

West Virginia University
Student Government Association
Student Assembly Meeting
Vandalia Lounge, Mountainlair, 7:30 PM
September 6th, 2023
2023-2024 Santmyer-Dozier Administration

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Dozier at 7:31p.m.

II. Reading of the SGA Mission Statement

The SGA Mission Statement was read by Vice President Brogan Dozier

III. Roll Call

Roll was called by Executive Secretary Prichard

President Pro Tempore Risk - Present

College Senator Abbas - Present

College Senator Arastu - Present

College Senator Bielinski - Present

Senator Bromley - Present

College Senator Cahill - Present

College Senator Coulter - Present

College Senator Dursa - Present

Senator Eastman - Present

College Senator Farooq - Present

Senator Frazier - Present

College Senator Henson - Present

College Senator Indomenico - Present

College Senator Jackson - Present via zoom

College Senator Kaminski - Present

Senator Leadmon - Present

College Senator Lipkovitch - Present

College Senator Lutman - Present

College Senator Madden - Present
Senator Olivero - Present
College Senator Oursler - Present
College Senator Phillips - Absent
College Senator Pillo - Present
Senator Randle - Present
Senator Sadler - Present
College Senator Schmieder - Present
Senator Scholl - Present
College Senator Shiels - Present
College Senator Switala - Present
Senator Vodiany - Present
Senator Weeks - Present
College Senator Witt - Absent

IV. Reading and Approval of the Agenda

The motion to approve the agenda was entertained by President Pro Tempore Risk
The motion to approve the agenda was seconded by College Senator Oursler
There were no objections, and the agenda was approved

V. Reading and Approval of the Minutes

The motion to approve the minutes was entertained by College Senator Oursler
The motion to approve the minutes was seconded by President Pro Tempore Risk
There were no objections, and the minutes were approved.

VI. Open Student Forum I

There were none recognized for Open Student Forum I

VII. The President's Report

President Santmyer: I hope everyone's semester has been going well. I just want to thank everyone who came to the town hall. We will have another town hall on September 11th at 7:00p.m on Evansdale Crossing room 414. We will continue to hear student concerns. Additionally there will be a public hearing on September

14th before the Board of Governors meeting. You have to sign up, so if anyone is interested we can figure out how to do that. The Board of Governors meeting is the 15th which is when all the decisions about the academic transformation will be voted on. Please fill out the survey, send it to your friends. I want to reiterate that I am here, I am listening. If you have any questions or concerns, you all can text or call me.

VIII. The Vice President's Report

Vice President Dozier: Just to echo what Madison said, we are here and we are listening. Please continue to reach out. Today, several of us attended the faculty senate meeting. Afterwards Madison and I toured Ascend WV to learn more about job opportunities offered after graduation. Tomorrow I will attend my first Alumni Board meeting which is very scary. Please send all the good vibes. I plan to voice the student concerns and I want to thank everyone who came out to help or participate in our town hall. I hope you all can make it to the next one on the 11th.

IX. Assembly Reports

College Senator Coulter: Last week President Pro Tempore Risk and I had a meeting with someone from the downtown library about possibly extending the limit of hours you can reserve a study room for. They were very receptive with that suggestion and have already extended it to 4 hours a week with a 3 hour at a time limit on a trial basis. We are planning on reevaluating that as the semester goes on, after seeing how it goes and possibly increasing it more. We also talked about library amenities that people do not know about. If anyone would be interested in helping with an initiative to showcase different amenities, let us know. We also talked about implementing a swipe in - swipe out system for study rooms. I think this would help us track the data on who is using them a little better and also make it count for required study hours. If anyone is interested in helping out please let us know.

College Senator Oursler: I am starting on a project and will call it the Campus Collaborative for right now. With this, it entails partnering with other universities here in West Virginia and providing resources that all the colleges provide collectively. We hope to help fight food insecurity around the state. I know WVU, Marshall, and Shepard have farms and access to distribute food to college campuses. Once we get to a point where we are producing more than we can use on the colleges alone, we will create some sort of donation programs that would

go across the state. I met with the dean of Davis College and the director for the farms. Both are very receptive and want to do this. I have a deadline of October 15th to have a three page synopsis of the program. The dean is going to work with those in the legislature to get a final draft and hopefully put it on the floor in the upcoming legislative session in January. If anyone would like to help please let me know. Secondly, tonight there is a resolution that Matthew and I have helped create and write. This is a working document and we are willing to amend, change, and add. We have five sections within the bill, but if we have 10 sections that's okay. We are willing to address any concerns. We have until Tuesday at 6:30p.m. to add those amendments. Please voice your opinions. If there are questions regarding the bill, please reach out. I want your voices heard.

Senator Olivero moved to add Senator Sadler to the roll

Senator Oursler seconded the motion to add Senator Sadler to the roll

With no objections, the motion passes and Senator Sadler was added to the roll

X. Committee Reports

A. Strategic Initiatives Committee

- I.** Senator Frazier was elected as the Vice Chair
- II.** Strategic Initiatives will be the next step during academic transformation. We will be meeting with many individuals as this process continues, and we are being proactive moving forward.

B. Academic Affairs Committee

- I.** College Senator Phillips was elected as the Vice Chair

C. Student Engagement Committee

- I.** Senator Bromley was elected as the Vice Chair

D. Student Life Committee

- I.** College Senator Pillo was elected as the Vice Chair

XI. Executive Reports

WVU Internal Senates Liaison Pierce: The Program Review Appeal Committee made a final recommendation to discontinue the PhD Resource Management major in the Division of Resource Economics and Management; the division additionally did not appeal several preliminary recommendations which will now become part of the final recommendation. These include continuing the PhD in Natural Resource

Economics and eliminating the MS Energy Environments major. Three other majors will be discontinued and merged to create new cooperative programs by Jan. 31, 2024, in the Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Design. The BS Agribusiness Management will be discontinued and combined with the BS Environmental and Natural Resource Economics. BS Environmental and Energy Resource Management will be eliminated and merged with the BS Energy Land Management. BS Environmental and Natural Resource Economics will be discontinued and merged with the BS Agribusiness Management. The Program Review Appeal Committee denied appeals for the MLS Legal Studies and MPA Public Administration programs in the Department of Public Administration. The final recommendation is to discontinue both programs and reduce the number of faculty positions in the unit from its current number to 0. The appeals process netted several changes of preliminary recommendations for the School of Design and Community Development, including a unanimous decision to keep the BSLA Landscape Architecture major. The BS Interior Architecture, BS Design Studies and BS Fashion, Design and Merchandising programs will be moved out of the School and Davis College and into the new college resulting from the College of Creative Arts and Reed College of Media merger. The Department of English in the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences successfully appealed a preliminary recommendation to discontinue the MFA in Creative Writing, as well as the number of positions recommended for reduction in the unit. The unit will now be asked to reduce the number of faculty in the unit from the current number to 28. In the School of Education, the recommendation to reduce the number of faculty positions in the School from the current number to 18 will remain unchanged. The MA Special Education program has grown enrollment in each of the last two fall terms and is operating in a cost-effective manner. As a result, the Committee overturned a preliminary recommendation to discontinue the program. The unit also lost its appeals regarding recommendations to discontinue the MA Higher Education Administration and PhD Higher Education programs. A preliminary recommendation to discontinue the EdD Higher Education Administration program was not appealed. The following preliminary recommendations in the School of Music were not appealed and will be presented to the WVU Board of Governors as listed: BM Music Performance: Jazz and Commercial Music: Discontinuance, MM Collaborative Piano: Discontinuance, MM Composition: Discontinuance, MM Jazz Pedagogy: Discontinuance, DMA Collaborative Piano: Discontinuance, DMA Composition: Discontinuance. The Committee also granted the appeal presented by the School of Music to amend the preliminary

