

NEVADA STUDENT ALLIANCE (NSA)

December 1, 2016

5:00 p.m.

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Student Union, Room 211

4505 S. Maryland Parkway

Las Vegas, NV 89154

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by NSA Chair Desiree DeCosta at 5:02 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

Ms. Desiree DeCosta, Nevada State College, NSSA (NSA Chair) - Present

*Mr. Carlos Fernandez, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, CSUN (NSA Vice Chair)
- Present*

*Mr. David Turner II, Truckee Meadows Community College, SGA (NSA
Secretary) - Present*

Mr. Brandon Boone, University of Nevada, Reno, ASUN – Present

Ms. Augustina Fernandez, Great Basin College, SGA – Absent

Mr. Sandesh Kannan, University of Nevada, Reno, GSA – Present

*Ms. Diana Gurrola, Western Nevada College, ASWN - proxy Kaitlin Lucky
ASWNC Vice President*

Ms. Meghan Pierce, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, GPSA - Present

Ms. Jill Robinson, College of Southern Nevada, ASCSN - Present

Mr. Deep Sengupta, Desert Research Institute, GRAD – Absent

3. GUEST RECOGNITION:

*Mr. Rick Trachok, Nevada System of Higher Education Board of Regents
Chairman*

Mr. Dean J. Gould, Chief of Staff and Special Counsel to the Board of Regents

Mr. John V. White, Chancellor

*Ms. Renée Davis, Director of Student Affairs with the Nevada System of Higher
Education*

Ms. Lilly Leon-Vicks, Western Nevada College, Coordinator of Student Life

Ms. Mevini Aponso, Truckee Meadows Community College, SGA

4. PUBLIC COMMENT:

No public comment.

5. DISCUSSION WITH BOARD OFFICERS AND CHANCELLOR:

*Ms. Desiree DeCosta starts with an issues that keeps popping up not just at the
Regents meetings but with the Student Government meetings. How to keep a safe
and welcoming campus for every diverse individual? We as the student*

INFOR

government, and as an institution are having a hard time walking the lines of representing everyone. This means everyone, to address any bullying and hate and to keep that off our campuses.

Mr. John V. White states that we are going in the right direction. Obviously there needs to be a balance in support. The issues than because a feeling of a lack of support for other individuals. The challenge starts with what the very basis for what the institutions are, they are places of engagement, places of debate and exchange. Touching upon the ideas of facilitating healthy speech with each other without limiting it and keeping everyone feeling safe. There is a decorum to speaking and keeping it at a level of engagement and not making any student feel unsafe.

Mr. Rick Trachok regards the recent election. For some of us we lost the election, for some we won the election. As President Obama said, elections have consequences. We need to keep this in mind and focus on the academic mission. We don't want to be striking out in a way that makes some of us feel good because we did not get the results that we wanted out of the election. There's an appreciation for the measured approach that the student governments are taking. We we may not always like the debate we have spirited debate and we all have an opportunity to express our views.

Ms. Meghan Pierce asks what should some of our goals with the legislative session be? Knowing that we have some of these tidbits of information coming out of Washington about dismantling the Department of Education or how to restructure it? Looking to our own State Legislature with pending budget cuts looming in the future.

Mr. Rick Trachok states having given this a lot of thought is comfortable with the way the process is working. On the budget side it is going to end up how it ends up. Is it going to be exactly what we wanted? No. Is it going to be what it could have been? He doesn't think that is going to happen either. It is very important for us to keep in mind the concepts that were raised earlier today in the Board of Regents meeting.

Mr. John V. White states that it is way too early to speculate now. I think we have a legislator in the governor's office that do care about Nevadans. On the talk of eliminating the Department of Education don't actually happened. Now that they have the ability to do that they will see it and think wow this is really complex. A lot of what has been talked about in the various conservative policies may get some traction. But it is not clear how those proposals will affect us. They may certainly be more friendly to for-profit institutions but that should not affect anyone at our institutions unless a student has really been missing an opportunity to go to ITT Tech. What is more likely is the capping of Pell Grants making it more expensive. There may even be reductions in research funding. Those are the kinds of things that won't be urgent enough and our legislative session to really

talk about. The more substantial things are the ones that people are already talking about. Like immigration sweeps. We just do not know what it is going to look like or what kind of response it will get. However something to keep in mind is picking on college students is extremely bad PR. Especially for a president-elect who is very conscious of PR. As far as to guess as to what kind of response we need to have there is a long list of possibilities. That is the challenge with immediate responses. We are ready to stand to do something but we're not sure what it is.

