



Student Government Association
General Meeting
Tuesday, October 8st, 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, Elizabeth Mercer, Daniel Currier, Ethan Haynes, 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, Troyelle Nosal, Sicilia Campbell, Emma Bowes

Members Excused: Akile Phakos, Sophia Rebenciuc, Brenna Guiliani

Members Absent:

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

President Joseph Bonilla called the meeting to order at 5:32pm. 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 October 1st, 2024, general meeting. There was no discussion, **VOICE VOTE** passed unanimously.

President's Report: **Joseph Bonilla**

Joseph introduced all of our guest speakers. Then after all the speakers, he appointed two students MOTION's below.

MOTION made by Joseph Bonilla, seconded by Ethan Haynes, to appoint Sicilia Campbell as a Courtney Hall Representative.

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

MOTION made by Joseph Bonilla, seconded by William Connor, to appoint Emma Bowes as a University Hall Representative.

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

A. Center for Student Success and Engagement: *Dr. Celeste Donovan, Justin Marques, Dr. Robert Thorton, Dr. Kristie Knotts, Maryansia DelRio*

Dr. Celeste Donovan – Director of TRIO Support Services

- Federal Program that supports First Generation college students. Low-Income students, and or students with a documented disability.
- Professional Advising.
- <https://www.westfield.ma.edu/academics/academic-support/trio-student-support-services-program>

Dr. Robert Thorton – Director of Academic Advising and Transfer Transition

Francheska Moriarty – Office of Academic Advising and Transfer Transition

- Empower students to take control of their educational experience.
- Individualize Academic Advising.
- Open to all students.
- Event on October 23rd from 2:30 to 4:30 in the Owls Nest.
- <https://www.westfield.ma.edu/academics/academic-support/academic-advising-and-transfer-transition>

Dr. Kristie Knotts – Assistant Director of Learning Disabilities

- Welcome all students, nice study area.
- Tutor Lab for all students.
- Teaches time management and study skills.
- <https://www.westfield.ma.edu/academics/academic-support/banacos-academic-center>

Justin Marques – School Certifying Official with Veteran and Military Services

- Certify all benefits to the VA
- Be a resource for veterans, current military, children and spouses.
- Navigates a roadmap for students.
- Events: November 7th Movie showing about “Honor Flight”.
- <https://www.westfield.ma.edu/offices/veteran-and-military-services>

Maryansia DelRio – Academic Advisor for the LEAD scholars’ program

- Program services students who are First Generation, Pell-Grant qualified, or Diverse backgrounds.
- Roommate issues, Financial Issues, helps with any and all issues.
- <https://www.westfield.ma.edu/academics/academic-support/LEAD>

- I. Daniel Currier thanked everyone for coming down and gave a general comment that many of these programs have the highest retention rates of any programs at the University. Mentioning to make sure to tell students about the programs.
- II. Ethan Haynes mentioned that he has previously worked on an honor flight, and it was one of the most inspiring things that he has ever been a part of.
 - a. Justin Marques reiterated the date of the movie showing.
- III. Sarah Harrington thanked everyone for coming down and speaking and asked to explain what CSSE stands for and what it is about.
 - a. Maryansia DelRio explains that CSSE stands for the Center for Student Success and Engagement, and it is to make sure that all students have the support they need to be successful.
 - b. Dr. Robert Thorton added that it is to simplify student success.