recommendation to reduce the number of faculty positions in the unit. As a result, the final recommendation now calls for a reduction in the College of Creative Arts unit to 34. In the Division of Forestry and Natural Resources, the BSR in Recreation, Parks and Tourism Resources will be recommended for discontinuance in line with the preliminary recommendation. From the College of Creative Arts, the School of Theatre and Dance appeal was approved to keep the MFA Acting program that had been recommended for discontinuance. The School of Art and Design will continue to offer a BA in Art History under a final recommendation. However, a preliminary recommendation to discontinue the BA in Technical Art History was not appealed. The Committee granted the School's appeal on the recommended number of faculty reductions to ensure that it is able to continue to meet accreditation requirements. The final recommendation will result in 16 faculty remaining in the unit. The School of Mathematical and Data Sciences in the Eberly College appealed the number of recommended faculty reductions, as well as the discontinuation of all doctoral instruction, but it did not appeal the preliminary recommendations to discontinue the current PhD or MS Mathematics programs. The Review Committee also amended the faculty position reduction recommendation to 32, enabling the unit to continue to appropriately staff the teaching of its service courses. The Department of Computer Science and Electrical Engineering was recommended to discontinue the BSBSE Biometric Systems Engineering program. The Department of World Languages, Literatures and Linguistics was instructed that they could continue to offer Spanish (a high demand language) and Chinese (a critical need language) and would be based upon student demand and instructional capacity. A self-study from the School of Public Health and the preliminary recommendation proposed a plan to reduce the number of faculty positions by 14, and its appeal on Aug. 25 adjusted that reduction to 11. For the Department of Chemistry, the Program Review Appeal Committee unanimously denied the unit's appeal to scale down the recommended faculty reduction. As a result, the preliminary recommendation to reduce the current number of positions in the unit to 23 faculty stands. The Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering lost its appeal regarding faculty position reductions. Citing sustained declines in undergraduate enrollment and student credit hour production, the Committee retained the preliminary recommendation to reduce the number of faculty positions associated with the program from its current number to 14. The preliminary recommendation to reduce the number of faculty of the College of Law positions from the current number to 24 withstood the appeal. The Eberly

College's Department of Communication Studies was unsuccessful in its Aug. 31 appeal of preliminary recommendations to reduce the number of faculty positions from the current number to 11. University Assembly Vote: Both resolutions were passed by the university assembly. The final results of the vote to freeze the academic transformation process were: For: 747 votes, Against: 79 votes, Invalid: 9 votes. The final results of the vote of no confidence against President Gee were: For: 797 votes, Against: 100 votes, Invalid: 8 votes. GPSS Meeting: Academic Transformation Survey: 34 responses. Problems: Quality and Accreditation, Lack of trust, Employment issues/opportunities (reduction in employment), Implication of fees, issues regarding faculty cut, international student issues.

Outreach Coordinator Tiano: Town Hall is September 11th, Evansdale Crossing room 414. Please spread the word, repost the survey link, and ask others to take it. I hope you were able to view the presentation regarding the Ronald McDonald House that I sent. This is the reason we collect pop tabs to help donate to families who are in need of housing to stay there. They do not turn anyone away. If you would like more information, please come see me after the meeting. I was asked by President Santmyer to boost SGA's community service projects this year. We believe there is an importance in giving back to the community. We know it can be challenging to serve others while juggling school, so this is where tabs come in. Collecting tabs is one of the easiest ways to give back. Next meeting I will have ore updates regarding campus wide collections, but for now I want you all to consider collecting tabs. Also if you have any plastic containers such as pretzel tubs, milk jugs, etc. I will be putting a bin near Madison's office where you can drop them off where I will be upcycling them for collection containers around campus.

Chief Information Officer Davis: Everyone please continue your bios by the end of the week. If you submit after, contact her. If you did not get your headshot taken, please also submit a headshot.

Attorney General Miller: Thanks to everyone who filled out the governing docs application. We have more than we need, but we are going to extend it until Monday. Decisions will be made Tuesday, and approved on Wednesday. If you still want to apply, please do so.

XII. Old Business

There was no old business to discuss

XIII. New Business

A. AR-2023-08-01

Senator Olivero conducted the first reading of the bill.

I. Questions and Discussion

College Senator Indomenico: Would it be possible in the bill you guys are putting forward to add a recommendation to the Provost to keep more languages? Or expand that requirement to the network of language departments they are proposing?

Senator Olivero: We already said we opposed destroying the department, so we weren't sure if we wanted to say "we think this language is better than this language". So that was kind of the idea behind keeping it to the requirement in general. They have seen that we have already opposed it. They've already chosen Spanish and Mandarin so I guess in what that we are proposing, that is what they would require. But, that is the University's problem. Hell, I would like for them to offer all languages, but I am not sure how that process would look. There is still stuff to add, and I would be happy to discuss in more detail later. As of right now, I am not willing to grant the expansion to other networks as an option, because I do not think it comes to the same levels of what we had. Maybe, if there could be a compelling case for it.

Senator Sadler: Obviously it is my first year in SGA, give me a break. My question is, we get this resolution through like we did the other ones, does the administration ever say anything to SGA specifically or address the stuff? What pressure does it put on anyone? Where does it push pressure? Do we get responses from that? Do we get validated from the administration when we put forth these resolutions?

Senator Olivero: What we are doing is showing where the thermometer is on what the student sentiment is. We do not have some kind of mechanism in SGA that compels the administration to do something, right? So if we pass this resolution, that doesn't mean they are going to automatically do what we want them to do. But it is important that it shows in an institutional way, that that is how the students feel about a certain issue. Obviously they know generally how students feel about a certain issue. We also have an obligation here to do our part. Based on things such as the two town halls, the surveys, it shows how we feel about that. It is a

Board of Governors issue now, so it isn't really in the administration's hands. The extent to which they listen to us, isn't in our hands.

College Senator Oursler: It depends on what type of legislation it is. In the past, I have written legislation and administrators have listened to us. There is a whole new committee across the strategic initiatives department that was formed based on a piece of legislation that I wrote last semester. The administration listens to what we say, but we can't force them to make an action that we want. We can't do that. They have to make their own decisions. I would speak to Landscape Architecture. I have asked many questions about that program and I have tried to fight because I am one of the Davis College Senators. I helped collect letters of support, and helped the department with the process. I would say they listen to some extent. I am not going to say that the administration will change their opinion on what we write. It is better to have the opinion, written and passed, and out there to show we actually care. As opposed to sitting here and acting like it isn't happening.

President Pro Tempore Risk: Do you all have any timeline for the Public Admin Department or Math to speak with them about adding that information to this resolution?

Senator Olivero: Hopefully we are going to have talks with the people in house with what their views are. At the end of the day, when we choose it has to be something that you can mount a strong defense for. I am not a math major or in public administration so I am not in the position to speak. I know Senator Leadmon and College Senator Switala are in math and public administration which we will speak to after the meeting, to see what specifically needs to be spoken of. As far as the timeline, next week will be the final bill with hopefully those contents added in.

Senator Sadler: Will you guys expand this bill to line up with the faculty or anything that has happened recently?

Senator Olivero: As of right now, that is not something we were thinking about attacking in this legislation. We were wanting to keep it to the programs themselves and the merits of why those programs or requirements should be retained. I would be afraid of getting too

mired in something else. I do not want to lose the essence of what we are trying to do here.

College Senator Indomenico: It is obvious that Garrett and Matthew have worked really hard on this, involving students and SGA in this process. I think they're doing an excellent job in articulating what students are saying and representing the student body as a whole. I think it is an excellent piece of legislation.