Mr. Rick Trachok states that it is very dangerous to speculate at what might happen. Especially if the actions that you take have consequences today.

Ms. Desiree DeCosta adds we have made that concerted effort to not help anyone one person or out ourselves because that is not what we want to be doing right now. We want to take precautionary measures as far as making sure our prospective student bodies know that it is still safe and that we uphold and respect our campuses as learning environments.

Mr. Sandesh Kannan adds that a lot of times the student body governments put on a lot of events. However it feels as if there is no policies put in place to promote diversity and to help students feel safe makes us feel like things that we do on the bottom will have no effect.

Mr. Rick Trachok states that everybody in the legislative understands what we're doing and very supportive of all the constituents on both sides within the institutions. They think that we are all very fortunate in that regard because it is coming down from the top.

Mr. David Turner II states that the last time we met we spoke on the excess credit fees. There is an understanding that the excess credit fees do pay for extra academic advisors. However there is a feeling that it may not necessarily be working and that there may be a better approach. Because financial aid has its own Pathways to keep people on track while trying to earn their various degrees. As there is a feeling that it is negatively affecting a significant population within the student body.

Mr. John V. White responds looking back at the excess credit fee could be something that we would have to manage. Part of the challenge would be getting data to support what was stated in the regions would probably have to extract that data from the campuses which could be a difficulty. Trying to come together with proposals to change it would be an engaging process to keep academic leaders involved. It is also in place to kind of keep people on track because students like to dabble with varying degrees. However there is a point where students need to say what degree they are getting. We know there are particular challenges in that category.

Ms. Jill Robinson adds that at the last meeting she spoke with Regent Wixom. He stated to write him up a statement regarding the veterans. At CSN we have a skew of non-traditional students who first started college had no idea what they wanted to do. Now that they are back they have a better idea of what they want to do. Do to those first years they are now hitting the excess credit fee and not able to return the following semester to finish their degrees. The students then have to file appeals to try and drop the excess credit fee. However while at CSN you are only allowed to appeals your entire academic career.

Mr. Rick Trachok states that it does not seem to make sense with only two appeals. However there is not enough data. The other thing is that we need to know how many students we are talking about that are facing these excess credit fees. Before we try to make any wide spreading changes we need to know what we are dealing with now. We need to have a mechanism in place that can be tweaked.

Ms. Jill Robinson adds being a student can make it difficult to get that data. Because it could be a conflict of interest as I am only a student trying to get student information.

Mr. Rick Trachok responds if we follow what reagent Wixom had given us before it will give us something to go on and maximizing the likelihood of getting something done.

Mr. Carlos Fernandez states earlier in the day UNLV specifically talked about utilizing the campus more for like Friday classes and weekends. This is in response to I need four more students taking specific classes. Currently instead of opening up new sections they are just expanding seats for classes which really takes away from the classroom experience. A lot of professors have had to redo how they have topped because there is a big difference between having 50 students and 30. Is there a way to put something in place for an institution to create more sections or is that at an Institutional level?

Mr. Rick Trachok gives the short answer, that it is institutional specific.

Mr. John V. White states that this is something to take to the Provost or vice Provost of academic affairs. What is a strategic choice for the institution which is affected by strategic planning in the ability to get new faculty.

Mr. Carlos Fernandez adds that a big issue for his constituents is with the science classes. There are a lot of classes that are prerequisites for other classes however they are feeling up and it is slowing down their ability to get their degrees. This is making some students feel discouraged and even dropout.

Mr. Rick Trachok states that you do not want the Board of Regents involved with this. Because it turns from governing to micromanaging.

