



Student Government Association
General Meeting
Tuesday, October 1st, 2024
Meeting Minutes

Peter T. Mazza Student Government Association Room
Ely Campus Center

A livestream of the meeting for public viewing also took place on YouTube.

Members Present: Joseph Bonilla, Justin Wald, Sarah Harrington, Austin Morgan, Jacob Constant, Lorraine Fernandez, Daniel Currier, Nicholas Palumbo, Isabella Moniz, Anderson Dallaire, William Connor, Travis McLoughlin, Rachel Luo, Stella Greenberg, Aiden Luciano, Ben Janes, Jakob Traynor, Thomas McLaughlin, Cody Hoisington, Sophia Rebenciuc, Melissa Kuzmeski, Ethan Mallinson, Irini Mahida, Dominic Zajko, Ezekiel Tamarkin, Akile Phakos, Puru Sharma, Christopher Lannan, Ethan Haynes, Troyelle Nosal

Members Excused: Elizabeth Mercer, Brenna Guiliani

Members Absent: Raymond Croteau

Also, present and participating were SGA Advisors Laura Cafaro and Ryan Meersman.

President Joseph Bonilla called the meeting to order at 5:30pm. It was announced that the meeting was being livestreamed and recorded. Members were asked to review the meeting agenda, and a roll call was taken of members present (listed above).

Approval of the Minutes: President Joseph Bonilla asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the September 24th, 2024, general meeting.

MOTION made by Jacob Constant, seconded by Daniel Currier, to amend minutes to strike the date of September 17th to September 24th.

There being no discussion, **VOICE VOTE** passed unanimously.

President's Report: **Joseph Bonilla**

Joseph introduced our guest speakers Matthew Dellea, Dr. Kevin Hear, and Dr. William Salka.

After the speakers, Joseph gave his report in which he gave a brief introduction about himself and his role of President of SGA and talks about how this year is a monumental milestone, it being the 100th year anniversary of the Student Government Association. He then gave a reintroduction of the "Team Huddle" initiative this year. After that he gave an update to the "Voter Registration Week" about giving the dates and the times of it, being Monday, October 21st from 10 AM – 12 PM, Wednesday October 23rd from 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM, and then finally Friday, October 25th from 1:30 PM – 3 PM. Finally Joseph, wanted

to reiterate about the importance of the elections tonight for the Parliamentary; Rules and Regulations committee and the Constitutional Review Committee.

MOTION made by Joseph Bonillas, seconded by Justin Wald, to appoint Laura Cafaro and Ryan Meersman to be the advisors for the 2024-2025 academic year.

There being no discussion, **VOICE VOTE** passed unanimously.

MOTION made by Joseph Bonillas, seconded by Christopher Lannan, to accept the results of the fall 2024 election.

There being no discussion, **VOICE VOTE** passed unanimously.

- I. Sarah Harrington asked to repeat the dates for the Voter Registration Week.
- II. Ethan Haynes asked where they will be taking place.
 - a. Joseph Bonilla explained that the locations are tentative and will be released at a later date.
- III. Ezekiel Tamarkin asked if this would be sent in an email later.
 - a. Joseph Bonilla answered yes.
- A. Director of Student Activities, Involvement, and Leadership **Matthew Dellea**
Matthew gave a presentation about a student receiving an award after being nominated by himself and other staff in S.A.I.L. Given to Austin Morgan, for outstanding leadership throughout the Westfield State community, the award was given out through NACA, National Association of Campus Activities.
- B. Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs and Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost Dr. William Salka **Dr. Kevin Hearn and Dr. William Salka**
Dr. Kevin Hearn gave a brief introduction about himself and his role here on campus as the Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs. Explains that he started his career in student government and wants us to take any opportunity that we are given. He wants everyone to be able to use him and his office if anything helps with being a student. He also wants to help other students become student leaders because of the experience and how rewarding it is. He explains that this Summer and Fall orientation and the opening of the semester was the best he has ever seen and the biggest word he has for the year is Engagement.

Dr. William Salka gave a brief introduction about himself and what he has done up to his current role working with and for Dr. Thompson, and that he is thrilled to be here.

