Associated Students of Central Washington University Candidates

First Public Debate Questions and Responses*

*Only includes questions that couldn’t fit in the time crunch of the debate
# 2020 Candidate Responses from First Public Debate

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*Questions may have been modified for clarification
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Question by Anonymous Attendee
My question is for all candidates, what role do they play on a team?

Answers

Mickael Candeleria  Candidate for President

Whenever I work on a team I find myself being the team mom/dad/parent. Whether that is guiding and facilitating discussions that the team is having, but also recognizing and supporting whatever the rest of the team has to say. Recognizing and acknowledging what the other team members have to say is incredibly important to me because I want all voices and opinions to be heard.

Email: mickael.candelaria@cwu.edu
Instagram: mickael4prez2020
Facebook: Mickael Candelaria for ASCWU President 2020

Josh McRae  Candidate Senate Speaker

On a team, I tend to be a quiet leader. I will always try to listen before I speak, and to truly understand the topic that I’m speaking on. If I don’t have anything new and useful to add, why should I speak over those who do? That doesn’t mean I’m idle though. Even when it may seem like I’m not contributing to the discussion at hand, I am always thinking and evaluating my understanding of the problem and what’s being discussed by others. I am a very logical and analytical person. My goal is always to solve problems, and I will do as much as possible to make things easier for my community. Even if I don’t have a solution, I can find the next step along the journey towards one.

Email: Joshua.bergener@cwu.edu
Facebook: Josh McRae for ASCWU Senate Speaker

Nathan Rawson  Candidate for Director of Student Life and Facilities

I believe that being part of a team is very important. If we do not have teams as student government, we will not accomplish much in the year.

Email: nathan.rawson@cwu.edu
Instagram: nateforASCWU
Facebook: Nathan Rawson for ASCWU

Yunus Timurtas  Candidate for Executive Vice President

Being a good team player for ASCWU is the most important success key because we are going to be the VOICE of 10,000+ students at CWU campuses and all CWU Students. Not only with ASCWU members and you have to be team up with all students to make sure their voices are heard! I probably would answer this question by saying that I probably play as a team player for the role because I am a good listener and I want to make sure that team dynamics running smoothly. I want to make sure that all team players in which students voices heard and have their issues delivered to places where
they need to be. My current position on Office for International Studies and Programs as Program Coordinator assistant. I need to make sure that all International student's issues delivered to the office and create the events for their need base with my other team players. If I elected, At the top of my priorities is to serve the CWU community and ensure that all student populations are heard across campus. ALL meaning students of all races, color, gender, disability, identity, ALL campuses of CWU...ALL students!

Email: yunus.timurtas@cwu.edu
Instagram: yunustimurtas2020

Brandon Wear-Grimm  Candidate for Executive Vice President

When I’m on a team, I really enjoy being someone who supports the rest of teammates and offer a helping hand whenever I can. I think this personal attribute plays very well with being the executive vice president. The Exec. VP is a supportive role for the president and serves as the advisor role to rest of their officers in a financial sense. One of my favorite leadership quotes by Lao Tzu that I like to live my life by is, “To lead people, walk behind them.” This is a great way to put how I see myself on a team. I like to be someone who lets others cultivate ideas and grow as I walk behind them and help make those ideas become reality. As Exec. VP, I can do exactly that for you. I can help advise and support my fellow officers and the rest of the student body create more by helping make student money at CWU more accessible and help make greater programs feasible to enhance our student experience.

Email: brandon.wear@cwu.edu
Instagram: brandon4vp2020
Facebook: Brandon Wear-Grimm for Executive Vice President

Ashley-Sue Vizguerra  Candidate for Director for Student Life and Facilities

I am usually the organizer in a group. While I am very good at leading, when I am in a group setting, I like to let whoever is in charge of that specific task lead. My company has allowed me to become very organized in implementing what things need to be done, and I am the same in a group setting when I am not the lead.