President Pro Tempore Risk: This piece of legislation has had a lot of thought put into it. I would implore everyone to look over the resolution and add your input before it has to be finalized. College Senator Oursler and Senator Olivero will listen to you. If there is anything in the realm of academic transformation, please put your input, even if it is small. They address issues quickly and are open to talking about it.

College Senator Oursler: This doesn't have to be just academic programs as well. It can be student input that wasn't really considered in this process. Transparency was also brought to our attention. After meeting with several higher ups, I realized they all have said various things. I believe that is something to be addressed because we should not all be on different pages like that. I know I am a senator for the Davis College, but do you all think it is inappropriate for me to add a specific section in the legislation regarding the cuts to the Davis College and how harsh they are? I do not want to be unfair or show special treatment just because it is my college. I understand if not, but I do feel it is necessary to add.

College Senator Pillo: I personally do not see any issue with that. Your job is to represent the students of Davis College so I do not see any issues with it.

Senator Leadman: Go for it. It is your job as the Davis College Senator. Nobody is going to represent them like you, except for her (College Senator Schmieder).

B. FB-2023-07

Treasurer Patel: The only changes that need to be made to the financial bill are to
1) amend the total cost for WVU Robotics to say \$900 instead of \$1000
and 2) change totals in Appendix A and Appendix B to \$1402 from \$1502.

The motion to amend the financial bill was entertained by President Pro Tempore Risk

The motion to amend the financial bill was seconded by College Senator Oursler
With no objections, the amendment was passed

The motion to vote on the financial bill was entertained by President Pro Tempore Risk

The motion to vote on the financial bill was seconded by College Senator Lutman
With no objections, the financial bill was passed

XIV. Open Student Forum II

College Senator Frazier: I am a diversity ambassador so we are going to have our first meeting on September 15th, and part of being an ambassador is to give input in diversity training or any other DEI offers. For SGA, if we would like to do any diversity training, please let me or Erin know about that. Or if any student orgs here would like to get diversity training please let me know.

Senator Sadler: I just want to yield my time to the gallery

Vice President Dozier: It is open student forum, anybody can speak. You do not have to yield your time.

Senator Scholl: I am the Vice President of the Peer Advocates club. If anyone is interested in joining, please let me know. Please spread the word with your friends. Having this support is very necessary. If you have any questions, I can hopefully help you with that

Dylan Miller: I am here because I want to ask President Santmyer to vote down the movement being put forward about the academic transformation. I think what Gee has done is cause for termination. From Gee's letter of employment from the termination clause, some causes for termination include: dishonesty, misappropriation of funds, managerial incompetence, professional incompetence, offends the traditions of the university, brings discredit to the university, and negatively affects the university's reputation. I think and I am sure a lot of other students think he has done some if not all of these things. I would ask that that movement be voted down.

Unknown: I have a rhetorical question. For those who decide to represent us. Whether it be through SGA or through those who are on the Board of Governors, and so on. Those who have a say in this decision. How is this organization going to uphold its value of diversity and inclusion when you cut off the meat of language to understand differences in culture? To construct monolingualism that is further ingrained in West Virginia as it is right now. I wish you all will speak on the restriction of speech that the faculty has faced in their contracts regarding speaking about the cuts. I, as many, grow tired of the thumb twiddling bureaucrats who rule us; who are merely opportunists. I grow tired of you all. I'm done.

Bethany Winters: I am sure you all have heard alot from the student union, and will hear more tonight. I just want to remind everyone of the people who can't be here tonight. In West Virginia, we have one of the lowest voter turnouts in the United States. I believe it is due to poverty, and other social problems in the state and we have a similar problem here. Over my five years at WVU, I have met students who were single parents, students who were working multiple jobs, and I also want to remember freshmen adjusting to life by themselves for the first time. The Sophomores getting their own first apartments. And for all the people who cannot participate in the activism. I believe that they need our support more than anyone else. They also deserve a quality education. Thank you for having the public forum.

Cameron: I am going to address the senate here. You guys might be aware of historical examples, so I am going to give you one. The Crossing of the Rubicon. You're senate, you're supposed to uphold things that are important. This Crossing of the Rubicon, these cuts, are basically that. It is going from this is the senate, republic, something that is supposed to be a virtue in a sense. Spreading diversity, inclusion, stuff that other people have said. But the point is, this Crossing of the Rubicon fundamentally changes everything around us. It is going from the Roman Senate to the Roman Empire. There is a big difference between those things. When it comes to understanding. It is important to understand that these fundamental changes change the entirety of the university. Coming from a place of pride of West Virginia, it is in your fight song that stickman likes to talk about, sorry. But my point is that this requires your undivided attention. It is very important, understanding these issues are something you should be striving yourself into becoming. Understanding these issues, cause that is the importance of it. This is incredibly frustrating because the more I understand these issues, the

more the cuts make less sense even from a Neo-Liberal perspective. No matter how you look at it, it doesn't make sense from any perspective. But my point is, you have to understand where you stand. So we know where you stand. And that importance is the only way to preserve the virtue that education is supposed to uphold. Communicating with other people. The importance of language, and basically liberal education in general. I yield my time.

Winston Smith: I appreciate that the student government seems to be on board with the will of the students and wanting the administration to stop with these cuts. And further than that, the administration to take responsibility for the cuts. I wish I could see the same fierceness in the student government that we see in the student union, campus worker union, and the faculty. Judging by the best example here is President Santmyer's refusal to commit to voting no against the recommendation that the provost has set forward. It doesn't look like you guys are matching the anger of the students that you claim to represent. I hope that you guys can fix that really fast, because the Board of Governors meeting is in nine days. So do better? I don't know. I yield my time.

Andrea: I want to let you know concretely what we and West Virginia lose if these cuts, even with the teeny tiny concessions admin has made, pass. We lose the language program that helps create WVU's esteemed Fulbright Scholars. It helps heritage speakers get in touch with a formal, language-learning program for the first time in their lives. We lose the ceramics program that feeds Morgantown homeless and a national top twenty program that drives artists from all over the country. We risk losing the Appalachian Dialect Project, which is integral to creating pride and decreasing stigma in a way that we here talk. We lose faculty from the plant and soil sciences program in a state that is both beautifully biodiverse, and racked with pollution. I have spoken to prospective WVU students from Hawaii who are interested in this program, and I have had to tell them, "don't do it." Which breaks my heart because I don't know what will be here in a year. We will also be losing grad students as these budget cuts inevitably mean that tuition waivers and teaching stipends are cut. This will affect every program, in every college that you represent because they all have to take intro math, science, and English. We will lose even more faculty who are having their whole lives uprooted by this. Admin will not take a pay cut, but my professors in the English department are volunteering to retire early, and they were not remotely ready to do this. Just so their co-workers and friends would not have to. They are taking a 100% pay cut,

as somebody at the townhall said last. So that my other professors will not have to, and the admin refuses to do anything. This is on top of a massive unannounced staff cuts that have happened over the summer. The number of nonrenewals that I have heard from staff have been around 400. What happens to the Morgantown economy when all of these people are forced to leave? Lastly, we lose the value of a WVU degree. What does a degree from a university that actively devalues itself even mean? What does this mean for the West Virginia students who can only afford this? I know students who are working two jobs to afford in-state tuition. The only reason I do not have to do that is because my mother uses my father's VA benefits and social security because he's dead! So she can send her first-generation, college student, and first-generation American immigrant child to school. I don't know what sacrifices you all made so you could be here, but that is what mine does and I want that sacrifice to be worth it. It is a betrayal of our state to let this happen. They are silencing us on social media and they are scared of us. There was a police presence outside and one this morning.

Unknown: I just want to say that I stand with what Andrea said, and I want to yield the rest of my time to her.

