



Structure and Program Advisory Committee

Friday, January 23, 2015

12:00 p.m.

VU567

- Members:** *Present:* Matt Smith (AS Assessment Coordinator, Chair); Hannah Pylate (Student-at-Large); Elspeth McGlocklin (Student-at-Large); Nidia Hernandez (AS Outdoor Center Marketing Coordinator, AS Representative)
- Advisors:** Lisa Rosenberg (Assistant Director for Student Activities)
- Secretary:** Emma J. Opsal (AS Board Assistant for Internal Committees)
- Missing:** Jonathan Franklin (Student-at-Large); Mirabelle Blech (Disability Outreach Center Coordinator, AS Representative); Chelsea Ghant (AS VP for Business and Operations)
- Guests:** Sadie Normoyle (AS Environmental & Sustainability Programs Director); Lillyanna Morgan (AS Outback Coordinator); Hayley Trageser (Perspective Student-at-Large)

Smith called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m.

I. Introductions

The committee shared their names, preferred pronouns, and favorite candy bars as an icebreaker.

II. Approval of the Minutes

III. Information Item – Queer Resource Center (QRC)

- A. The QRC was not present to discuss their recommendations, so their presentation was postponed until the following meeting.

IV. Information Item – Outback Farm

- A. Smith gave the committee time to read the documents for the farm. He clarified that the people who had created the documents had since left their offices, as the positions were hired for a winter-winter term, rather than a fall to spring term, like most AS positions. Smith asked for thoughts on the documents presented. He lauded the work done by the previous Outback Coordinator. Hernandez asked about the recommendations with budget implications, and which would be the priority of the office to be most useful and lasting for the office. Normoyle stated the recommendations for increased hours and a new staff member were the most immediate and important, and more work between the office and Fairhaven was necessary for the implementation of the new full time staff member. Normoyle stated the workloads of the current staff members was substantially more than what the positions were salaried for, and the new position would also help alleviate the workload in one specific area. Morgan stated the staff wanted to make all sections of the farm available to students, not just those which had been well established in the past years. She additionally stated the area specifically mentioned in the recommendation for another staff member, a permaculture, was not attended to, even

though it was a valuable independent study resource and had a great amount of interest. Smith asked the representatives to walk the committee through the recommendations, so they could all have a through look together. Normoyle discussed the first recommendation, which asked for an earlier hiring process, so there was substantial time for an internship, and the incoming employees could have a better transition into the positions. Normoyle felt this consistency could benefit the staff. Additionally the consistency of the outback would benefit all those involved. Smith felt this was an excellent recommendation, as it would allow for more regular assessment, and year to year planning. Normoyle stated this was something the previous position holders had already begun to strive for, as the legacy document from the previous coordinator had not just been for the incoming position holder, but for the farm as a whole. Morgan stated the document was extremely beneficial for herself and her coworker, and together they were already thinking of ways they could add to it. Rosenberg asked about the possibility of hiring in the summer, so the new staff could attend fall training, but the job would not start until the following January. Normoyle stated this was a possibility, however the logistics were still being discussed between herself and the persons in charge of the farm's hiring schedule. Normoyle stated they were considering this so there could be some overlap with the outgoing coordinators, and the incoming coordinators could receive some on-site training. Morgan stated there was an obvious shift needed, and the benefits and the limitations needed to be weighed before this was implemented. McGlocklin asked how it would be added to the internship. Normoyle wanted it to be an explicit part of the internship, and a more concrete part of the job description. Smith stated there were some wording issues, to make the recommendation more grammatically correct. This clarified the terms of the internship. Tragreser asked the difference between the internship and the apprenticeship. Morgan stated the internship was paid for the position holder, but not for the incoming staff member, and the apprenticeship was for 2 students to work on the farm during the summer and those staff members were paid. Normoyle stated although the internship was standard for all AS employees, it had not happened every year, and wanted for it to be a solid, well defined part of the job. McGlocklin asked who reviewed the documents and recommendations with the incoming position holder. Normoyle stated it was supposed to be the outgoing position holder, as well as the ESP director. Smith asked the committee to move to the second recommendation. The recommendation called for a way to track the demographics of those who utilized the farm and participated in its events. Morgan explained how in the past, there was not a system for collecting data, and one had not been created as the coordinators were normally on site, and away from their desks. She stated this would allow for more accountability, and the forms would be clear so visitors could more easily give feedback to the farm. Morgan stated this was already trying to document the feedback of the farm, as she was discussing with the work study students various aspects of their jobs. Rosenberg asked if the office tracked the dates and attendance for events at the farm. Morgan stated there was, however each of the different coordinators had used different systems to track the data, and piecing it together was difficult. Normoyle stated she had discovered templates from the past in a file that were comprehensive, however they were not accessible to the coordinators. Morgan stated this was a good start, however there was a need for both quantity and quality data. She also stated the records were distributed by word of mouth from year to year. Morgan also discussed the uses of the site by non-student groups, as they wanted to track this data as well.