- a. Justin Wald asks if they can explain what positions they were in in student government?
 - i. Dr. William Salka explains that he was chair of their Budget and Resource Committee.
 - ii. Dr. Kevin Hearn explains that he was Senior Class President.
- b. Laura Cafaro asked if they can explain a bit more about what their roles entail.
 - i. Dr. William Salka asked if Sarah Harrington could answer what a Provost does.
 - ii. Sarah Harrington explains that the provost is the Head of Academic Affairs, dealing with anything and everything academic related.
 - iii. Dr. William Salka added and explained that he oversees all the academic departments, all the majors, all the faculty but also in charge of all the academic support services. Including that the biggest thing that he and his department are working on this year is the retention rate. Because he wants everyone to graduate.
 - iv. Dr. Kevin Hearn explains that he works directly for Justin. He also explains that in his role it primarily focuses on the out of classroom experience including residential life, S.A.I.L office, University Police, Career Services, Counseling

Services, and a variety of different support services here on campus. Also included that from last year's student government they wanted him to build a bridge with academic affairs and be a good partner to the provost, and they were able to do that. He ends by explaining that if you have issues around campus with their specific areas, contact Justin for Student Affairs and Sarah for Academic Affairs.

- c. Sarah Harrington asked a question regarding the dean's list from the spring.
 - i. Dr. William Salka explains that the dean's list should be posted soon but he will reach out and follow up.
- d. Ezekiel Tamarkin asked about the changes that Dr. William Salka is planning to make.
 - i. Dr. William Salka explains that the university will be moving to a dual advising model meaning that every first year and second year student will have a professional advisor and a faculty advisor, allowing the students to make sure they are getting the help they need. As well as moving the CARE center out of the library to Parenzo where all of the other academic support services are.
 - ii. Ezekiel Tamarkin readdressed and asked how he plans to inform new and current students about the change and the faculty.
 - iii. Dr. William Salka explained the chairs are informed and are supportive of the plan. Then for the students to do a soft rollout in the spring but will do a full launch next fall. However, they plan to send emails and reach out in whatever way they can to make sure people are informed.
 - iv. Ezekiel Tamarkin readdressed again and asked primarily about the faculty.
 - v. Dr. William Salka explained that the chairs are supposed to be the ones to inform their faculty, and he meets with the chairs once a month.
- e. Anderson Dallaire asked about what the plans are to put in place where the CARE center currently is after it is moved.
 - i. Dr. William Salka explained that they are looking into a bunch of different things including a faculty center, the honors program but they have not decided yet about what will be put there. Added that Sarah will be told about the decision once it is made to share it with SGA.
- f. Christopher Lannan thanked Dr. William Salka and Dr. Kevin Hearn for coming down to speak with us and appreciates the work that they do.
- g. Isabella Moniz asked about what the plan was for majors that have been misplaced and dispersed across campus due to the closing of MOD hall. Then explains about her personal experience with having classes in Dower Center at the same time as music classes and not being able to get class done with the noise.
 - i. Dr. William Salka explains that the issue is on his radar, and he is planning to create a scheduling policy to make courses be spread out across the day and to utilize the classrooms better and not put a lecture next to a music class.
- h. Justin Wald asked Dr. Hearn what his plans were for retention this year.
 - i. Dr. Kevin Hearn included a response to Isabella's question explaining that it is our job to bring the issues when they come up to them to get things fixed. Then to Justin's question to go back to the word he used before Engagement and he explained that studies have shown that students that are involved on campus tend to stay on campus, and their chances of graduating grow.
- i. Sarah Harrington gave a Point of Information to not be on their phones during the meeting.

Student Trustee Report: *Daniel Currier*

Daniel gave a brief introduction of himself and his role as Student Trustee here at Westfield State. He explains that in his role he gives a student's perspective on the Board of Trustees. Some of the things that they vote on are the annual budget, tuition and fees increases, and granting tenure and promotion to faculty, the evaluation of President Thompson, and much more. Their next full meeting will be October 23rd, and more information will come. Daniel then gave two key caveats that even though in his role he gives a student's perspective, and he doesn't want to pay more in tuition he does need to have the mind of the university in mind when making decisions. Additionally, adding that many of the conversations that they have are safeguarded by confidentiality. Then he welcomes everyone to the student government association, with the amazing and cherished history. Daniel then talked about the project that he has been working on with Sarah Harrington, and Justin Wald about the common meeting hour. Then finally finished with his main initiative this year being deferred maintained at the university making renovations and updates to the campus possible, however the Commonwealth needs to step in and help us out.