Andrea: Admin shows that they don't care about us. The police are watching us because apparently they think we are dangerous. The Board of Governors have said within an hour of the vote, that they do not care what 800 faculty have to say or what we have to say. I believe you, miss president, are the vote we get on the Board of Governors. If you do not vote for us, and if you do not have the bravery to go against an administration that refuses to act in the interest of your constituents, which is what we basically are, then why do you even represent us? Why do you dare say you represent us?

Matthew Kolb: I am a member of the student union, I am actually one of the co-founders. I currently serve as the union's assembly of delegates which represents over 300 students at this point and that number is growing. A little bit about the union. In the beginning, we had about five people. Yes, we started organizing around trying to fight against the cuts and faculty reduction, but the union is going to outlive this current struggle. That is important to remember. We started with five people, a little over a month ago we had a little over a dozen people. Today, we have over 320 members and four student organizations looking to affiliate with us which

could very well give us over 500 members. Even though we are a new organization, we have been on the frontlines of the fight recently. I would go so far as to say that all, or most, of the press coverage that the university has received because of this crisis, is because our union and its members have been working day and night to make sure the world hears about this. To help you understand the extent of the press coverage that we have helped attain, not only has there been the student paper, local outlets, state wide outlets, national outlets have picked us up. We have gone international. Our walk-out, especially that we organized about two weeks ago, made international headlines across the seas. We did that and we worked hard to get that done. I gotta be honest here, do we really think that SGA can sway the administration or the Board of Governors? That is a serious question because this organization is affiliated with the university and ingrained in its operations to the extent it cannot wield the power that the student union can. You know, we just have to look at recent history. In every single or most articles talking about the activities at WVU recently, the student union has been mentioned, SGA has not. I am not saying that is the fault of everyone here, it is the fault of the system that SGA operates within. That brings me to this article right here in the DA. West Virginia United Student led union represents, provides a platform for student voices. If you haven't seen it, this is it right here.

Unknown: I would like to yield my time to Matthew

Matthew Kolb: Why is it that our union has an entire article dedicated to it in the student paper discussing how we represent and provide a platform for student voices. Why doesn't this say SGA? It's an honest question. Why does it say West Virginia United, the students union here at WVU that just formed over the summer. There is an answer to that. The student union is the only thing that has been actually fighting in a way that matters. We have been working to not only mobilize students, but members of our students, alumni. We have been working to have a physical presence at every event we can handle. SGA is here tonight. It offers us some nice legislation, but once again, returning to that question, does the administration actually give a crap about that? Is it going to change their minds? The walk-out didn't change their minds. Showing up to the Board of Governors meetings, you know what we were told by one of the members? That we need to tone down the profanity. That is what they care about right now. Profanity. They do not care about the hundreds of people whose lives are going to change dramatically. They do not care about the hundreds of students who will be forced

to change their entire life. They are not even caring for the thousands of people who are family members, who depend on faculty and staff members and their jobs here. But they care about profanity. No. I think that the SGA has a perfect opportunity right now to get into the game and be serious about it. To represent the students in the way the union has. Because right now, it is the union that is getting the attention. We had people on an NPR Podcast that gets 5 million views a week. What has SGA been involved in? Dozens of our members have been interviewed by the media. Dozens of our members have been talking to very important people about the issues here. What has SGA been doing? Because we haven't seen it. Beyond the legislation and the proclamations. We believe that SGA has dropped the ball. If you're not going to pick up the ball, then get off the court.

Dante Pulice: I honestly really hate that I have to keep giving speeches at things like this because it's really kind of ridiculous. I know and remember faces and I know histories. So I do not want to undercut everyone at SGA because I know many of you are trying to talk to students, reach out to things, and help us. All I want to do right now is to implore all of you to do that. I don't want to undercut all of you. I don't know the extent of what you all are doing, but I really hope that you are really putting in maximum effort. Because we elected you guys to represent us, not the other way around obviously. But, that is kind of what's going on with our union. I think Matthew hit the nail on the head. We don't really prepare speeches but I was going to get at that as well. But, please step up guys, please. We really need you to represent us. Thank you.

Christian Rowe: I wanted to specifically read what the Board of Governors said today in regards to the faculty senate vote. This is a statement from them: "The Board of Governors unequivocally supports the leadership of President Gee and the strategic repositioning of WVU and rejects multiple examples of misinformation that have formed these resolutions. The university is transforming to better reflect the needs of today and we must continue to act boldly. President Gee has shown time and time again, he is not afraid to do the difficult work required." In my opinion, this was the Board of Governors coming out and saying plainly, that they do not care about what faculty, or by extension, students and staff have to say about how this university is run. Personally, I think that the people who attend this university, teach all of its classes, and do all of its research should have some sort of a voice here. It is utterly ridiculous for the Board of Governors to come out and

openly support a president that the faculty just voted no confidence in by a 76 point margin. In my opinion, this lays bare the interest of the Board of Governors as being only their own and not aligned with ours. I call on SGA to publicly support the faculty's vote of no confidence and I call on President Santmyer to vote against all proposed cuts that result in job loss and loss of educational opportunities for West Virginia. Thank you.

Cassandra Stewart: The last time I was here, you all helped me start my organization, I really appreciate you guys. I almost felt like I didn't need to speak because I feel that Garrett does the Davis College more than justice. We are all very thankful for him. Just a couple things I want to bring to your attention. I know Garrett has already said, but I am in the design program school and those are all my people. I have been here long enough to claim all of them as my own. With all of the merges and extensions, I feel like we are kind of getting swept under the rug. I know at the end of the day, Fashion Dress and Merchandising may not be everyone's top priority when talking about these cuts, but we found out (faculty) the night before the appeal that we could not appeal the move. They told our director to pull the slides because it was not appealable. I really encourage you guys to help me out. I would like to find out why they gave us a recommendation if it is not a recommendation? We have plenty of reasons as to why that is not a good idea. Design and art can be friends, you would not have design without are, but they are different disciplines. The silencing of that very much echoes, with what happened on Twitter with the math department and the association of Women in Math. Their accounts have been entirely silenced after mentioning their appeals were not reported accurately. I think that also needs to be investigated. Also I want to mention that with academic support units, they do not get appeals. That is really concerning as a student getting a certification in university teaching. It is very possible that they will get rid of the grad academy or some of these other programs that are very influential and important to education. I hope you guys keep this in mind and thank you.

Stephen: I am a transfer sophomore student, and I want to say that I am from out of state. I got into University of Maryland and I could have very well gone there, but I came here. Because I wanted a quality education, and this university felt like home to me. I am a transfer, I have been through this. My old community college, they tried the exact same crap. Not to the extent of this, but they cut programs and I lost a few friends. They transferred out because they couldn't do anything. I've

done some digging and this is the flagship university of West Virginia. I have also noticed that the population of West Virginia has been slowly dropping. How about if WVU really stands for diversity and higher education, how about you don't cut programs that would, I don't know, create more German teachers. Create more mathematicians. Stop cutting the programs and you will get more people here. I'm looking out here, and we elected you, well I didn't because I just transferred here, I didn't vote. Most of you guys are paying attention but I see a few of you looking at your phone or looking at something. We elected you. How about you stand with us, do your job, like seriously. Also, I am not a math student, but I'm pretty sure that 797 is almost eight times more than 100. Correct me if I'm wrong, but if the Board of Governors can't get that through their thick skulls that, hey way more people don't want these programs cut. How about they go back and not cut the math department. And, I don't know, take a damn class. I yield my time, thank you.

