



Senate Meeting

10/19/20

Virtual

5:15 PM

- I. Call to Order:
- II. Roll Call:
- III. Approval of the Minutes
 - a) Sierra: So moved
 - b) JD: Seconded
 - c) Approved
- IV. Approval of the Agenda
 - a) JD: Friendly amendment to change 5:15 to 5:15 PM
 - b) So moved: Riley
 - c) Seconded: Mohomed
 - d) Approved
- V. Guest Speaker: Dr. Brian Merkel
 - a)
 - A little context. I have been interested and professionally involved with public health for 36 years. I have had the pleasure with being involved with the safety task force that has been in operation for some time. With all that said, I can say to all of you that with any uncertainty whatsoever, that what you're doing on this campus is nothing short of remarkable.



- Among the reasons that I thought we could get together this evening and meet with the leaders of this campus, that is absolutely true.
- If you would've asked me where we would be in the beginning of the term.
- In light of how poorly the community is doing outside of us. Just a couple of things really, I think there were a lot of us that thought we probably would be worthwhile to open up a dialogue between us and you.
- We always have an eye on improving our efforts and we thought we should open up a direct dialouge with you as well since there is something we can learn from you
- Keeping things going and improving.
- You can email me or contact me at any time
- I can't thank you enough for allowing me to join you this evening and allowing me to share that. It is something the entire campus community are really really proud of all of you. Just keep up the good work. It really is nothing short of remarkable.
- Another thing I can say, we just shot a video about thanksgiving.
 1. In order to keep this going post Thanksgiving, realizing the nature of this virus and what it takes advantage of just to keep the safety tips in mind and if you have any questions about that at all, happy to talk with you. 465-2262 is my office phone number or you can email with me.
- I really wanted to acknowledge your significant effort. We enjoy teaching students, we enjoy interacting with students. To be honest with you, it is much more fun for



me to teach face to face. It is just thrilling for me, just to imagine that we are able to do what we're doing at this point in the semester.

- If you have any questions, I am happy to entertain them now.

b) Dr. King: I just wanted to further the conversation. If there are no immediate questions, if people want to respond. How are classes going for you? General comments just so we can get a sense also about what Dr. Merkel mentioned as well.

c) Questions:

- G: A common theme and something we have talked about at the past few meetings is just the struggles that students are facing this semester. It is mainly through professors and course loads. Sometimes it is not understanding a course sometimes it is not having the right tools for a course. For a few people you have to self teach and there is a lot more content that comes with that and online interactions and the way we substitute class interactions. It creates a very different educational experience. IT is a very common feed we have seen with student feedback.

1. Dr. Merkel: I certainly appreciate that. For whatever it is worth, it kind of gets into an empathy piece and our chancellor talks quite a bit about this. I think too, if this helps you, it can be really tough on the faculty as well. I think it is important to say to all of you that you are not alone in that. That may give you some sense that maybe faculty are even more accessible than you realize to reach out to them. I really absolutely believe that and I know I



have experienced that too. To whatever extent we can help, reach out. To the faculty, students services, tutoring services are great resources too.

2. Something that applies across the campus but we talk about in human bio a lot, we talk about road maps to get you to where you wanna be. As a first generation student, I was really ignorant of all of that when I was in your shoes. What are office hours? Can I go to faculty during their office hours. Absolutely know, that you can and you should reach out. I cant emphasize that enough. Although it has been many many years since I was a college student, those experiences factor into how I teach. It is empathy again. I realize how difficult that can be and how challenging that can be. Sometimes the best thing I can do is let you know that you are not alone and the campus community understand that.
 3. One of the great things about this campus is that we are constantly amazed by all of the things you do. I think it is an important focus for us. If there are any questions related to that, certainly let me know.
- Montana: A comment about the semester, I think it has been hard socially. We would spend hours in the office together just talking and you're not getting those interactions to fill your bucket. It has just been really awkward socially and trying to figure out how to see people or talk to people you don't have a close relationship with but its not necessarily a close relationship with everybody. Social dynamics have been hard this semester and in general.



1. Dr. Merkel: My wife recently just left the house to drive to east town mall because she couldn't take being in the house any longer. She needed some type of interaction. I really do think there is something to this. This is not natural to how we normally engage each other and how we carry out our lives. My wife is a high school teacher. I certainly understand that it is really important to have an outlet.
2. One of the things that is really important too, this past spring when we closed down, all of you know that we sort of in place of the typical course evaluation, there was an opportunity for different type of feedback for faculty. As I was going through my performance review report, we incorporate all the feedback from students into that as well, I thought it was so helpful and I wasn't entirely sure at the beginning, this spring when I heard that things are going to change, I thought it was incredibly helpful because of the reason and the points of this conversation right here.
3. One of the great things the students talked about is the unique challenges you faced and continue to face in this environment. There can be some depression, the lack of social interaction, this whole empathy thing came up. When we talk about how we interact with students and how we reflect upon and how in light of that information we should think about our courses as teachers. The kinds of things we need to take into consideration. Everybody is unique especially during this time. Keep doing that. Keep sharing these feelings you have with others. Reach out if you need help.