Vice President's Report-Student Life: *Justin Wald*

Justin gave a brief introduction about himself and what his role entails being the Vice President of Student Life. Talking about the departments that he oversees and his employee Dr. Kevin Hearn. He then finishes with these goals for the year.

A. Special Committee on Club Relations and Celebrations: *Justin Wald*

Justin explained that Austin and himself met and discussed ideas for the committee, and came up with redefining the club transition process, as well as creating a club support network or an information pamphlet that gives all the relevant club recourses from SAIL staff to Rules and Regulations to Finance Committee. As well as discussing club awards. Then discussing that the committee is charged with the maintenance of a robust relationship with registered student organizations, planning events that celebrate our clubs, and developing initiatives to engage students in these clubs.

B. Food Services Committee: *Justin Wald*

Justin talked about the committee moving to bi-weekly on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month. Then gave some updates with dining, they are introducing the fall drinks to Owl Cafe, a sandwich to bowl option at Ely Harvest, and sign changes in the DC to be more friendly to students with visual challenges, then there will soon be a poll released where students can vote for late night fried options on the GET app.

MOTION made by Justin Wald, seconded by Austin Morgan, accept the proposed amendment for the charge for the Dining Services Committee.

There being no discussion, **VOICE VOTE** passed unanimously.

- I. Laura Cafaro explained that we want more students in senate to give reports because it gets boring hearing the same person talk for three reports in a row.

Vice President's Report-Academic Life: *Sarah Harrington*

Sarah introduced herself as the Vice President of Academic Life, expressing her excitement to see so many new faces in the room. She explained that her role focuses on academic-related areas such as courses, curriculum, parking, and academic affairs, and she works closely with the Provost to relay important information across campus. Now in her second year in this position, Sarah emphasized how much she enjoys it and encouraged others to consider running for exec next year. She also highlighted the new SGA dictionary found in the back of binders, which helps clarify unfamiliar terms and committees

for new members. Additionally, Sarah is seeking students to join her on the University Curriculum Committee, which meets on the 1st and 3rd Fridays. There are two open spots, and she hopes to fill at least one by Friday. Lastly, Sarah mentioned the importance of getting students involved in the Parking Control Board due to the significant changes in parking this semester.

- I. Daniel Currier gave a Point of Information about the committee's packet given out at the beginning of the meeting.
- II. Sarah Harrington explains what each of the Governance committees do.
- III. Joseph Bonilla gave a Point of Information that there are still students who need to sit on these committees.

Vice President's Report-Student Equity: **Lorraine Fernandez**

Lorraine introduced herself as the Vice President of Student Equity sharing that she is a junior Psychology major with a minor in Spanish. She also explains that she is a student ambassador at the CARE center and is President of the Latinx Association for Empowerment (L.A.f.E.). Also explaining that she is very excited to collaborate with everyone this semester to create a better environment on campus, explaining that today we can explore innovative solutions to enhance student life, promote equity and foster a sense of belonging.

- I. Joseph Bonilla congratulated Lorraine on her being this year's Vice President of Student Equity, and is very excited for what she has planned.

Vice President's Report-Finance: **Austin Morgan**

Austin introduced himself as the SGA Vice President of Finance for the upcoming year and welcomed the new faces in the room. He explained his responsibilities, including overseeing SGA accounts, chairing the finance committee that funds SGA-recognized clubs, and representing the Westfield State University Foundation. He shared that the Executive Council recently voted to increase the club sports budget from \$45,500 to \$45,846 to support the Women's Club Ice Hockey team. Austin also invited people to join the Finance Committee, highlighting the opportunity to engage with SGA-recognized clubs and organizations through financial decisions, and noted it would be a valuable addition to a resume.