Madison Moore: I am up here to draw on the history of the state. As you may or may not know, the only reason West Virginia exists as a state is because during the civil war, we broke free from a confederacy. I just wanted to hit on the fact that it is not like us to be left behind in history. We are the only state entirely within the Appalachian Mountains. If we could all band together then and break away from the confederacy, away from the state that we were a part of, then we can do things like this. We can make change, and we can't be left behind in history. We need to make our own history through one way or another. If that requires breaking away from a mold, or the forces that work against us, then that is what we need to do.

Jasper: I came here and it was really hard to get the loans out because I live in poverty. I ask one question: What happens to people who live in poverty whose programs are getting cut? Do they just go to another school? No, they just stay here because they don't have the fucking money. I guess what I'm trying to say is, it's bullshit, it's bullshit. That's all I'm saying, thank you.

Emily: I am a junior math student, minoring in spanish. I have to take a class this semester called perspectives on math and science. It is for the teaching program, it is a very useful course. The essence of it is that we go through the entire history of what math and science were called. We learn about all of these things going back to the ancient Greeks and Romans. One of the things we do is read philosophy.

We read Plato. We read modern scientists. We read these texts to figure out how the field has changed overtime. One of the things we realized is that before they were called scientists, they were called philosophers. Because it included the humanities, it included math, everything that we think of when we think of education. Things we may not think of today are connected. There are strong connections between philosophy and math and anthropology, science, between everything that we want to study at this school. I know we always pat ourselves on the back for our research status. I don't understand how we are going to do that without a math program at the PhD level. One thing that I've seen is that math is truly connected to everything. I am sorry that maybe you cannot see it, because you have a grudge against your third grade math teacher because you hated decimal points. I urge you to research and look into it because this is the future of not just the state, but this is the future of our culture. Thank you.

Tanner Rogers: I am a graduate student here in the linguistics program. For a lot of my undergraduate career here at West Virginia University, because I did graduate from here in May. I came back for my masters degree. I am hearing that not only the department I am working with gets cut entirely, but that the school is lying about the numbers. It infuriates me, plain and simple. Not only that, but the short-sided and absolutely asinine reasons they gave for the gutting of the linguistics program and the world languages department. I am speaking for myself and those who do not have a voice. How many in this room are actually from West Virginia? How many are from out of state? Though it may seem like a lot of in-state students in this room right now, the majority of the school population comes from out of state. We West Virginians only make up around 46% of the entire student population. The school doesn't seem to notice that by cutting languages, linguistics, foreign culture, they will be setting the state further back. West Virginia is already stereotyped as a poverty-ridden hell hole that is illiterate, and has no connection to the outside world. We are trying to break that stereotype. Not only that, but we are trying to lift West Virginians out of poverty and make them more competitive in the modern job market. You know what that requires? Foreign languages. If you have someone from southern West Virginia, McDowell County, who thank God graduated from college, two years from now after the program is gone, and meanwhile you have someone who graduated from Rutgers in New Jersey who took four years of foreign language in college, who would you more likely choose? The guy from McDowell County, West Virginia? Or the guy from Rutgers? How many of you would pick the West Virginian? How many

would pick the guy who went to Rutgers? A lot more people, even though it doesn't seem like much because more hands were raised for the West Virginian.

Cameron: I yield my time to Tanner

Tanner Rogers: The issue is that the Board of Governors, President Gee, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives, whatever that means, they do not care. It is clear by their actions, they do not care. Regardless of whatever they say, it is clear that they do not care about the future of our state. Because guess what, a lot of them are able to pick up and move elsewhere. President Gee himself is from Utah. He has been President not only here twice, but the University of Colorado Boulder, Ohio State twice, Vanderbilt, and Brown. In the time he was at Brown, for two years, was so horrible that even today a tradition at Brown is to name a series of porta potties after President Gee. Ain't that humiliating. He was chased out of Ohio State for the exact same reasons. He was chased out of Vanderbilt and out of Brown, for everything he is trying to do here. And, the Board of Governors is siding with him, against the students, against the faculty, and clearly against the people of West Virginia, and I'm not going to stand for it. I do not think any of you all should. I urge Madison Santmyer, please vote no. Student Government, actually make market effort. I do not know how busy you all are, I'm not going to claim to know. Because that is not my place. What I will do however, is implore you to please do more. We have elected you to represent us. It feels like we are not being represented. What does that leave? It leaves us with an opportunity to vote you all out. At the end of it all, it comes to a point where I am about to say enough is enough. We are past that point. I have lost confidence in this administration, I have lost confidence in the Board of Governors, and unless something is done fast, I have lost confidence in the Student Government. Something should be done quickly. That means as much as I like him as a person, that means getting rid of President Gee. That means getting rid of the entire Board of Governors if need be. But, it is clear that they are already against us. When it came to world languages they had already dug in their heels because we made such a fuss.

Corey: I am a trans-woman and this school is fucking allowing that stupid talk about women's sports, is fucking bullshit. It is transphobic, it is awful. We need to not let it happen and protest it. That's everything.

Winston Smith: I want to try and make the point that fish was going to make. As some other people have said, West Virginia has historically been a very poor state, and WVU is an opportunity for people to better themselves economically, through education and get better jobs. If programs at this university are destroyed, it will keep people poor. Also, if any individual people in SGA are interested, and you want to fight harder than SGA allows you to, join the union.

Senator Sadler: I understand that it is hard for SGA to work with the union and get behind it. It is radical, it is hard guys. But there is no taking off the head of a snake by biting itself. It won't do it. I know you guys don't want to go for administration, that is tough and puts a target on your back. But the reality is that they are coming for faculty and students. That Twitter page going down is not something we should just let go. Them putting in new stuff in their faculty contracts to not let them speak out against this administration is problematic. I know that SGA doesn't want to be that radical and go into that, that's hard, but we have to. People's lives are on the line, hundreds of faculty. I know that is such a large ask, but those people that are asking us for, 300+ people asking us for, and they are not the only ones. Everyone here knows a couple years ago, nobody wanted Gee here. This is not a new topic. Gee doesn't need to be here. I know that is hard for us as SGA to say, but he is not doing a good job. It is apparent and the Board of Governors are the same way. These people who are voting against our faculty and students are voting against our voices and they are a problem. I know it is hard to go against them but they are part of the problem.

College Senator Indomenico: I know this has been an intense moment for us in SGA, but I wanted to thank all of the students for coming out and expressing their opinions and making their voices heard. Your anger, your anxiety, we all feel it. It is important for you guys to come here and make sure that we hear you. It is very good of you guys to do that.

College Senator Abbas: I would like to thank the students for coming out and expressing their anger to us. We obviously agree, and we are all in the same boat here. I would like to show some support for President Santmyer who has been nothing but great to us and is on our side.

College Senator Coulter: Thank you everyone for coming out for this meeting, we really do appreciate it. I want to implore you guys, that if you feel that any of us are not representing you properly, that you come speak to us. Voice your concerns to us. I promise, we are willing to work with you guys. We want to be a support for you guys and what you are doing, thank you.

College Senator Oursler: I also want to say SGA and the union have our differences, but I would also say that is our strength. SGA can advocate for students in a very certain way. The union can advocate for students in a very certain way. I do not think it is a detriment to this organization or your organization. I feel it is very important to be able to advocate for students the way the union is, along with the way that SGA can, more formally. I see that as a strength, and I do not think we should be divided in this because we all feel almost the same. It is just the methods we have to take. I do not think there is a disconnect between the union and SGA. It is the system that is set up and how we have to take things. I feel it is very important, and I am very glad you all came out to talk. Like I said, this is a working document that we have put forth today. It will be edited and amended by next week. It will have many different things that are not on it today. Your sentiment, your anger, I will personally try to add to this document. I feel that it is very important. Please do not think there has to be a barrier between the two organizations. I think if we work together, and very constructively, you all can do certain things we can't, and we can do certain things you all can't. We need to use that to our benefit. That's all I have to say, thank you all for coming out.