The committee then moved on to the third recommendation, which wanted to add a position of assistant coordinator, to tend to an area called The Forrest Garden. It was a large section of the garden which was filled with local plants and ecosystems. Although it had a lot of student interest, Normoyle stated the current staff was unable to maintain it as well as perform their other duties. She stated this dedication of time specifically to the garden would allow it to become a greater resource for students, and allow the other coordinators to focus on their own responsibilities. Smith asked about a later recommendation, which asked for the hours of both the positions to be expanded to 19 hours, rather than the standard 15. Normoyle stated this was not a redistribution of the work, but rather an expansion of the farm. She stated the area was a valuable independent study resource, however it was not integrated into the farm so there was no support. She stated independent study projects were left there, and this became a burden on the coordinators, as they were unable to clean up after the students, and feared the areas utilized would be unable to be used by others. Additionally these were unable to be integrated and expand the farm. It was asked if the position had been recommended before. Normoyle thought not, however stated it had been talked about in the office. The recommendation was lauded, as it included responsibilities, but though it would be best to include a list of future benefits, so the recommendation would be stronger. McGlocklin asked what percentage of the positions on the farm was administrative, meaning the surveying and data compilation. Morgan stated there was substantial work done in the office as well as on site, because there was much needed outreach to other parts of campus and students, as well as planning and making sure materials were available for the farm. Morgan stated 80% of the position was administrative, with the rest on site. As a follow up, McGlocklin asked how many of the hours would be used for administrative purposes if the increase was approved. Morgan stated many of the hours would be administrative, as more outreach was needed, as the site was underutilized in her opinion, and the extended hours would allow the positions more time to raise awareness of the farm. Smith asked how many volunteers were used by the farm. Morgan stated the number changed throughout the year, as in the winters, there was more infrastructure and administrative work to be done, and the weather did not make anyone want to participate in the farm. However in the spring, the work parties could number as many as 30 participants. She stated there was no true average. Hernandez asked if the position was approved, how accessible it would be to all students, as it was possible the level and narrowness of the knowledge necessary for the position could deter student applicants. Morgan stated this would not be a problem, as many students were already very interested in the garden. Morgan stated the only issue for the farm would be the training for the position in the beginning. However, Morgan felt there were enough resources outside Western Washington University, that the expertise and education surrounding permaculture would be able to be gained. Rosenberg asked if the position would match the term of the already established positions, starting in Winter and ending in Fall Quarter. Normoyle thought it was good for the employees of the Outback to start together, as they would all be new together, and they would learn together, however she felt the position was not as seasonally dependent, and if hired on a different schedule would allow for more overlap within the farm. Smith stated there was much to talk about, however they needed to discuss the 4th recommendation. Morgan stated there was an issue of continuity in the farm, and because of this, they wanted a permanent position for a staff member. She stated this would also need to be

