at 3:00 pm and we talked about the bonfire. Barb Hand and I also talked about it this week. There was nothing against city ordinance preventing us from having a bonfire it was strictly a University decision. So, what has usually happened was that the fire department was on site and 911 on speed dial, in case you forgot the number. As well as, it would be on the green and there would be enough room and a certain way to control it. There was nothing against it logistically from what we found.
20. **Joey Joyal**: Also, we are going to set up a meeting with Matt Dellea and the Athletics Department and any other group that is interested in getting involved with this. Other Class Councils, Hall Councils, how do you get your halls out that day onto the green. Do you have access to the intercoms, can we be annoying and rowdy I would love that.
21. **Logan Terenzi**: This is about the bonfire and people getting involved I know we would have the Fire Department and Fire Marshall but, if we want to extend that to EMS that are trying to get professions in that to work with them to help out. That would allow kids to participate and learn from it.
22. **Joey Joyal**: Yes I am sure our First Responders club would be happy to be there. They do a lot of sporting events and it would be great experience.
23. **Katherine Pinney**: Also, I do believe we need a bonfire permit.
24. **Barbara Hand**: It could be worked out very easily, I think the University could help with the behind the scenes work. Tony do you remember?
25. **Tony Casciano**: I don’t, you would have to go to the Fire Department to have a quick meeting and say hey this is what we are planning. They would tell us what we need but, I don’t think it’s a big deal.
26. **Chloë Sanfaçon**: I know Cam Kelleher is not here to mention it but, in CAB we have talked about trying to get a bonfire. So, I think CAB would be interested.
27. **Joey Joyal**: Sounds great. I’ll let you know when the meeting is, I am waiting for the Athletic Directors to get back to me. Then I will let Matt Dellea and all of you know.
28. **Riley Gregoire**: So, in my hometown we have a bonfire every year usually it is before the rain and they have it at the football field in the center of town. So is this something we want to advertise to Westfield or something we wanted only for students.
29. **Joey Joyal**: That is definitely something we can talk about at the meeting.
30. **Dr. Gloria Lopez**: Good evening everybody, thank you so much for your interest and energy. I just want to say that I am very supportive to continue to engage students and school spirit and developing ideas. Anything I can do to support, I am in.
31. **Audrey Therriault**: As Student Government, I don’t know exactly what the process is but, maybe we could make a committee where if anyone on Student Government is interested, like a School Spirit Committee or tied in with efforts for enrollment and retention because I know that is a big thing. There might be some collaboration with that effort so just like for me, I don’t think I am a part of a club or anything that would necessarily be able to join but personally I want to be a part of it. Maybe the parliamentarian knows the logistics of that but, that might be something we could do.
32. **Joey Joyal**: That’s a good idea.
33. Sophomore Class: **No Report**
34. First Year Class: **No Report**
35. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
36. NEW BUSINESS: (Requires majority vote to be opened)
37. ANNOUNCEMENTS:
38. **Elizabeth Ferrara**: So, you guys all have a flyer for the Blue Key award and I want you to hang them up because we only have two nominations so far. So, even if it’s just on your door please hang it up.
39. **Thalita Neves**: Could you all stay after to film a Give-A-Hoot video, you all just have to say Give a hoot and then Danny or Scottie will take it from there.
40. **Mitchell McKittrick**: MTG’s music review is February 27, 28, and 29. It’s free and we put so much work into it and it’s not that long. We are accepting donations for National Mental Health Institute completely for charity.
41. **Kaytlyn Mekal**: Town Hall on Monday come bring a friend we are going to have pizza.
42. **Samuel Tsongalis**: Banacos and Honors students start advising tomorrow and goes all the way until March 17 so, don’t freak out it goes until after Spring Break. It will be in my report next week.
43. **Katherine Pinney**: Bingo is on Friday, February 28 at 10:00 pm, please come.
44. **Matthew Jacques**: There are 81 days till commencement.
45. ROLL CALL: Daniel Armany, Lindsey Dalrymple, Hunter Hassett, Ariana Torres, Steven Lyttle, Valerie Eckenroth, Jason Phillips and Marilyn Maison were absent.
46. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm

*To ensure the courtesy of others,*

*Please refrain from ANY cell phone use during the meeting.*

*Please also note that for accurate record keeping purposes, SGA meetings are recorded and kept on file by the SGA Executive Secretary.*