- Mohomed: We are really doing well compared to others schools, compared to the number of cases. My question is, despite what's going on besides our school, what are some of the things we can hope for so we can think about that instead?
 1. Dr. Merkel: I can't tell you how much I appreciate that. You're question is going to help me release my science geekiness. You asked for some sign of hope. Given what we know about the virus and what we know about vaccines is that we have some reason to be hopeful that this time next year, hopefully before next semester starts, that things will look more similar to what we remember.
 2. There are some signs that we really could have a vaccine. The other thing that we do have to keep an eye on is, I think that sometimes the greatest impact for the people that are not behaving and not doing what we need to do, comes from all of you.
 3. As an example of this, we have pre-med students who work in hospitals and in these hospitals, they are bearing witness to the challenge that hospital workers are going through. That message needs to get out to a larger audience. What is particularly powerful about the students in these hospitals, is that they are also campus community members and they know the kind of things that are working to have this good effect and good outcome, so I really hope there are more chances and opportunities for you to speak. It is a sign of hope.



4. I really do think that with everything happening and the progress with vaccines is there is reason to be hopeful for what is to come in Fall of 2021
- Montana: I know a lot of school shave been talking about not having a spring break. Is that something we have discussed at this point?
 1. Dr. Merkel: Thinking right now is that spring break will occur as it always has in the past. The spring schedule looks as though it will not change at this point in time.
 - Addison: As the son of a doctor I agree with what is being said.
 1. Dr. Merkel: I think we have a really good opportunity through this community, it is really unfortunate that there is a lot of misinformation being conveyed on how to keep each other safe and get back to the lives we used to know. In thinking about that, as I read the note Addison wrote.
 2. To that I would say to all of you, if you have any questions about any of this, it really comes down to identifying and finding accurate and valid information.
 3. Some of the things you can do, you can share what you are learning with your family members. You can talk about the good the bad and the ugly of the internet as a source for information. You can talk about how well this campus is doing and discuss why the campus is doing so well.
 4. My whole thing really comes down to this: we where seatbelts. Why do we wear seatbelts and obey speed laws? We do this because car accidents can be devastating for family but they are also a tremendous negative for the



economy. The same goes for disease. It is very unfortunate that face masks have become political. They work, end of story.

5. The three W's. watch your distance, wear a mask, wash your hands and stay at home if you are ill. The more we all do that, there's an empowering message here, if it is true that everyone wants to get back to what we used to know, in some respects it couldn't be simpler. The challenging part is compliance and getting people that don't want to listen and don't want to be accountable. That is where it gets difficult.
6. I have no interest other than public health to say what I am saying. If you know someone who would be interested in having a conversation about the science that I know and have been involved in. We want hospitals to be able to take care of people, they are completely overwhelmed with COVID patients. We have a field hospital. That is something that I have only seen in history books. And now because of COVID 19 and because we are not doing what we should be doing, we have one because the hospitals in the area are being challenged. There are plans for a field hospital in Madison.
7. You have a lot of strength in your voices. Once again, I am happy to take more questions, but I want to leave you with this, you do have a voice. I do believe there are those that would listen.

VI. Reports

a) President:

- Whats going on everyone? Its supposed to snow apparently.



- I would like to talk about the budget. I submitted it yesterday. I made a couple adjustments. They were mostly minor to keep things organized and uniform.
 1. If you would like to see it, you can email me and I can send you a copy of what it looks like now. I know there was some information we were a little bit unsure of. There will probably be a few more changes.
- For the execs, if you have not signed up for the 2:1's, it is in an email in a survey.

b) Vice President:

- I went to the UW Systems meeting this past Friday which was the other UW Systems student gov and Tommy Thompson coming in as well.
 1. There were some title nine changes.
 2. There's talk about getting a list of all the changes being sent out to the presidents and vice presidents.
 - a. If you want to see that when it comes out let me know
 3. There are a lot of different programs going on around campuses.
 - a. What we want to see with university police going on around campus and moving forward considering all the movements and civil unrest going on.
 - b. You can always email to be put in contact with the people in charge of that project on our campus.
 4. There was also discussion about how other campuses are handling online classes and COVID.
 5. G submitted the budget so that is all on the right track



6. We are hoping to get 2:1's up and going.

c) Speaker of the Senate:

- Hi everyone
- I am starting 1:1s this week with the senators.
 1. I had one today already.
- For those of you who haven't filled out the form I sent you, please do by the end of the week.
 1. If none of those times work, please let me know.
 2. If you did not receive the form please let me know and I will send you the link. It is just a google doc.
- I am also working on attending all the committee chair meetings.

d) RHAA:

- RHAA is working on a lot of different programs. Keep an eye out for the social media accounts.
 1. Bingo is November 6th and is in the process of being planned.
 2. We also will be holding a scavenger hunt outside. People will be put into a drawing for prizes as well.
- If anyone is interested in being a building rep, you can reach out to get the meeting link .

e) Student Court:

- Hello everybody.