Dylan Miller: I have a quick question because I genuinely don't know. I am a third year student, and I didn't know what SGA was until last year. I definitely do not know how to get in contact with the people who represent me. Anybody who could answer that?

Vice President Dozier: Everybody works together, but all of the information is found on the SGA website. I implore you all to follow our instagram for the most recent updates.

Cameron: My point is this, I know you guys probably aren't familiar with a lot of political theory like I am, but that is besides the point. I am trying to make the point that there is a concept known as historical materialism that explains what foundational things that lead to this problem exactly. To understand how wealth is

distributed and this concept is very important in analyzing the economic situation that leads to this in the first place. My point is, you have to have some sort of material analysis skills to understand what causes this in the first place. On a micro and macro economic level. Understanding that in the first place from a historical materialist viewpoint helps dramatically. There is a reason why a lot of people use this theory. I implore you to at least look it up, thank you.

Senator Leadmon: First off, I just want to say thanks to everyone who came to talk today. This was very important. We appreciate the feedback. I just want to say we are all here too. We are all students, we all have experiences. I am a math major, I was considering getting a math PhD. That's not looking so hot right now. I might have to go out of state, I do not like going out of state. I get antsy when I'm not in West Virginia. So it's going to be a thing for me to work on figuring out. We all have a lot to lose. We are here with you, we are working with you to our best abilities. Our legislation, the proclamation, and what we wrote today was well informed. We met with the administration to understand the issues. We are working to find solutions to the best of our ability. Our differences make us stronger individually and give us the best shot we have to make an impact on the situation.

President Pro Tempore Risk: Another thing that I want to echo, if there is a specific person you are looking to contact, Vice President Dozier, or myself, even President Santmyer are great people to reach out to. If you all do have any specific ideas of ways we can work with you, please reach out about this. If there is anything else, members of SGA joining you via a walkout. Please just send us the information, I would be happy to come to one. I know there are many other people here that feel the same way. Although SGA doesn't necessarily work in that capacity of us standing up and walking out of a meeting or something like that, we would be happy to collaborate on any events that we possibly can. If any of you all have any comments to say now or later, always come back to another meeting. Feel free to speak more now, it's only 9:00p.m., it's not that late. We are all college students and we usually stay up until midnight anyways. But we do appreciate all of you coming and talking to us. It is much better to come and hear you all, versus all of us thinking about it to ourselves or other members of SGA so we really appreciate it.

Unknown: That sounds cool and all, but why weren't you there?

President Pro Tempore Risk: Why wasn't I there? I actually was there.

College Senator Oursler: I will say, I was also there too. I spoke at one of them. What I also want you all to look to the future is that these aren't the only cuts that are happening at the university. Education is not going to cover the \$45 million. The provost has already stated that to us multiple times. What is up next is that different departments are all talking about strategic initiatives. From sustainability, to roads and grounds, to government relations, to anything. Most non-academic things are on the chopping block next, so what I would ask is to strategically pick which ones that students care the most about, and let us know. I am here to help you all with whatever. But, we have to pick our battles carefully because the cuts have to happen. I'm just letting you know that as students we have to pick strategically. We can't just say we want no cuts at all, because they are going to happen. Looking forward, it is coming and seeing how everyone has responded, I don't think it is going to stop.

Dante: I saw something earlier, in 2014 where Gordon Gee said he would get student enrollment to 40,000. That sounds like he is making a claim and he failed. I just want to know, is it possible for SGA at all to have any statement on the vote of no confidence on Gordon Gee? Can you support the faculty and students who show up? What I mean by support, is push this fire Gee narrative more. Like officially through any SGA platforms, through any official platforms you have through the school? Very clearly, both students, faculty, and anyone who pays attention to WVU should know that Gee has failed. Are you guys able to push that narrative and platform it?

President Pro Tempore Risk: Technically speaking, yes. If somebody wrote a piece of legislation, and we got it through all the necessary processes, then yes. The legislation has to come from within SGA.

Unknown: Are you gonna do it?

President Pro Tempore Risk: I mean if somebody decided to write it then yeah we will.

College Senator Oursler: If the majority of the assembly approves an amendment to the bill, it will be passed in that bill. So there could be an amendment to the resolution that was made if the majority of the assembly agrees to that amendment.

Dante: I will formally urge you all at SGA to create an amendment or a bill stating your approval or disapproval of what went on today or against. I think it would do the student body very well, I think it would do you guys very well. I do not think any of you want to suffer from a poor reputation. You guys were elected, so I really think you guys ought to do that.

Will: I transferred here right as all of the cuts happened, they told me right as I finished my paperwork. That was so awesome. I have severe dyslexia, the proposed programs that they would change, the language department too, I don't feel would be adequate in any way. I do not see how I, as a disabled person, could possibly learn any language purely online or through another institution. It just simply doesn't seem accessible or accommodating.

Olivia Dowler: I have sat in the seats that all of you have. I have been an intern, a senator, and an executive so I know what you are capable of. Mailyn is a great example of what you are capable of. You see her speaking out. You can use your voice. I know how much, I hope you care about West Virginia as much as I believe you do, and about WVU. I know you are in this for the students to make it better, so show that. You can use your voice, Mailyn has been using her voice. Every single day, you can use your voice. Fight for these students because this is affecting you too. I know so many of you are first generation students. I know that so many of you have been to study abroads, likely possible by the language department. That is not going to happen anymore. I am a tour guy and a new student orientation leader and I should not feel guilty telling students to come here. I should not be giving tours and having parents ask me, "Oh you're a Spanish major? How are you doing that if they are cutting the entire world language program?" It is embarrassing to me to have to answer that question and tell them why. What does it say to people if you are not providing languages? It says you do not care to communicate with them. West Virginia cannot be shut out anymore. We cannot push people away. If we want young people to stay in the state, if we want anyone to stay in the state, then we need to fight for it. Nothing will change if nothing changes.

Senator Olivero: I want to say that SGA and the union are working on the same team. We appreciate all the students who have given and provided input for us. I want to speak a little bit to something I specifically heard that I think needs addressed. I strongly rebuke the notion that SGA has done nothing. As we all are aware, we had no say in the cuts, and we have opposed them from the start. We have tried to make the most of a difficult situation. We organized two town halls where anybody from the student body had the opportunity to speak directly with an administrator from the office of the provost. The other town hall will be held next week where students will get more face time with the administration. This is called us using our unique position to facilitate that connection. We have done our

utmost to ensure that our legislation, the primary function of our organization, is well researched and well written. We are not a single-focused organization. We work every day to try and approve the life of students. Just because it isn't plastered over the DA, doesn't mean it is isn't happening. If students want to know what is going on, I encourage you to attend meetings or run for office. We meet every Wednesday, 7:30p.m., same place and have done so for as long as I have been here. I look forward to moving our resolution forward, and I am incredibly proud of the work this assembly has done so far on such a short timeline. I yield my time.

Senator Sadler: I'm not saying that SGA isn't doing anything, having those forums, having those things you should already be doing that. Those are bare minimum things. That's great, but it's not enough. I know that it is really annoying to hear from me, a first year person that doesn't do shit in here. But it's not enough. I can't keep listening to faculty, students, graduate students, come and tell me that they are uprooting their lives, that they are leaving this university. They wanted to be Mountaineers but now they don't have that opportunity. I know it is hard we are going on different goals, but we need to go for actual people that have power. That is fine if we don't have power as students if we can't do anything here, but we need to actually call out our administrators. People like Corey Farris who said we didn't do anything. People like Gordon Gee, Mary Ann. These people are people that are controlling our students and our faculty. It is okay if we do not have much power, but we do have a voice. I know it is annoying to see my annoying ass out there yelling all the time, but it is a problem. As long as people continue to come up to me and tell me that they want to be here but do not have the opportunity, I will be out there. I want you guys to talk to me, I want to be a part of these resolutions. But I am not getting anything from this end. I want to see more. You are all amazing, active on campus. I want to see all of you out there though. I want to see you all remind the students you stand with them, not the administration. Our students, faculty, people who actually support us and that we see day-to-day. They are more important than anything we might be scared of.