Email: ashley-sue.vizguerra@cwu.edu
Instagram: ashleysue_cwu
Facebook: Ashley-Sue Vizguerra 2020
Question by Edgar Carreno

Being that the EVP sits on the Services and Activities Fee Committee and with the end of the quadrennium next year what will you do to make sure that the actions and decisions of the services and activities fee committee are communicated with the campus community and how will you make sure all students are taken into consideration when making these decisions (i.e. university center students)?

Answers

Yunus Timurtas  Candidate for Executive Vice President

I experienced myself that I did not know about the S&A committee stands for and there was such a thing until the middle of the Winter Quarter. One of my duty is sitting on the S&A Committee. I want to make sure that all students would know what exactly we are going to do on the committee. I will be using social media and face to face interaction with students about communicate with students and make sure all students are taken into consideration when making these decisions. I also going to work for the center council closely and I will make sure that the students who are in university center campuses would be able to access our S&A committee with teleconference technique. Whether I elected or not, I will make sure that the student's voices are heard on all committees and will increase student involvement on these committees to represent their fellow friends.

Brandon Wear-Grimm  Candidate for Executive Vice President

As the current Chair for the Services & Activities Committee, I have seen this issue. Before this year, there were no actions or criteria in place to make sure that the money being allocated to base-funded departments and supplemental requests were being spent for the purpose of benefitting the students, nor was the impact being measured in anyway. With this process, there was no justification or reasoning to the spending of the committee being shared with the students. Luckily, thanks to the efforts of this year’s committee, we have gotten qualitative data that we can now track and record to inform the students of the S&A fee allocations. If elected Exec. VP, I hope to make sure there is diverse representation on the S&A committee to make sure as many student needs and concerns as possible are addressed during the new allocation of student money as the quadrennium comes to an end. I also hope to make sure that any propositions to reallocate money are addressed with the entire student body – including university center students, marginalized and underrepresented students, and our fully online students – through public forums, promotion, and polling.

Every student should be aware of where their money is being spent and be able to voice their thoughts on the matter. With your support, I can make this information accessible to all and make sure that our student money is being spent by the students AND for the students!
Question by Jasmin Washington

ESC: If there is a face mask requirement in the fall, how do you think this will affect POC’s?

Answers

Leilani Salu  
Candidate for Director of Equity and Multicultural Affairs

Thank you for the question. I believe that if there were mask requirements, this can have a negative impact on POCs (students and faculty) due to stereotypes which criminalize and misrepresent them. In order to comply with CDC policy and acknowledge the systemic barriers which ‘categorize’ POCs in such boxes, I feel that it is up to the university to break these misconceptions through workshops, events, even PSAs outlining the regulations for Fall, what the school is doing to ensure equitable practices, and what they expect of students/community alike. I don’t think the responsibility falls on student orgs to respond, but instead the university to protect its students from these harsh misrepresentations.

Email: Leilani.salu@cwu.edu
Instagram: lei_4ascwu
Question by Anonymous Attendee

What experience do the candidates for Student Life have with working with Equity clubs and/or Orgs?

Answers

Nathan Rawson  
Candidate for Director of Student Life and Facilities

I am currently the Vice President of the Law and Justice Club, where I have been spearheading activities for the LAJ program and students. I have also served as a Sophomore Representative at my transfer college. In that role I planned major events and also handled legislative activities. I have held numerous leadership positions while in high school that oversaw event planning. I have the knowledge and skills to be able to best serve the students of Central!

Ashley-Sue Vizguerra  
Candidate for Director for Student Life and Facilities

While I was working at Pierce College I worked for the ADS office taking notes for students in classes. I worked closely with them to make sure that students who were unable to take notes could still receive the notes for their subjects. During my time working with Student Life on the Westside, I have thrown events honoring APAHM (Asian Pacific American Heritage Month), Black History Month, Alternative Thanksgiving in honor of Native American History Month, Mental Health Awareness, and have helped a student start a Women in Business club. While our clubs are lacking in the University centers, I have made my mission to educate students.
Question by Anonymous Attendee
This question is for Ashley-Sue. Do you feel there are barriers to managing the facilities aspect of your position while attending a satellite campus? If so, how will you navigate these barriers and still be involved in the facilities aspect?

