

Services and Activities Committee
Meeting Minutes
April 8, 2025

Called to order:

Eli called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

Attendance:

Erin Sargent, Arik Spring, Robbi Goninan, Eli Alvarado, Mia Young, Nicholas Villa, Oscar Martinez, Marisol Torres Alcantar, Nick Moreno, Ian Seymour

Absent: Yahir Calderon Sotelo

Guests: Verónica Gomez Vilchis, Ruben Cardenas, Lola Gallagher, Brandon Mattesich, Charlotte McNeely, Jessica Thomas, Josh Nelson-Ichido, Jennifer Green, Eun Young Lee, Emma Muhlbauer, Charlotte Zombro, Kyley Glenn, Z Morris, Robin MacArthur, Lizbeth Valdes, Keaton Weyers, Caleb Cleland, Zoey Ryan, Katrina Nolan, Austin Hardebeck, Brian Valencia, Gunner Stuns, Jackson Roberts, Jonathan Fritz, Jennifer Mertel, Craig Chapo

Agenda:

MOTION: Arik made a motion to move the agenda from 4/8/25. Nick M seconded. Motion Carried. 4 (yes), 0 (no), 2 (abstentions)

Minutes:

MOTION: Arik made a motion to approve the minutes from 3/14/2025, 3/15/2025, and 3/17/2025. Nick M seconded. Motion Carried. 4 (yes), 0 (no), 2 (abstentions)

Reports

I. Chair:

- a. Reviewed the guidelines for public meetings in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.
 - i. This includes maintaining decorum for Public Comments, which means no shouting, name calling, or personal attacks. Speak respectfully and keep the comments directed to the committee as a whole. Speakers are given up to 3 minutes to comment.

II. Advisors:

- a. They received a response from Joel Klucking regarding the ASCWU Senate Supplemental Approval Dunk tank, which was approved.

III. ASCWU:

- a. They will bring the 4% increase to the next ASCWU Public Meeting. They will share the results with the Committee after that meeting.

Communications Received

- a. Many were received and put into the folder for the committee's review

- a. These will be posted on the S&A website following the Meeting Minutes

Public Comment

Jackson Roberts:

- We are speaking on the behalf of the students and faculty who work on Central Student Media Outlets: The Observer and PULSE Magazine. We are Jackson Roberts, Brandon Mattesich, who have joined virtually, and we are the co-editor and chiefs of the Observer as well as joined by Gunner Stuns, the editor and chief of PULSE magazine and plenty of our staff who are joining us as well.
- During Spring Break, we received notice that the S&A committee planned to defund the Observer, an institution that has been a part of CWU campus for over a hundred years and serves as the voice of the students as well as the quarterly student magazine, PULSE magazine. We implore you to please reconsider this decision and to seriously look at the ramifications of completely defunding student media. If this decision is to pass it will mean the silencing of student voices as well as a free and independent student press by the students for the students in a time when journalism matters now more than ever. To cite a well-known quote, “A key purpose of journalism is to provide an adversarial check on those who wield the greatest power by shining a light on what they do in the dark and informing the public about those acts as well.”
- Based on what we read in published deliberations, we would like to clarify some key points about how the student media function and the history of the funding from the S&A Committee. Student media at CWU are funded by fees paid by students and is signed by the S&A Committee. Our traditional funding by student fees ensures independent and free press as I said *by the students for the students* and this happens all on the CWU campus.
 - If we were funded by the administration, we might be limited by that administration on what we could cover, and we work on behalf of student interests. We are also overseen by an independent student media board and not by faculty or administrators, and students make all content decisions at the Observer and PULSE magazine.
- In the S&A Committee minutes from March 17th, just last month, the committee announced its plans to defund the Observer and PULSE based on supposed violations of Killian’s guidelines, which are the basic principles governing the use of S&A fees. Yet, just a couple days earlier according to S&A Committee’s Minutes from March 14th, they originally planned to fund the Observer \$36,000 regardless of Killian’s guidelines for salaries, travel, and awards but no printing. Killian’s guidelines have never been an issue in the past, S&A has been funding student media in the same structure since the 1990s. In fact, we have received comments on our website since this news broke from a former president of the S&A fees Committee in the 1990s as well as a board member of the CWU BOT.
- The former president of the S&A fees Committee is Alyson Castonguay and they have this to say:

I served as the president of the S&A fees committee in the late 90s. A student paper is essential to a healthy campus community, and during my tenure, excellent journalism uncovering corruption in our student government. There’s a reason we need a free press. Very few institutions hold truth to power and a free

press is essential. College campuses are where these skills are learned and then tested.