Alyssa: The union has had the opportunity to speak with a member of the administration and will have another opportunity to do so on the 11th. But we think it would be incredibly valuable to speak with more than just two people in the administration. We want to speak to multiple people at one time, which would be ideal. There are a lot of people on the administrative board. We want to talk to them.

Andrea: I believe next to be reassessed is organizations that are funded by the university such as SGA, the office of accessibility services, and the Carruth Center. We are probably going to be fighting just as hard for them not to lose funding because they are vital to our lives. I want a Carruth Center that can actually help its students that is not underfunded and overworked. I need the office of accessibility services so that I can go to school here. I want to be able to have a reason to fight for our SGA to remain funded, I want to know what they are doing for me that is worth keeping. You are asking where we want to make these cuts? I will say, I don't know if SGA is doing anything, then do that. Because I can't lose things like accessibility services or the Carruth Center. Please show me you are worth funding.

Senator Randle: Thank you guys for coming out and telling us your stories. We hear you, and we agree with you. Nobody here wants these cuts. We all agree that it is bullshit. Instead of being hostile towards one another and making comments towards our assembly, our President, that are not helpful, we agree with you. We want to help you, help us, give us your thoughts as you've done tonight. I'm not saying all of you, but we want to help you. We are not here to be hostile towards you or disrespectful towards you. Let's be respectful towards one another and work together and come up with some solutions. We have \$45 million dollars to come up with.

Senator Olivero: On the merits of SGA's existence, I am more than happy to talk to people about that after the meeting. If anyone in the assembly has any alterations or would like to present any sort of amendments, you have the ability to do so. Everyone here has equal power and responsibility.

XV. Advisors' Reports

Thanh Le: The REACH conference registration is open. We are looking for talented facilitators that are students to present on some topics. These are on engage. Registration closes next friday. Homecoming parade and court applications are open, please apply if you are eligible. I apologize for my misguided prediction of our Penn State game, I feel better about this weekend. First home game, be mindful of each other and have a good time.

XVI. Snaps

Snaps were given to Senator Olivero, Hotline Workers for flooding, College Senator Olivero, student union, Attorney General Miller, President Santmyer, Vice President Dozier, Student Government Association.

XVII. Adjournment

The motion to adjourn was entertained by President Pro Tempore Risk

The motion to adjourn was seconded by Senator Eastman.

The ayes have it. The meeting was adjourned.

West Virginia University
The Student Assembly - Student Government Association
Assembly Resolution: AR-2023-08-01
**AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION REGARDING THE ACADEMIC
TRANSFORMATION**

Short Title:	Academic Transformation Recommendations
Author(s):	Matthew Olivero, Senator Garrett Oursler, College Senator (Davis)
Sponsor(s):	Gabrielle Frazier, Senator Joanna Switala, College Senator (Eberly) Peyton Bielinski, College Senator (CAHS) Tayler Pillo, College Senator (Reed) Olivia Scholl, Senator Susie Risk, President Pro Tempore
Contributor(s):	Charlie Long, Chief of Staff Anabella Tiano, Outreach Coordinator Karsey Prichard, Executive Secretary
Committee Endorsement:	Academic Affairs Committee
First Reading Date:	9/6/2023
Second Reading Date:	
Date of Approval:	
Presidential Signature:	

Whereas, the West Virginia University mission statement reads, "[we] commit to creating a diverse and inclusive culture that advances education...prosperity for all...and advance high-impact research...by leading transformation in West Virginia and

the world through local, state and global engagement¹;" and,

Whereas, The West Virginia University Student Government Association's (WVU SGA) mission statement reads that "We, the students of West Virginia University, desire to preserve within our University...an atmosphere that helps to foster an open exchange of ideas with civil discussion, inquiry, and self-expression to help ensure that the personal freedoms and general welfare of the students within our University are protected²;" and,

Whereas, WVU SGA is committed to a constructive, consensus-based approach to academic transformation;³ and,

Whereas, WVU SGA conducted a town hall on August 31st, 2023, and published a survey, for the purpose of ascertaining student sentiment on the subject of the Academic Transformation; and,

Whereas, WVU SGA has written a letter to the Provost's office outlining the reasoning for our recommendations;⁴

SECTION I-World Languages

Whereas, West Virginia University is one of the only higher-education institutions in the state that offers instruction in world languages; and,

Whereas, knowledge of human cultures is considered one of the hallmarks of a liberal arts degree; and,

Whereas, if the recommendations are approved, WVU would be one of only two Big XII schools lacking a foreign language requirement for a Bachelor of Arts degree;⁴ and,

SECTION II-Student Input

¹ [WVU Mission Statement](#)

² <https://sga.wvu.edu/about/our-mission>

³ See AP-2023-08-01, which established our position on this issue.

⁴ See Appendix A.

Whereas, representatives of the student body are not included in the appeals process due to BOG rules;⁵ and,

Whereas, there is confusion and anxiety among many students about the future of their programs and their next steps at WVU; and,

Whereas, in December 2022, WVU SGA established the Student Academic Advisory Board, with the purpose of giving students an opportunity to meet with and advise members of the Provost's office independently of SGA;⁶ and,

Whereas, WVU SGA is unaware of any activities conducted by the Board since its creation; and,

Therefore, be it resolved by the Student Assembly of West Virginia University:

Section 1: WVU SGA encourages the University to retain the foreign-language requirement for a Bachelor of Arts Degree;

Section 2: WVU SGA requests that the Board of Governors amend Rule 2.2 Section 3.2.4 to include a student representative on the program review appeals committee(s);

Section 3: WVU SGA requests that the Provost Office collaboratively works with the WVU SGA to re-establish the Student Academic Advisory Board;

Section 4: WVU SGA requests that the Provost Office partner with this newly formed advisory board to incorporate student concerns into the transitional period following academic transformation.

Mandates:

Dr. E. Gordon Gee, President

Valerie Lopez, Special Assistant to the Board of Governors

Maryanne Reed, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Dr. Evan Widders, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education

Dr. Mark Gavin, Associate Provost for Academic, Budget, Facilities, and Strategic

⁵ [BOG Academics Rule 2.2 - Program Creation and Review | Policies | West Virginia University](#)

⁶ [See AR-2022-08-08](#)

Initiatives

Dr. Tracy Morris, Associate Provost for Academic Personnel

Rob Alsop, Vice President of Strategic Initiatives

G. Corey Farris, Dean of Students

Madison Santmyer, Student Body President

Farzana Islam Tamanna, GPSS President

Dr. Thanh Le, Director, Student Engagement and Leadership (Advisor)

Karsey Prichard, Executive Secretary

Frankie Tack, Faculty Senate Chair

Shirley Robinson, Staff Council Chair

Jennifer Fisher, President's Office

Dr. Autumn Tooms Cyprés, Dean of the College of Applied Human Sciences

Dr. Darrell Donahue, Dean of the Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Design

Dr. Gregory Dunaway, Dean of the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences

Dr. Tara Hulseley, Dean of the School of Nursing

Dr. Keith Jackson, Dean of the College of Creative Arts

Dr. Pedro J. Mago, Dean of the Benjamin M. Statler College of Engineering and Mineral Resources

Dr. Clay Marsh, Dean of the School of Medicine, and Executive Dean for Health Sciences

Dr. Diana Martinelli, Dean of the Reed College of Media

Dr. Stephen Pachuta, Dean of the School of Dentistry

Dr. Bill Petros, Dean of the School of Pharmacy

Amelia Smith Rinehart, Dean of the College of Law

Daily Athenaeum

APPENDIX A—LETTER REGARDING ACADEMIC TRANSFORMATION

Dr. Evan Widders and Dr. Mark Gavin
West Virginia University Office of the Provost
September __, 2023

Dear Drs. Widders and Gavin,

We write to you to express our concerns about the final recommendations from the Provost regarding the programs under review in the 2023 Academic Transformation. Our position on the cuts in general has already been established by AP-2023-08-01, and this letter should not be construed to alter or supplant that previously passed legislation. However, in light of the results of the appeals process, and after considering the information provided by your participation in the SGA meeting on August 23rd and the SGA town hall on August 31st, we feel it necessary to elaborate more deeply on specific issues of concern for us with regard to the Academic Transformation and make our position on those issues clear.

