

Committee on Government Operations

Senate of the Associated Students 88th Session
Minutes for Tuesday, September 15, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

Zoom Meeting: Email Victoria Supple at speakerprotempore@asun.unr.edu for more information

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Senator Supple called the committee on Government Operations to order at 5:01 pm. Presiding secretary, Yesenia Pelayo.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Senators Supple, Chantiyanon, Stoddard, Taylor, Kidd, and Luers were present.

A quorum was present.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment at this time.

4. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

There were no minutes to be heard at this time.

5. **OLD BUSINESS**

a. **Accountability Contract**

Senator Supple moved to pass the gavel to Senator Taylor.

Senator Taylor accepted.

Senator Taylor explained that they had to go over the accountability contract again to make sure Senator Chantiyanon agrees. He asked Senator Chantiyanon if she had already gone over the contract.

Senator Chantiyanon said she already looked over it.

Senator Taylor asked Senator Chantiyanon if she accepted.

Senator Chantiyanon accepted.



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If you would like a copy of any of the agenda items listed, please contact Senator Victoria Supple at speakerprotempore@asun.unr.edu

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. **Potential Changes to the Associated Students' Governing Documents**

Senator Taylor explained that they would be discussing potential changes to the associated students' governing documents including the SAS, club funding manual, senate rules, and the constitution.

Senator Supple said she received an email from Director Rodriguez about changing chapter 1103 of the Nevada State Undergraduate Research Journal. She asked Director Rodriguez if she would like to talk about that.

Director Rodriguez explained that the research journal started about six years ago, and the first two years they struggled to put the framework together. She said it was really complicated and there are legal issues associated with starting a legit journal. When ASUN put this together, they told the administrators to do what they had to do. The last three years have been spent appointing editors, and the journals have been pretty small. Three years ago, pressure was starting to be put on the vice president of research to hire a director of undergraduate research, and a director had finally been hired. In conversations with Dr. Kelley, she thinks it would be best to move the journal into the office of undergraduate research.

Senator Taylor thanked Director Rodriguez and asked if there were any more changes or ideas.

Senator Luers said he wanted to work with Director Bajwa and whoever is hired for the commissioner for marketing and outreach for the department of diversity and inclusion position to see where they need to take out things that are involved in that position since he created it. He would like to monitor that throughout the session.

Senator Stoddard said that for those who weren't selected for the internship, they should do something to where they could still participate in a way, but don't take on the full responsibilities of an intern.

Senator Taylor thanked them for their input and then asked if anyone wanted to comment on decreasing the elections fee from 50 to 25.

Senator Supple said that was something she wanted to do with President Hall last year but didn't have time before she became president. She said she could mention it at senate.

Director Rodriguez asked why they should have a fee at all. She said back in the day they had the fee because everything was paper trail driven. Right now, if a student was charged for something they could have a hold automatically put on their records and they couldn't even register.

Senator Supple said she thought having the fee was in place for keeping people accountable who wouldn't pay if they violate the elections code.

Senator Luers said what he thought Director Rodriguez was saying was that when you sign up you're already held accountable through MyNEVADA for anything that you do that violates the elections code. You don't have to put money out up front because even if it wasn't there, Director Rodriguez could charge your account. He then asked Senator Supple if the fee waiving she was working on with President Hall was completed or not.

Senator Supple said that President Hall did complete that project. There was a form for candidates to fill out to apply to a panel that would determine if they could waive the filing fee. She then brought up how there has been talk about creating a new way to fire people because since hiring goes through oversight and senate, firing should also go through oversight and senate. She suggested changing that process and adding it to the statutes.

Director Rodriguez said she would look something up in the constitution.

Senator Kidd said she agrees with Senator Supple because she and a ton of fellow senators didn't even know about the firing of the director of programming until it was brought to their attention at senate after it had already been processed. She said she thinks it having to go through senate before it can be completed is a great idea.

Senator Chantiyanon said she was confused about the firing process. She asked if it's someone from a different branch, does the president just fire them on her own or does it go through anyone. She said if it doesn't go through anyone, but hiring goes through them, they should at least be told if someone is about to get fired.

Senator Taylor said the removal process is, for members of the president's cabinet or any department they could either be impeached or fired if they violate the SAS, and for senators it's a recall election or a censure.