Answers

Ashley-Sue Vizguerra  Candidate for Director for Student Life and Facilities

This is a great question, and I admire your honesty in your concern. When I first started my journey on running for this position I asked very pointed questions about my ability to actually perform this job. I am the first-ever university center student to run for an ASCWU position. While this is an honor, it no doubt brings about challenges. If this Covid-19 pandemic has taught me anything, it is that anything is possible with technology. It is true that I will be sitting on boards and meeting with Orgs and clubs via Zoom or Skype, for the most part, but I do not believe this will prohibit my ability to give this position the justice it deserves. I am planning to drive out to the main campus as much as possible during my time in the ASCWU, but I recognize that for some this may not be comforting. For those students, all I can offer is that I am passionate about this position. I want to make a change, and I will not allow the barrier of my attending a satellite campus to hinder that.
Question by Anonymous Attendee

For the President candidates: What do you believe are the 3 biggest issues in higher education and what does advocacy around those issues look like in the time of COVID-19?

Answers

Mickael Candeleria  
Candidate for President

The three biggest issues in higher education overall: 1. The rising cost of tuition and fees 2. Declining enrollment rates and retention of current students 3. High turnover rates for faculty, staff, and administrators especially those from an underrepresented community.

The rising cost of tuition unfortunately is going to be difficult to advocate for due to inflation, but fees are something that ASCWU has a huge say in and this could be a huge issue next year as many departments could request a fee increase due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Declining enrollment and low completion rates is also going to result from the pandemic, so it is going to be more important than ever to have resources and support available for perspective and current students. Turnover rates for faculty/staff/admin of color seems to be an issue specific to CWU. A lot of our faculty of color are not receiving tenure even though they are just as qualified if not more qualified than their white counterparts. Faculty and staff of color are also pushed to step into different roles on-campus to promote “diversity” and “inclusion” on top of their workload already which makes them burnt out. In terms of advocacy in times of COVID-19, a lot of it is going to be through shared governance via online modalities. Connecting with administrators, professional staff, and even legislators to ensure that we are advocating for these concerns and how it effects the student body. Voicing that resources like more online support services for tutoring, more online mental health counselors, and distributing resources EQUITABLY instead of equally. Also having students serve on tenure review committees and search committees to help with the high turnover rates of faculty and staff of color can help show student support and unity.

Cece Mortimer  
Candidate for President

I believe that the three biggest issues in higher education are: cost of tuition, accessibility to resources and the lack of representation in professors and faculty at these institutions. Many students are discouraged from attending college because they can’t afford the costs associated with attending college. A way that you can advocate for tuition costs is the promotion of scholarships to lower income students and communities. Especially during COVID-19 it is essential to make sure that all potential students are aware of the costs and are sure of the different ways that they can receive funding for school. When I first attended CWU, I did not know about many of the different resources that were available to me as a student. During this pandemic, mental health and wellness is extremely vital and being able to accommodate some of their needs is extremely important in this environment. Some of these resources that I was unaware of are Student Medic and Counseling Center and different scholarship opportunities that are available to all students. Being more present online and promoting these different opportunities is vital because of how everything has transitioned to online.

Email: chicena.mortimer@cwu.edu
Instagram: cece4prez_
Question by Anonymous Attendee

In regards to sustainability, what are some tactics to create more sustainable practices for people to follow at CWU? What ideas would you have?