Vice President's Report-Publicity: **Sarah Harrington**

Sarah read on behalf of Elizabeth Mercer, the Vice President of Publicity, who was unable to attend the meeting. Elizabeth introduced herself, sharing that she is a senior Psychology major from Connecticut who enjoys reading, running, and playing ice hockey for the women's club team. She has been part of SGA for four years, starting as Class President and serving as Vice President of Publicity for three years. In her role, she manages the Student Government's Instagram, leads the Owl Ball and Blue Key Committees, and is starting the Special Committee on Publicity and External Relations. She also oversees the Senator of the Month Award, which recognizes outstanding senators. Elizabeth proudly announced that the September Senator of the Month is Melissa Kuzmeski, a new senator who has shown enthusiasm, leadership, and dedication as a commuter student. Elizabeth closed by congratulating everyone in their new roles and offering her support to anyone who needs it.

Executive Secretary Report: **Jacob Constant**

Jacob introduced himself as the Executive Secretary this year, managing tasks behind the scenes. He congratulated the recent election winners and noted that 229 votes were cast. Jacob explained that new senators' binders do not yet contain a constitution because the SGA is voting on amendments tonight, and if approved, an updated version will be distributed. New senators will be added to the SGA 2024-2025 Teams chat, and there will be a mandatory training session after next Tuesday's meeting. Jacob also

mentioned that his office hours on Tuesday, October 8th, will be adjusted to 3:30-5 PM due to a Facilities Master Plan Steering Committee meeting and encouraged anyone with questions to reach out.

- I. Joseph Bonilla gave a Point of Information about reports and how we want to see more people report for the committees they are a part of and encourages everyone to report.
- II. Laura Cafaro congratulated Jacob on running his first round of Elections!
- III. Akile Phakos asked a question about the training after next week's meeting.
 - a. Joseph Bonilla explains that they can speak with them after the meeting.

Commuter Council and Class Council Reports:

A. Commuter Council: **Melissa Kuzmeski**

Melissa mentioned that on Friday, September 27th, a few members of the Commuter Council met and decided to hold bi-weekly meetings moving forward. They discussed creating a monthly newsletter featuring Westfield State announcements, updates, and highlights. The council is also planning a commuter event in the coming weeks, with potential food options like a waffle bar or parfaits. Additionally, they are considering adjustments to the commuter lounge to make it a more inviting, calm, and comfortable space for doing homework, with a better layout of tables and chairs.

- I. Sarah congratulated Melissa on her first report!

B. Senior Class Representative: **Isabella Moniz**

Isabella shared that the Class of 2025 held a successful Welcome Back BBQ at Woodward on Friday evening. The event featured good weather, food, drinks, live music, a photo booth, and was a great opportunity to create memories with friends. The event also helped boost their social media presence, which will assist in promoting future events. Isabella thanked everyone who attended and supported the event, especially the junior class representatives and Nestor for their help. Looking ahead, the class is now focused on planning their "100 Days Until Commencement" event in early February, as well as organizing a senior weekend. They aim to have an agenda and cost estimates available to seniors before Thanksgiving break. To ensure maximum participation, they will post a few polls this week to gauge student interest. To keep senior weekend costs low, they are working on two key fundraisers: selling Class of 2025 lawn signs and potentially an online sale of food items like cookie dough and popcorn as the holiday season approaches. Isabella invited anyone with questions to ask at this time.

C. Junior Class Representative: **Travis McLoughlin**

Travis reported that the Class of 2026 council met on Tuesday, September 24th, at 4 o'clock. The meeting began with interviews for senate candidates to assess their fit for the Class Council. Although only two out of four candidates showed up, both interviews went well. The council is also planning a bake sale at the Homecoming tailgate, with more details to come. Unfortunately, due to scheduling conflicts and lack of interest, the Class of 2026 will not be hosting a "Halfway There" event.

- I. Sarah Harrington congratulated Travis on his first report!
- II. Anderson Dallaire asked how they judged the lack of interest.
 - a. Travis McLoughlin asked the council and only Chris was excited to have a "Halfway There" event.
- III. Sarah Harrington asked a clarification question about if the class council wasn't interested in the "Halfway There" event or the class.
 - a. Sarah Harrington readdressed, the reason why is because Katie Egan put so much effort into making it a tradition and hoped to see it continue.
 - b. Travis McLoughlin explains that we will have an event just next year in the spring

- c. Joseph Bonilla wanted to reiterate Sarah's point that we can do whatever, however it would be encouraged to send out an email asking the class for their thoughts.
- IV. Justin Wald asked to clarify what the issues were while trying to plan the event to understand the decision.
 - a. Travis McLoughlin explained that he reached out a number of times with nobody replying to their emails, of trying to find a date and a venue to host the event. Then after planning with the class council, they found the date October 18th to be a good date, however they were unaware that was the same day as homecoming.
- V. William Connor thanked the class for helping out at the Senior BBQ.