Senator Luers said he doesn't think oversight should have the power to approve or deny the president firing someone, but it should go through oversight so that they all are overseeing the process of what happened, why someone was fired, and the steps that are being taken to relieve that position.

Senator Stoddard said the director of programming felt as if he didn't have ample time to correct himself or was even given guidance. He said, because of this, they could possibly add an element of warning beforehand to offer that chance to correct.

Senator Chantiyanon said the ample time was a good point to raise because he felt he didn't have guidance or ample time. She asked if there was any way he could come back and state he was wrongfully fired.

Senator Taylor said that he was always welcome to come in and give public comment at the meetings, but if he felt something was wrongfully violated he could file a charge against whoever he felt the need to.

Senator Luers said he doesn't think that directors should be provided ample time to correct these things. If your entire department walks within a week, that's not something you can really fix in ample time considering the hiring process and retraining. We don't know the full story so we don't really understand exactly what happened. Associate Director Butler is working on that. We shouldn't make any decisions based on that until we have the full story on what happened before we decide to change the SAS.

Director Rodriguez said she was going to step back and go to the constitution. The constitution is set up like your federal government. There is a system of checks and balances in place. Only the legislative branch is responsible for letting go of its own members. The executive branch is responsible for nominating the senate but then they can fire. The judicial council can be brought before the senate. She said she would caution them if they're going to start saying the senate now controls firing, they're upsetting the system of checks and balances. She said they need to be looking at the bigger picture. She agrees with Senator Luers in that they aren't fully aware of what happened. Part of it is trying to protect people's reputations even if they didn't do their job the way they were supposed to. She asked if they really wanted to make public everything that unfolded this summer for the record meaning making what the six members said public. She urged them to weigh that out because it may not be what they think.

Senator Taylor asked Director Rodriguez if there would ever be a point where more transparency is given on this situation in any form. In senate they were given the names of the people who resigned, but would they ever be given some backstory for transparency sake and for the students' sake.

Director Rodriguez said this would fall under personnel matters so technically no. She told Senator Taylor that if he would like to go talk to Aja and Gabbie individually, they directly interviewed all of the students. It was disheartening what they had shared. In retrospect, having learned that, the president had to reevaluate the whole situation. When students begin to feel damaged, we need to take a step back. Sometimes we're not prepared to accept the position that's handed to us. She said she is hoping Wes decides to reapply as a programmer. Being removed from one position doesn't mean you're not eligible for other positions.

b. Senator Reports

Senator Supple said she has been hiring interns. They will hear more about it on Wednesday.

Senator Luers said he has been working on the UNR PD coalition that's been created with Senator Torres and Chief Justice Pride. They are working with the ACLU and are hoping to start legislation regarding that coalition soon. He said he has also been continuing his work with Senator Stoddard and the executive branch with the initiatives for street name changes and the art projects in the name of social justice.

Senator Stoddard said he was working with Senator Abrams and a number of others to find a place for a protein bar in or around the gym or to fill in the empty space in the Joe on the first floor. He has also been looking into the deputization of police forces to eliminate the city aspect.

Senator Kidd said she has been working with Senator Stoddard and a number of others on the juice bar. She also set up a meeting with Director Turk to gage her opinions on the grade replacement policy. She is also setting up a meeting with Dr. Shannon Ellis and Senator Yang on the same topic.

Senator Chantiyanon said she finished helping write a legislation but doesn't have anything on her plate right now.

Senator Taylor said he attended Service Palooza and talked to three groups. One group specifically offered marketing for internships. He is also working with Senator Torres on legislation for creating a diverse studies course and opening up courses that are more diverse. He also had a meeting with Senator Doyle.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

Senator Kidd said several constituents have talked to her about science labs going completely online but still charging the lab fee. They asked if they were going to get any refunds on that. She said she didn't know if she should bring this up in public comment here or in senate.

Senator Luers said Senator Kidd should bring that up in public comment in senate. He also said since she had a meeting scheduled with Dr. Shannon Ellis, she could ask her then. She could also schedule a meeting with the dean of undergraduate students.

Senator Supple said Senator Kidd should bring it up in public comment tomorrow because Marc Johnson will be there.

Director Rodriguez said the committee was impressive. She is always going to challenge them to start from the constitution and work their way down. She will ask them to exemplify the way the federal government is set up in their own government.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Senator Taylor adjourned the meeting at 5:30 pm.