Answers

Mickael Candeleria  Candidate for President

Recognizing that I am not a professional or knowledgeable about sustainability I want students who are knowledgeable and experienced to take the reins next year and have ASCWU support their projects and efforts. I would love for ASCWU to request base funding from S&A solely dedicated for CWU students (typically students who are majoring in environmental science or a related major) to request funds from to implement sustainability practices on our campus. We have a new seat on the Student Senate called the Sustainability senator and I am hoping that senator can chair the campus sustainability council for students to request these funds for sustainability projects while also serving as the student counterpart to our new Sustainability Coordinator Dr. Kathleen Klaniecki to help promote and implement more sustainability practices on-campus than ever before.

Josh McRae  Candidate Senate Speaker

To be perfectly transparent, I don’t know yet. Up until this point in my leadership development and responsibilities, keeping up to date with sustainability at CWU has not been a problem I needed to understand. However, I do understand its importance. If I am elected Senate Speaker, this problem is one of the few where I will begin my term by meeting with various admin and professionals that understand the problem so that I may become educated on the issues we face, the steps we’ve already taken to solving them, and the step we’re looking toward to move us forward. No one can know everything, and I am always ready to learn more.

Cece Mortimer  Candidate for President

One tactic is color coordinating the different utensils that are given with meals in the SURC dining. For example: all recyclable items being the same color and the same as items that are designated with trash. Another tactic is to decrease the number of one use items so that we are also decreasing the amount of trash in and around campus. For instance, in Holmes dining they use metal silverware and real plates. Incorporating a strategy like this for the SURC is a possibility, but I am aware that this may be harder to institute.

Nathan Rawson  Candidate for Director of Student Life and Facilities

I think that sustainability is very important for our campus. I would love to talk with dining services and be able to see where we can cut down on waste. I hope we can make dining services more sustainable. I also would like to look at the possibility of solar power on campus and making the campus self-sufficient.
Brandon Wear-Grimm  Candidate for Executive Vice President

Absolutely! If elected your new executive vice president, I want to help students create more sustainable practices and operations on our main campus, and our university centers. Besides making sure student money is available for these students to create sustainable initiatives, I have a few practices/ideas I would like to implement on campus. Within the SURC and our academic buildings, walls are riddled with paper. This way of promotion uses an extraordinary amount of paper and creates a lot of waste, transitioning billboards to energy-efficient electronic screens would be a great first step. However, there’s an immediate change I could implement if elected your Exec. VP, all of our 29 committees (soon to be over 30 next year) use paper to conduct their meetings. With committees meeting weekly and having upwards of 50 attendees at a time, a lot of paper is wasted. These committees can easily transition to paper-less practices as their agendas and minutes can be conducted electronically and dispersed through avenues like email. I believe we can start with paperless transition and go further!

Ashley-Sue Vizguerra  Candidate for Director for Student Life and Facilities

Sustainability is no doubt a necessity as we continue to use our planet's resources in large quantities. Some ideas I have it to first educate students. Making sure that students understand the why and how’s of sustainability (such as how to reuse glass, since it is no longer accepted for recycling at the SMaRT center). One thing I would like to implement is a donation drive at the end of the year. As students leave their RH and begin the pack to head home, there are undoubtedly items that end up in the trash. By creating a donation drive for students to receive or give items for themselves or an organization would help reduce the number of items being tossed that could be used by someone else. I have long been a believer in donations in order to reduce the number of new materials I am purchasing.
Question by Anonymous Attendee
Question for CeCe; You listed three Orgs that you have worked with or been apart of. Can you tell what you have done with MECHA and CASA this year?