Mr. Sandesh Kannan ask in regards to a fee increase for the institutions, these have gone up but the budget has stayed the same. Last year we were in the negative. In terms of increasing the dollar amount what kind of data is required so that the Regents have all of the information that is needed.

Mr. John V. White response that it depends on what kind of feed it is. If it is a course fee it depends on what it is going to be used on for the course. If it is if he increase that is already in place is how much of an increase and what it is going to be used for. If it is just a general fee it depends on everything that it could be used for because there is a broader spectrum. The board wants to see a specific utilization. You would also need to survey all students that will be affected and show the students are happy with promises. Those of the things that typically need to be taken into account with a fee increase. This typically means student engagement in the late summer early fall to have a proposal ready for the December meeting.

Mr. Rick Trachok adds that typically the board would like to see something showing that the money will be utilized for something in specific. For example if it were for a Rec Center then the board needs to see that these fees will be used only for the rec center. Than they might be a little bit more receptive to the idea. An across-the-board fee increase is a very difficult thing. For some of the Regents there are adamantly opposed to funding intercollegiate athletics. This is a broad spectrum of what we are dealing with. However if the students were to all rally together and come to the Regents and say that we need a student union and we are willing to pay a fee to get the Student Union built then the Regents aren't going to stand in the way. They still have to approve it but they are not likely to reject it.

6. NEW BUSINESS

No new business

INFORMATION

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

INFORMATION

Mr. Sandesh Kannan asks if there will be an NSA report at the following Board of Regents report.

Ms. Desiree DeCosta responds that there is no NSA report.

Ms. Meghan Pierce states that they will be going over fee increases for all the institutions so it is important for everyone to be there. Meghan asks if any of the NSA members are aware if they are going to need to speak on behalf of the students, because a few years back with the increases that went before the board the Student Body Presidents had to speak and answer questions.

Ms. Renée Davis states that with these kinds of fee increases that she can't recall the Student Body Presidents needing to speak at them. That if anyone would like to speak on the fees to bring it up during public comment.

Mr. Carlos Fernandez states that being the face of the students means that we are going to take a lot of the heat. But that is our responsibility to make sure our students know we have their back. That there is no political agenda that we are here to stand up for our students to keep them safe and help them learn. That we should take advantage of the services and resources that each institution offers. That we can use our administrators to help us, but to make sure that they are not being taken advantage of. The students are our boss.

Ms. Desiree DeCosta responds that she appreciates what was said at the press conference. That it was a bold statement to say that the students are our boss and that made her very proud.

Ms. Jill Robinson adds that she was not sure what to do with having students on differing sides. That it doesn't always give time to debrief our own feelings. That this is why they are going back to round tables with the president. One of these round tables is called Pop Talks, talking and pop tarts, where everyone can say what they want and hash out what they need. There is an officer present to help everyone feel safe and to be part of the conversation. As well as a counselor so everyone feels they have someone on their side.

Mr. Sandesh Kannan asks if anyone is having issues similar to what he is experiencing, or if the NSA can help with some of the issues. The issues are hitting dead ends with administration and deflecting when trying to get answers or help. Can the NSA support with this or is it at an institutional level? A main issue is with parking, especially when a game is going on. Students pay for parking, then the institution tows cars because the spaces are double rented so people can park during games.

Ms. Meghan Pierce states that it is the same at UNLV.

Mr. David Turner II states that if this is an issue both UNLV and UNR are facing, that these two institutions might need to ban together. But this isn't an issue that is going to affect all the institutions. That it is really at an institutional level, but can be worked out between the two universities to address with the Regents. Or have both the undergraduate and graduate student body presidents address together with the UNR administration.

Ms. Lilly Leon-Vicks states that she is proud of the NSA for standing up the way that the NSA has. To keep in mind that there are also faculty and staff being harassed by the same students that we may be harassed by. To remember that these students are only doing it from a lack of understanding, but that is where we

as the Student Body Presidents need to stay educated ourselves and have understanding for all the students.

8. ADJURNMENT

NSA NSA Chair Desiree DeCosta adjourns the meeting at 5:45 p.m.