We begin with the Department of World Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics. As you know, the recommendation to eliminate this department has been one of the most contentious and debated of them all. Our opposition to the elimination of this department (a recommendation that withstood appeal) remains unchanged.⁷ We hope, however, that at minimum, the University will reverse course in its apparent decision to shed the foreign language requirement for Bachelor of Arts degrees. This decision would put us at odds with our peers in the Big XII⁸, and, more importantly, it would put us at odds with the purpose of a liberal arts education in the first place. According to the American Association of Colleges and Universities, knowledge of human cultures is one of the essential learning outcomes for a liberal arts degree.⁹ Learning a foreign language *is* knowledge of human cultures, and the removal of that requirement would not only devalue a Bachelor of Arts degree earned at West Virginia University, but it would also foreclose the opportunity for liberal arts students at this institution to expand their knowledge and broaden their cultural horizons.¹⁰

⁷ See AP-2023-08-01. We will largely refrain from retreading the ground already covered in that bill.

⁸ Our research indicates that among Big XII schools (excluding Texas and Oklahoma), only BYU lacks a requirement of some kind of foreign language proficiency for graduation with a Bachelor of Arts degree.

⁹ <https://www.aacu.org/trending-topics/what-is-liberal-education>

¹⁰ One specific implication of the gutting of WLLL is the difficulties that could face students applying for Fulbright Scholarships, many of whom need four semesters of language courses. The University is seemingly without an answer for this concern.

The University maintains that the decision to remove the foreign language requirement will serve as a net positive for students because instead of being required to take the four required foreign language classes, they will be able to take classes of their choosing.¹¹ We dispute this characterization for several reasons. The first is that it assumes that all students who could *possibly* take interest in or benefit from foreign language instruction are *already* aware of that before being introduced to the languages. In such a world, there are two fixed classes of students: those who want to study languages and those who do not. This is not the world we live in. People change in response to experiences, and we reject the view that students who are required to take basic foreign language classes are incapable of deciding to pursue more advanced courses as a result of their experiences in required classes. We further dispute the University's position because it assumes that a student's interests and desires are one and the same. This is not the case. A student's aversion to taking a course does not necessarily mean that they should not take that course. Otherwise, it is doubtful that many students would enroll in the general education courses. The University, however, requires students to take general education courses because it believes that all students should be imbued with that knowledge and experience before graduation. We feel the same way about foreign languages for Bachelor of Arts students. Our final point on the University's argument is that Bachelor of Arts students *already* have the opportunity to enroll in classes of their personal interest because the Bachelor of Arts programs are inherently broad. Many BA programs limit the credits students may earn within their major, allowing them to take many electives or declare second majors.¹² Within the context of the 120 credits needed to graduate, there is ample space for students to both complete the foreign language requirement and take classes for which they may have prior interest.¹³

We will not re-litigate the issues relating to student input in the decision-making process, but we do hope that you will work with the Student Academic Advisory Board to navigate the landscape beyond the BOG vote. As we are sure you are aware, many questions beyond the immediate future remain unanswered, and many students are in want of more clarity. For students in programs slated to be cut, the specifics of teach-outs remain hazy. Many students are anxious about larger class sizes or concerned about their futures at WVU. **This has additional significance given the sizable investment almost all students are compelled to make to attend the University.** In our previous discussions, you indicated that the most potent opportunity for student input would come after final recommendations are approved, and we believe that it is imperative for there to be as much student involvement as possible in this process. If needed, we can facilitate the initial connection between the Board and the Provost's office.

¹¹ This position was articulated at multiple points throughout the town hall on August 31st.

¹² This can be untrue for students pursuing a BA in a hard science (e.g. Biology), but implicit in the choice to pursue a BA instead of a BS in those fields is students' assent to the requirements therein.

¹³ Satisfying the foreign language requirement becomes even simpler when considering dual-enrollment high school classes and the existence of the placement test, both of which allow qualified students to bypass a portion of the required classes.

We understand that the decisions made throughout the Academic Transformation have been difficult. The University's challenging financial position is not lost on us. Neither are the results of the appeals process, some of which have assuaged the pain in certain departments. However, for the reasons outlined above, we urge the University to change its course on the foreign language requirement. If these decisions proceed, West Virginia University will be worse off because of it. As representatives of the student body, and as students ourselves, we must oppose those choices.

Respectfully yours,

Matthew Olivero

Matthew Olivero

At-Large Senator

Political Science/Environmental Geoscience, Minor in Spanish

Garrett Oursler

Garrett Oursler

Davis College Senator

Environmental, Soils, and Water Sciences/Sustainable Food and Farms, Minor in Horticulture

West Virginia University
The Student Assembly - Student Government Association
September 6, 2023

As referred by the Bureau of Finance

An Act

Making grant appropriations for various student organizations on behalf of the West Virginia University Student Government Association.

Be it enacted by the Student Assembly of the West Virginia University Student Assembly:

That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Student Government Association Grants to Student Organizations account and not otherwise appropriated, for the Student Organizations listed below for the Fall 2023 Semester per the official WVU Academic Calendar.

Table of Contents

TITLE I: WVU Robotics Club	2
TITLE II: Phi Sigma Pi	2
TITLE III: Muslim Student Association	3
APPENDIX A	4
APPENDIX B	4

TITLE I: WVU Robotics Club

For Expenses to cover a 3-D printer

<i>WVU Robotics Club</i>		
Item	Quantity	Cost
3-D Printer	1	\$1000.00
Total Allocated Funds		\$1000.00

TITLE II: Phi Sigma Pi

For Expenses to cover prizes for a bingo fundraiser.

<i>Phi Sigma Pi</i>		
Item	Quantity	Cost
Supplies	1	\$202.00
Total Allocated Funds		\$202.00

TITLE III: Muslim Student Association

For Expenses to cover a speaker for Islamic Talks.

<i>Muslim Student Association</i>		
Item	Quantity	Cost
Speaker Fee	1	\$300.00
Total Allocated Funds		\$300.00

APPENDIX A

Financial Bill Total Allocation Amount

Financial Bill 2023-24 Totals	
Organization	Total Cost
WVU Robotics Club	\$1000.00
Phi Sigma Pi	\$202.00
Muslim Student Association	\$300.00
Total	\$1,502.00

APPENDIX B

Requested Amounts Per Organization

Financial Bill 2023-24 Totals		
Organization	Total Grant Requested	Total Suggested
WVU Robotics Club	\$2,178.00	\$1,000.00
Phi Sigma Pi	\$202.00	\$202.00
Muslim Student Association	\$300.00	\$300.00
Total	\$2,680.00	\$1,502.00