Answers

Cece Mortimer Candidate for President

Great question! ESC Organizations usually have a specific quarter(s) or a month(s) where they showcase their culture. For example, FASA has Mabuhay in the fall as well as Barrio Fiesta in the spring and BSU has February with ‘Being Black in Ellensburg’, partnering with the ABS department for their open house, this year, surrounding the history of Mardi Gras, and Showtime at Central. MEChA partners with the Diversity and Equity Center in the fall for Día de los muertos which I would have loved to be there and support them with that event but I was with the BSU in Seattle feeding the homeless this year. MEChA also has RAZA Grad (now called Raíces Grad) in the spring that I was planning to help them with, like I did last year, (with setting the stage, tables, photo booth, and ushering the grads & their families) but COVID-19 happened so all ESC Organization’s graduations were cancelled. For CASA, their big event to showcase their culture is unfortunately in the spring as well with African Night that I had also helped them with last year with cooking the dinner, serving the food, and directing the acts for the night. So aside from that I was only able to help those organizations with fundraising & helping create posters with MEChA for their protest against Ellensburg’s ICE contract.

I would also like to add that my involvement with those organizations as well as with the BSU was the highlight of my first year at CWU. That it extended way past going to weekly meetings. I’ve actually befriended many of the people in those organizations and they welcomed and accepted me for who I am, which allowed me to broaden my safe space while being here in Ellensburg so I want to thank them for that.
Question by Anonymous Attendee

Question for Mickael: When you were the VP of Student Life, you had a diverse staff. Can we expect to see that if you are elected as ASCWU President?

Answer

Mickael Candeleria Candidate for President

While I will never tokenize my staff, I am so happy I had such a diverse staff team this year because I was truly able to have a wide array of different perspectives and ideas to implement Wildcat pride on-campus. I will definitely advocate to have a diverse staff team next year, if elected.
Question by Anonymous Attendee
Question for Multicultural Affairs candidates: What are your main areas of concern or things you want to accomplish if you are elected?

Answer

Leilani Salu Candidate for Director of Equity and Multicultural Affairs

Thank you for the question. If I were to be elected, the main areas I would want to accomplish/focus on are:
- Constitution Changes: I want to make the ESC Constitution more concise and transparent for current and future organizations. Some of the language which is used in the current constitution can be confusing, and acts as a barrier for current and future orgs. I also want to make an amendment in light of recent events (COVID-19) which will outline alternative measures to fulfilling hours and the like.

- Accessibility/Consistency initiatives: I want to make the processes for ESC more efficient and easy to do. Recently there was miscommunication with hours for orgs last quarter, to where hours were either missing or not documented correctly. To prevent this, I want to put processes like submitting hours in an online platform like presence to make it more accessible and consistent for both the orgs and executive board. Paperwork for funding requests, etc are other things I would like to put online, so orgs can be able to see if they’re standing, hours, etc. anytime and at anywhere.

- Funding: with the expansion of ESC, sitting at 11 orgs (the most it’s been), I want to ensure that there is funding for all orgs with the addition of funding for programming/recruitment opportunities.
Question by Anonymous Attendee

Question for President candidate: As far as hiring committees go, many students have voiced that they dislike the woman selected as a new provost. What steps will you take to ensure the student voices are truly heard if you are elected?

Answer

Mickael Candeleria          Candidate for President

I personally have yet to meet our new Provost/VP for Academic and Student Life, Dr. Michelle DenBeste, however, I know that she was not the student body’s first choice to serve in this position. If there is still discourse from the student body, it is going directly to President Gaudino as he provides oversight over the Provost to bring student issues and concerns and the number of students who have had issues. The Provost/VP for Academic and Student Life position is incredibly pivotal to the student experience at CWU so it is important that we have a Provost that aligns with the student body’s wants and desires.
# 2020 Candidate Responses from First Public Debate

## Additional Candidates Contact Information

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edgar Espino</td>
<td>Candidate for Director of Governmental Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:edgar.espino@cwu.edu">edgar.espino@cwu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram: edgar.espino2020</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madeline Koval</td>
<td>Candidate Senate Speaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:madeline.koval@cwu.edu">madeline.koval@cwu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram: madelinekoval_4_senatespeaker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob Robles</td>
<td>Candidate for Director of Equity and Multicultural Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:jacob.robles@cwu.edu">jacob.robles@cwu.edu</a></td>
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