- B. Westfield's Integrative Student Experience (WISE): Dr. Beverly Army Williams & Dr. Lynn Shelly**
 Dr. Lynn Shelly and Dr. Beverly Army Williams talked about the new CORE which is now WISE. They talked about how the first year are taking their courses in different aspects starting with the First Year Journey. Then they explained that Westfield State is now very unique in the sense that we have such a unique curriculum.
- I. Ezekiel Tamarkin asked if we are looking or making any sacrifices going from CORE to WISE.
 - a. Dr. Lynn Shelly responded with the biggest things that we are losing is "Double Dipping" however it was required because some students were able to get by doing their core in around 33 credits whereas others were doing it in 58 credits. Which will make it fairer and in compliance with the accreditation standards. Everyone will take a 41-credit WISE . The new core now has classes that have high impact classes.
 - b. Dr. Beverly Army Williams added to clarify that you can still "Double Dip" from your major to WISE, just not WISE to WISE.
 - II. Sarah Harrington thanked Dr. Beverly Army Williams and Dr. Lynn Shelly for coming down then gave a Point of Information that SCORE is now WISE and that we have 1 student spot still open on the committee.
 - III. Ezekiel Tamarkin explains that he is happy about the lack of double dipping and then asked about on the handout that a lot of the courses do not have numbers yet, and does this mean we are getting more courses, and can the University handle them?
 - a. Dr. Lynn Shelly explains that the ones that don't have numbers yet are still going through Governance and the Registrar's office. Then explains that some of the courses on the sheet are old courses so they have kept their old number but are being reworked into the new WISE curriculum. Then explains that we are getting new courses but there are a lot of courses that are being retired because they weren't being offered or relevant anymore. Then in the end we will have roughly the same number of courses as before.
 - IV. Daniel Currier congratulated Dr. Beverly Army Williams and Dr. Lynn Shelly on the completion of the new curriculum as it took almost 4 years to get it done. Then Daniel asked a general question for the students in the room that SCORE will be ending at the end of the semester, and a new committee will be forming what its purpose will be and what it will look like.
 - a. Dr. Lynn Shelly explains that they are still waiting for the committee to be approved through the governance process and the proposed committee will look very similar to what SCORE looked like however it will be dropped to 10-12 members from 14 members.
 - V. Ezekiel Tamarkin asked a small question about the use of acronyms and how it doesn't align with other institutions, and it makes it hard for transfer students or new students to understand everything.
 - a. Dr. Lynn Shelly explains that they have never actually thought about that issue, however it is now something they will be thinking about going forward.
 - b. Dr. Beverly Army Williams explains that there is a FYJ class that talks about Westfield state and that could be a thing that gets added to what is gone over in the class.
- C. Research, Innovation, Design, & Entrepreneurial Center: Dr. Lamis Jarvinen & Grace Templeton**
 Dr. Lamis Jarvinen introduced herself and so did Grace Templeton and went over what the RIDE center does. Dr. Lamis Jarvinen explained that she wants to empower students to be able to do anything that they want to do. As well as wanting to partner with clubs and organizations around campus. They have professors around campus coming up to them to try and incorporate the center into their class.
- I. Ezekiel Tamarkin asked about what they are doing for new students and transfers to let them know where and what RIDE is.
 - a. Dr. Lamis Jarvinen responded that they are working with Admissions, and they are doing a really good job letting every know about RIDE, but in their defense, RIDE is a brand-

new center. The center is a resource to us, and they want us to use it, and they are looking forward for professors to utilize the center in their classrooms.

- II. Sarah Harrington thanked Dr. Lamis Jarvinen and Grace Templeton and let everyone know that the stickers for the upcoming registration events were made at the RIDE center.
- D. All University Committee: ***Ethan Haynes***

Ethan reported that the All-University Committee (AUC) met on October 4th at 1:40 p.m. Chair Jesse Johnson provided an overview of the committee's role, clarifying that AUC does not implement items from the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) but instead recommends them to the President's office for implementation. The minutes from the September 20th meeting were approved with a 9-0 vote. The committee then voted to refer four UCC items—a 100-level math course, a mathematics minor, a political science capstone seminar, and a 300-level political science course—to the President's office, with the vote passing 7-0-2, with Ethan and another member abstaining as they were not present for the initial discussion. Seven additional UCC items, including courses from finance, art, geography, planning, and sustainability, were also passed along to the President's office by the same vote of 7-0-2. The meeting closed with a mini report from SCORE, which will present its final report and assessment plan on October 18th. The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

 - a. Joseph Bonilla gave a point of information explaining that AUC also reviews policies from APC.