New Business:

MOTION made by Joseph Bonilla, seconded by Sarah Harrington, to open new business.

There being no discussion, **VOICE VOTE** passed unanimously.

A. Constitution Amendment Review

Daniel Currier went over briefly the amendment that all the senators were given the day before to review. The amendment includes the process for removing an SGA member, and Club Approvals.

MOTION made by Daniel Currier, seconded by Christopher Lannan, to approve the amendment.

There being no discussion,

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Nicholas Palumbo	Yes
Isabella Moniz	Yes
Anderson Dallaire	Yes
William Connor	No
Travis McLoughlin	Yes
Rachel Luo	Yes
Stella Greenburg	Yes
Aiden Luciano	Yes
Ben Janes	Yes
Jakob Traynor	Yes
Thomas McLaughlin	Yes
Cody Hoisington	Yes
Sophia Rebenciuc	Yes
Melissa Kuzmeski	Yes
Ethan Mallinson	Yes
Irini Mahida	Yes
Dominic Zajko	Yes
Ezekiel Tamarkin	Abstain
Akile Phakos	Yes
Puru Sharma	Yes
Christopher Lannan	Yes
Ethan Haynes	Yes
Troyelle Nosal	Yes
Joseph Bonilla	Yes

Justin Wald	Yes
Sarah Harrington	Yes
Austin Morgan	Yes
Lorraine Fernandez	Yes
Jacob Constant	Yes
Daniel Currier	Yes

Passed with 28 YES, 1 NO and 1 ABSTAIN

B. Parliamentary Election:

Christopher Lannan and Ethan Haynes were both nominated.

A **SECRET BALLOT** was held, and it was declared that Ethan Haynes was elected to be Parliamentary for the 2024-2025 academic year.

C. Rules and Regulations Committee Election:

Ben Janes was nominated for the Freshman Class, Akile Phakos was nominated for the Sophomore Class, Ezekiel Tamarkin and Irini Mahida were nominated for the Junior Class, then William Connor was nominated for the Senior class.

A **SECRET BALLOT** was held, and the results of the election was:

First year: Ben Janes

Second year: Akile Phakos

Third year: Ezekiel Tamarkin

Fourth year: Liam Connor

It was also announced by Justin Wald that Jacob Constant will be his designee to the committee.

D. Constitutional Review Committee Election:

Jakob Traynor was nominated for the Freshman Class, No Sophomores were nominated, Christopher Lannan and Irini Mahida were both nominated for the Junior Class, and then Anderson Dallaire and Nicholas Palumbo were both nominated for the Senior Class.

A **SECRET BALLOT** was held, and the results of the election was:

President appointee 1: Justin Wald

President appointee 2: Daniel Currier

First year: Jakob Traynor

Second year: TBD

Third year: Irini Mahida

Fourth year: Anderson Dallaire

MOTION made by Joseph Bonilla seconded by Travis McLaughlin, to close new business.

There being no discussion, **VOICE VOTE** passed unanimously.

Announcements:

- I. Ethan Haynes requested for all of the members of the Rules and Regulations committee and Constitution Review committee see him after the meeting.
- II. Austin Morgan requested for anyone interested in the Finance Committee to come see him after the meeting.
- III. Daniel Currier reminded everyone about the Vice Presidential debate tonight.
- IV. Justin Wald requested anyone interested in joining the Special Committee on Club Relations and Celebrations to come see him after the meeting.
- V. Sarah Harrington reminded that her meeting with the Provost is October 15th.

- VI. Christopher Lannan informed everyone that he put flyers about the ballot questions in the table in the back of the room.
 - VII. Jacob Constant congratulated everyone who got elected to server on the committees.
 - VIII. Joseph Bonilla apologized for the length of the meeting today.
 - IX. Nicholas Palumbo: 228 days to commencement.
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EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the approved minutes of the Student Government Association (SGA) general meeting held on September 24^h, 2024.

Executive Secretary Jacob Constant

Signed: **Jacob Constant**

Date: **10/4/2024**