- We are probably going to have a meeting later this week or next week.

f) Advisor:

- As Dr. Merkel was saying earlier, watch for information coming this week for Thanksgiving Break and how we are going to handle that to catch things before students coming back to campus. We are trying to make a lot of efforts on a safe return to campus.

VII. New Business

a) New Ad Hoc Committee

- Last week during the exec meeting, we have an Ad Hoc committee dedicated to gathering student perspectives and opinions on how online learning is going. Administration is very interested in how students are feeling.
 1. This feedback is very important.
- The chair of this committee is Kyla so I'm going to let her take over.
- Kyla: G created that Ad Hoc committee. What we want to focus on is gathering student perspective and being the central place that administration can go to get that perspective. We want to be an entity that students can go to and not feel uncomfortable
 1. So they don't feel uncomfortable going to a professor or to mark. We would act as that and I think it is very important to start this now since it is only going to get harder as it is going. Especially as the weather gets colder it is going to be harder to manage all of that.
 - a. We want to improve things for the spring.



- If you have any interest in joining, it will take place on a biweekly basis. It is more loose compared to committee meetings. If you have any questions, comments, concerns.
- Discussion:
 1. Mohomed: That is a really good committee. I have some suggestions, can I send them to you?
 - a. Sarah: If you have any concerns or questions that you think the committee should know, preferably to Kyla or to the exec/senate email. Always send information no matter how big or small to us. It is really important we gather as much information and feedback.
 - b. Kyla: You can be involved as little or as much as you'd like. If you just want to come whenever you can, that is an option. You don't have to commit to a certain time every week or every other week.
 - c. Sarah: You can pop in an out of meetings. We aren't taking attendance. WE just want as much input as possible.
 2. Sarah: Do you think sending out an email for this? Do students pay attention to those campus wide emails? Personally, I look at the emails, but I don't know if that is a majority.
 - a. Rachael: I think it would be a good idea to send out information about the committee and tell them where they can get resources or if they have any questions.
 3. Mohomed: I think even in the email, you can include that if you don't want



to join that you can send thoughts or anything to share so we can bring it to our meetings and administration.

VIII. Standing Committee Reports

a) Academics and Governance:

- Hello hello
- I don't have much to report. I have a meeting with my senators tomorrow and meeting with liaison on Wednesday.

b) Environmental Affairs:

- I don't have a whole lot going on.
- I sent an email super last minute to my senators about having our meeting tonight. If you could just stick around on here so we could have our meeting.

c) Equity and Diversity:

- I had my first committee meeting last week. We went over stuff we had done last year before we got kicked out of school
- I am still working on scheduling my liaison meeting.

d) Health and Safety:

- Hi everyone
- I had my meeting with Amy Henniges last week that I shared with my senator at our committee meeting.
- We are looking for a way to do some flu shots, obviously in a different way we have done in the past.



e) Resources and Outreach: (given by Sophia)

- We just finalized our meeting time and that will be tomorrow.

f) Rec and Athletics:

- Hi
- We were supposed to have our second meeting today but I wasn't feeling well so we are going to try and meet some other time this week.
- I had my meeting with Jeff last Thursday
- There isn't much to report on, he did tell me that with the extra equipment that had to take out, they created a work out area for the athletes so they don't have to worry about timing. They do hope in the future to make the athletes their own workout area because they enjoy having their own space.

g) Union and Dining:

- Not last week but the week before, I had the meeting with my committee specifically about the food,
- I had my meeting with Matt, we talked about a whole bunch of stuff.
 1. A lot of feedback about the food people are receiving in isolation or quarantine. He wants students to email dining services or him to get that out there so they know what they are doing wrong.
 2. If you need something urgently taken care of, there is a phone number you can call. They are supposed to remake it and fix it.
 3. He wants students to try it that way and see if it fixes that.



- The composted is up and running.
- The coffee shop remodel is not happening for a little bit. They are hoping to finish it during Christmas break. He wants to do a launch party but he doesn't think that will happen this year as well.
- We also talked about the merging of the office of student life into the union. He's not super pressed about it, they are still looking for positions that need to be filled. They are still working on transferring duties. That is hard now because of the student employment shift.
- I have been reaching out with UW Osh Kosh student government and working with their union advisory council. They are bad at communicating. Hopefully within the next week I will have that project off the ground.

h) SUFAC:

- Hello hello
- All org budgets were due last night, if you didn't submit one, sorry too late. Most people got them in on time.
- This week is a quick mock budget, so our newer members know what to expect.

IX. Announcements:

- a) JD: They just expanded night service for green bay metro night service. They expanded it to include campus. You can use your bus pass from school to get free rides.
- b) JD: Campus cupboard is looking for volunteers especially in campus closet. If anyone is interested, email me or reach out to our org email. I can go ahead and get training done with



you.

X. Adjournment:

- a) Motion to adjourn
- b) JD :So moved
- c) Riley: Seconded
- d) Adjourned: 6:18PM