Student Trustee Report: ***Daniel Currier***

No Report

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

Justin shared that he met with Chris Willenbrock, the Director of Residential Life, to discuss ongoing internet issues in the residence halls. Chris provided information from Alan Blair, who noted that there are no major issues currently identified, but many problems arise because the instructions being sent out are not being followed. IT resolves most tickets within a business day, but they lack the staff to provide coverage on weekends. To help address these issues, Justin encouraged everyone to follow the provided instructions, report problems as they occur, and manage their devices effectively to improve the overall experience.

- I. Ezekiel Tamarkin asked if they want us to submit a ticket about not having internet if they don't have internet.
 - a. Justin Wald explains that in that case you can go to your RA, and it can be created that way.

A. Student Affairs Committee: ***Justin Wald***

Justin Wald reported on the Student Affairs Committee meeting from last Friday, where they discussed the disconnect between student leaders and the general student population, accessibility issues on campus, and ways to better utilize the common meeting time. The key takeaways focused on improving accessibility and using the common hour effectively. The committee explored current accessibility challenges, and a new student member suggested inviting individuals who face these issues daily to a meeting with Facilities. Justin relayed this idea to Facilities, who were supportive. Additionally, the committee discussed the possibility of an educational speaker series during the common hour, featuring Senators, Representatives, Authors, and other prominent speakers to engage students, and they plan to discuss this further at the next meeting.

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

No Report

A. Curriculum Committee: ***Sarah Harrington***

Sarah reported on behalf of Melissa that the University Curriculum Committee met on Friday, October 4th. They discussed a new 21-credit Graphic Design minor, which is slightly more than the typical 18 credits, and noted that a one-credit course may be taken under special arrangement, though only once. The Environmental Science program's description revision was tabled for further clarification. The Chemistry department proposed requiring a C- or higher in prerequisite courses for progression and degree satisfaction, with anything below that counting as an elective; this proposal was passed after extensive discussion. Lastly, the committee reviewed three Finance proposals, passing two and tabling one for further discussion with the Economics department. Sarah encouraged anyone with questions to reach out for clarification.

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

No Report

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

Austin reported that he met with VP Taksar to discuss the university's upcoming challenges. Taksar mentioned a likely increase in the technology fee to keep up with advancements and costs, while dining fees are expected to remain stable, unlike in previous years. The university's contract with Follett, the bookstore provider, ends in June, and the Massachusetts college system is considering a new provider. Additionally, the facilities master plan will focus on improving wayfinding this year, aiming to ensure that students can easily navigate campus with better signage. Austin invited anyone with questions to email him at vpfinance.sga@westfield.ma.edu. He closed with, "Go Birds."

Vice President's Report-Publicity: **Elizabeth Mercer**

Elizabeth introduced herself, thanking Sarah for reading her report last time. She's a senior Psychology major from Wallingford, Connecticut, in her fourth year with SGA. Elizabeth shared that she enjoys staying active through gym workouts, yoga, and pilates, and she's also a member of LAFE and the Women's Ice Hockey team. She congratulated the new and returning senators and specifically recognized Melissa for being named Senator of the Month, which is one of her favorite responsibilities. Elizabeth also mentioned her role in the new Special Committee of Publicity and External Relations, inviting senators who are interested in joining to reach out. Additionally, she is organizing Owl Ball, the spring dance at Tekoa Country Club, and is deciding between two DJ options: one from last year with a 360-camera for \$2,000, or a Glow Party DJ with a photo booth for \$1,700. She asked for opinions on Teams and plans to finalize the decision by the end of the week. Elizabeth welcomed anyone with questions or who simply wants to introduce themselves to see her after the meeting. She ended by offering her support to anyone who needs someone to talk to or help with their ideas.

- I. Joseph Bonilla gave a point of information that we do want to hear about everyone's experience who attended the events. Then explains that the second option is the DJ from the glow party and the other one is the one that we have had in previous years.
- II. Anderson Dallaire asked when Owl Ball will be.
 - a. Laura Cafaro explains that it will be Friday, April 11th.
- III. Joseph Bonilla asked for the new senators in the room what Owl Ball is.
 - a. Elizabeth Mercer explains that owl ball is a spring dance that is a formal event, and the themes change every year, and it is all handled in the spring semester.