communicated with Fairhaven, because the addition of this position would allow the farm to be more integrated into the curriculum, as it was used not only by Fairhaven, but by science classes as well. Smith stated this was not just for the SPAC process, but something more long term, to be explored in the coming years. He stated they did not have the capacity to authorize a non-student position. Normoyle stated this was a long term goal. It was asked if any funding had been secured for the position. Morgan stated not, as there was no concrete plan for the utilization of the position, however the benefits of the position had been acknowledged in a previous collaboration from 2012. It was discussed where the funding would come from, with the possibility of a grant from the community, or money from Fairhaven. It was also stated the “view” of the farm was that Fairhaven owned the property, and the AS maintained the site. It was unknown where the funding would come from at the time. This staff member, however, could possibly be someone already employed by the university in Fairhaven or Facilities management, however they were yet to be considered a possible worker, as a shift in management would be needed for this position. Hernandez asked about the continuity, and the possibility of new curriculum on the site, if there would be a need for more student staff in the future, and if this grown would be manageable for the foreseeable future. Normoyle stated that if the suggested recommendations were added, it would be manageable, however the changes over time would mean there would be need for assessment in the future, however there were immediate needs for the farm. Rosenberg asked what was meant by the acknowledgement for the position. Normoyle stated although she had not seen it, she believed it to be a written acknowledgement from the board that there was a need for the position, and was not a formal acknowledgement. Rosenberg suggested working with the former Board Program Assistant to find the acknowledgement to send to Smith. The committee then moved on to the 5th recommendation which asked for an increase in the salaried hours for the positions. Smith clarified that the positions in the AS were salaried at approximately 15 hours a week, as there was variation between workloads from week to week. He stated a potential downside was that over time, as responsibilities grew, there was potential for regular overwork, and therefore the workload would not equal the pay. He asked the committee keep in mind the implications of this change when discussing. McGlocklin asked if it was possible to see the unedited new job descriptions, as they would be the most accurate to the responsibilities of the positions. It was also suggested the recommendation discuss the increase of hours, rather than salary, as it would clarify the reasoning behind the increased pay. The 6th recommendation called for an increase in publicity and outreach. Normoyle stated the farm was hidden, and because of this, few people knew of its existence. She stated she wanted more people to be aware of it, so it could become more accessible. She stated there was a lack of integration into the campus, as the farm was not on the maps of campus. She stated this was a strategic recommendation, which would utilize many different opportunities needing to be discussed more thoroughly. McGlocklin suggested a work-study be utilized for publicity, so the coordinators would not have to worry, and there would be continuity throughout the year. It was also asked if the farm had a marketing plan developed. Normoyle stated there was not one specific to the farm, however developing one could lead to more consistency and comprehension in the legacy document. As clarification, Smith stated that outreach was not just an issue specific to the farm, but hard in the AS in general. Other than a work-study, Hernandez asked if there were any ways the current job descriptions could be edited so

there would not be reliance on a work-study position, and the coordinators would be familiar with the marketing plan as well. Normoyle stated it was preferable to have a work-study, however integrating the plan into the job descriptions and the legacy documents would be a good way to integrate the plan further. It was also suggested to use volunteer forces for outreach, as this would be a good resume builder, and there was a greater range of students to choose from than just applicants, from the Green Energy Fee, the design program, and others. Rosenberg suggested the recommendation specifically site the map as a challenge to the outreach. Normoyle and Morgan left at 1:17. Smith stated the recommendations would be discussed shortly the following week.

V. Debrief

Smith discussed the recommendations for the future, and asked if the committee would be open to reading the recommendations before had, rather than read it in the meeting. It was asked if he would have them in time. Smith stated yes, as they would become more and more available moving forward. Smith reminded the committee to use parliamentary procedure, as it would be clear in cases where there were many speakers. Smith asked the committee what their thoughts were on the recommendations. Hernandez thought there was great reasoning behind each, and the recommendations would benefit from a benefits list, as well as looking at the current job descriptions. She stated the benefits did outweigh the concerns, and there was always more room for improvement and added stipulations, so the pieces that still seemed vague could be better articulated. McGlocklin asked if it would be useful to ask for a thesis, then a more detailed reasoning behind the recommendation, to really sell the idea. It was asked if this was a normal amount of recommendations. Smith stated there was normally 4-7, and this was on the higher side. It was also wondered if this would be too much for the office to handle if all were passed. Smith said no, as this was typical of the SPAC process. It was asked how to decide which of the recommendations to pass, whether to go with the pressing issues, or to do anything in the long-term. Blacker was concerned the 3rd and 5th recommendations would overwhelm the staff. Smith stated these recommendations would approve, and solidify standard documentation. They were for the general improvement of the office in the long term. Smith stated there were many nuances to creating something the office would want to improve into the future. Additionally, there were different nuances to many of the recommendations, as some were for the internal works of the office, and others for the office's functions for the students. Smith stated many of the recommendations did not need the approval of a body because of this, as the strategic implementation would only need the work of the office to be completed. SPAC passing such recommendations however would solidify the next 3 years of staff direction, and lead to more accountability.

VI. Adjourn

The Meeting was adjourned at 1:35 p.m.