- A comment from Ron Erickson who was on the BOT from 2011-2021 who said:
Funding for the Observer should be reinstated. The Observer is vital to the campus community and a great teaching and learning tool.
- The committee itself stated in the meeting that funding in the Observer “feels wrong and sad, but this is just a recommendation and still has to be approved by groups.” The proposal requires approval by administrators and trustees and we hope they realize that if funding student journalists and –

Gunner Stuns:

- I am the EIC at PULSE Magazine. Other aspects of the deliberations about PULSE and Observer suggest that committee should have come back to us for additional information. It is our understanding that members weren't aware, for example, that only a few students have paid roles and not all students. That Observer has a fully functioning website or that the \$1,000 copies printed each quarter for PULSE were all distributed and picked up.
- We are speaking here tonight to request that the S&A Committee's proposal be rejected and that the Observer and PULSE continue to receive proper funding for student hours, small staff, awards, professional memberships, office operations, and potential travel. When we applied for this round of funding, we requested the bare minimum to keep this campus institution afloat. In simplest terms, the \$1,100 for the Observer and \$2,000 for PULSE will not be enough to sustain these operations. This proposed budget is not a budget; it is a death sentence to one of CWU's longest running institutions and its most popular publications. While the Observer is ready to pivot to digital only, we strongly feel that PULSE should continue to be funded to print copies and distribute these on campus and in town. The print magazine has an avid readership, covers all aspects of student life, wins national awards (including the Pulitzer Prize of College Journalism, the Pacemaker), fulfills an essential public service, and moreover serves as an excellent representation of this university and its student community.
- As far as the Killian rules, let us explain that students in paid roles are putting in those hours on top of class credits. The Observer usually has 6-8 paid students and PULSE 3-4. If it would allow the S&A Committee to re-evaluate their proposals, the Communication department is willing to change its policies and separate paid roles for leadership from the class credit roles of other students on staff. However, we reiterate that S&A has been funding these paid roles in the current structure since the 1990s and some students deserve both the credit and paid hours based on how many hours they dedicate each week. These are positions of great responsibility. We are liable for what all of our student reporters publish, and we take our roles seriously. As editors in chief, we dedicate over 20 hours a week to these positions.
- The Observer serves a unique role on the campus as the voice of the students and a watchdog of campus administration, holding the powers that be accountable and shining a light on issues of concern to students. Past coverage of important issues in both the Observer and PULSE such as the Title IX concerns, complaints about dining, issues with on campus jobs, dorm problems, and critique of program staff faculty and administration has directly contributed to change in policies and improvements on campus with benefits for all students. Without us, some of these issues might not have come to light or been addressed.

- The fact that we've been able to put out the type of product we have and continue to win awards at the regional and national level, with the already limited funding we have as well as significantly fewer staff members compared to other universities, is a testament to the efforts of our leadership team and the entire staff. For example, just this weekend, some of our staff members are attending the Regional Society of Professional Journalist Conference in Portland because PULSE and Observer are finalists for best magazine, newspaper, website, and multi-media awards.
- Please reconsider the proposed defunding of your campus newspaper and magazine.

New Business:

- A. 2514: OUR Supplemental Funding Request
- a. Withdrawn request.

Old Business

None.

Public Comment – Second Call

Z Morris:

- I am the lead graphic designer at the Observer newspaper. The Observer newspaper, PULSE magazine, and all aspects of Student Media do a lot for our campus other than just being in journalism. I know that I would not have the portfolio, professionalism, and the support in networking that I do in this moment if it was not for student media in my professional career. I would just like to encourage you to consider the impact that it will have on many departments.

Adjournment:

MOTION: Arik made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:15PM. Ian seconded the motion. 5 (yes), 0 (no), 1 (abstentions)

Our next meeting will be April 15, 2025 (SURC 301) at 5:00pm.

Check out our website at www.cwu.edu/services-activities