Executive Secretary Report: **Jacob Constant**

Jacob gave his Executive Secretary report, emphasizing that during meetings, no one should be using their phones or laptops unless they've received prior permission. He acknowledged that he uses his laptop to take minutes. He also mentioned that he's tracking office hours and will start enforcing the requirement

now that the Senate is full. He reminded senators that failing to complete office hours counts as a half absence and that four absences from SGA meetings or committee sessions result in removal. Office hours can be logged via QR codes in the room, or by requesting a link from him if they are done elsewhere. Jacob also announced a mandatory training session after the meeting, with exceptions for those who attended the previous one, and asked senators to accept his invitation to join the SGA organization on Presence. He encouraged anyone with questions to email him at execsec.sga@westfield.ma.edu.

- I. Joseph Bonilla gave a point of information that we want to make sure that office hours are meant to be intentional and purposeful.
 - a. Sarah Harrington added that to make sure to get the word out that you have office hours with the example of Justin that his flyers are up all-around campus.

Parliamentarian Report: *Ethan Haynes*

Ethan Haynes introduced himself to the senate, sharing that he is a transfer student from Dickinson, North Dakota, majoring in political science with a concentration in law and a minor in history. He reminded everyone that he was elected as parliamentarian for the academic year and will be chairing the Rules and Regulations Committee as well as the Constitutional Review Committee. Ethan posted his office hours alongside the executive board members and encouraged anyone interested in starting a club on campus to reach out to him via email or visit during his office hours. He ended by accepting the resignation of Anderson Dallaire from the Constitution Review Committee.

New Business:

MOTION made by Joseph Bonilla, seconded by Justin Wald, to open new business.

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

A. Student Athletic Representative Waiver

Justin Wald explains that he met with Marlee Berg a representative from the Student Athletic Advisory Council (SAAC) and discussed the seat that they have on senate that has gone unfilled in many years. Some of the things that they discussed is that changes to the position has to be made to allow students from the council to be able to come to the senate meetings.

MOTION made by Justin Wald, seconded by Sarah Harrington, to accept SGA Resolution #004.

Nicholas Palumbo	Yes
Isabella Moniz	Yes
Anderson Dallaire	Yes
William Connor	Yes
Travis McLoughlin	Yes
Rachel Luo	Yes
Stella Greenburg	Yes
Aiden Luciano	Yes
Ben Janes	Yes
Jakob Traynor	Yes
Thomas McLaughlin	Yes
Cody Hoisington	Yes

Raymond Croteau	Yes
Irini Mahida	Yes
Dominic Zajko	Yes
Ezekiel Tamarkin	Yes
Puru Sharma	Yes
Christopher Lannan	Yes
Troyelle Nosal	Yes
Sicilia Campbell	Yes
Emma Bowes	Yes
Joseph Bonilla	Yes
Ethan Haynes	Yes
Justin Wald	Yes
Sarah Harrington	Yes
Austin Morgan	Yes
Lorraine Fernandez	Yes
Jacob Constant	Yes
Daniel Currier	Yes

Passed with 30 YES

B. Senior member of Constitutional Review Committee:

Puru Sharma was nominated and was appointed to the Constitutional Review Committee.

C. Laura Cafaro goodbye.

Finally with this being Laura’s final SGA meeting as our Advisor, the SGA Executive Board gave her a signed certificate with each Executive Board member’s Signature on it. Then each Executive Board member gave parting thoughts to Laura Cafaro.

MOTION made by Joseph Bonilla, seconded by Christopher Lannan, to accept SGA Resolution #005.

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

MOTION made by Joseph Bonilla, seconded by Ethan Haynes, to close new business.

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

Announcements:

- I. Daniel Currier gave an announcement about the Account and Finance club and about their event this Thursday.
- II. Ethan Haynes let everyone know that the mailroom now has information for voters and to make sure everyone votes.
- III. Laura Cafaro thanked everyone and explains that she will be on campus just working in the Events and Conferences office under the Institutional Advancement Division
- IV. Nicholas Palumbo: 221 days to commencement.

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 October 8th, 2024.

Executive Secretary Jacob Constant

Signed: _____

Date: _____