



# UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–LA CROSSE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

2244 THE U 1705 BADGER STREET LA CROSSE, WI 54601 (608) 785-8775

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## **Student Senate Agenda**

Date: **Wednesday, March 24<sup>th</sup>**

Time and Location: **6:00pm; Zoom**

- I. Call to Order
  - a. 6:02
- II. Roll Call
- III. Consent Agenda
  - a. Approval of Minutes
    - i. Passes unanimously
  - b. Approval of Agenda
    - i. Ericson: I would like to add a discussion point on mental health.
    - ii. Schauberger: I am not sure how we would like to go about this, but could we have a moment of silence for Jules Joolsen?
    - iii. Passes unanimously
- IV. Guest Speakers
  - a. Mitch Reynolds
    - i. Reynolds: Thanks for having me, I am happy to be here with you in the meeting. I had an Instagram live with UWL Votes earlier and it was nice to be with my opponent and talk about important issues. I am a UWL graduate, I graduated in 1998; I raised my kids here, they graduated and live here as well. I manage Whole Tree Corp., a women-owned business. Before that, I was a news reporter here in La Crosse. I'm running for mayor because I feel that it is important to make sure that those who traditionally don't have a voice do have a voice. I want to empower diverse voices. Those who sleep on the street, all marginalized and oppressed people, I want to fight for equal opportunity. I want people to be able to go to UWL as a nontraditional student and go from poverty to having a family and a relatively successful career. My goal is for equity and to pursue those policies that focus on achieving social, racial, and environmental justice in our community. Focus on housing discrimination issues we face constantly. I'm not sure how many of you are on versus off campus. But 50% of our population lives in rentals and yet our renters don't have a lot of power and are frequently subject to poor living conditions. I want to make sure that we have someone in city hall that is advocating for them. At the minimum just providing information so renters know what their rights are. I have been focused on finding ideas on how to end homelessness in our community. I was a young person who had to beg couch stays from friends. We can end chronic homelessness by aggressively working towards a housing first policy within the city. This plan comes from the National Alliance to End Homelessness. We find homes with no strings attached, telling people, "let us help you to transition to living in a home". And it is up to then that person to begin to work on the other important issues. Mental health, drugs, finding a job, taking care of kids. Because you can't do any of that if you don't have a home. I talked a lot about quality affordable housing in the city. Because of the lack of that, people pay a lot to live in substandard living conditions. There are market values that create those conditions. Some landlords don't feel to invest more than they absolutely have to because they still make a



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lot of money without those investments. Those are among the things that I am focused on. Make sure that we address some key sustainability issues. Move forward with the city installing solar panels and hiring a sustainability coordinator in city hall. I don't really have a platform if you will, but those are my concerns. The keys are housing issues, empower diverse voices, and make sure that we are welcoming diversity as well as focusing on a sustainable future.

Mathu: There is an article on your website about increasing voter access. Would you commit holding city voting drives on campus or a drop off box on campus for absentee ballots if elected?

Reynolds: Yeah, they were opposed to that in the fall mainly due to political divides. I don't expect to have that divergence in city hall again. I would like to have one on campus and just have them in more places. Adding more drop boxes for sure where it makes the most sense. We have people who struggle with transportation and it is inconvenient to get to city hall to drop off their ballots. I've suggested a number of things including absentee ballot drop boxes. I didn't realize that we were limiting such access. I would also like to extend the hours for in person absentee voting. The hours don't have any sense we should make it rational for people with real lives. And also, not always have it at city hall because that is hard to get to for some people. Let's expand it to the north and south side community centers. We need to make sure that everyone can have their voice heard. We can do that through extended hours, additional spaces and drop boxes but also to make sure that the voting places are closer to the districts that they are for.

Korfmacher: Thanks for being here. This is a question from an Instagram account for leaders of the freshman class. How will you connect with the student government, if elected?

Reynolds: I talked to Justice Weaver who represents a large part of the 'college district' of La Crosse. There does seem to be a disconnect between city hall and the college. I felt that city government needs to be more proactive with people in the community. We accept that city government is there and we go there if we have problems and then get information about our problems. We need to change that dynamic so the government is proactive, telling citizens that this may affect you. Interact with at least student gov so there is that conversation going on. Parking, rentals, anything that City Hall needs to be reaching out to student government about, saying that "this may be important to those you represent. Please help your people get more information." It is super hard to find information about whatever you are interested in on the website. It isn't just sharing the information, but partly it is being more proactive about providing information to all. We shouldn't just pass by and wait for you to try to find it because it is confusing to find all the information you need. We should go to the citizens and say "We have something that may impact you, what do you think? And this is how you become engaged." Overall what I would like to see the city



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do with it is to make our website interaction better. Maybe put an FAQ page. Our police department is really good at social media constantly posting about all that stuff. I can imagine that other city departments can do that as well.

Schweiner: I'm sure you have heard the comments from the police union recently; would you support a citizen-supervised police board?

Reynolds: I am in favor of the subcommittee under the criminal justice management council. I support a creation of an additional advisory committee or oversight board. But we need to evaluate that. If there was, say a complaint from someone that police were acting poorly, that board would be able to follow that process through because individuals aren't going to do that but someone who is a board member will. We have a process in place of a police and fire commission but getting a complaint through there is a pain. More oversight isn't bad, and more transparency is definitely a good first step. We need to improve that discourse, I was very disappointed of their actions. Take a step back and look at what happened there. We can't exist as an inclusive government without citizen members, and this woman was volunteering her time and creating an environment to gather information, that was her job and for that, she gets pummeled on social media by the police association. I weighed in on it, as did the current mayor. I was so surprised. I was like, "What are you thinking? Why did you do that? How is it anything but corrupt?" Everything was taken down but it has become a campaign issue. The damage has already been done.

Cayo: I'm not sure how much you know about the way student senate is organized, but we have people organized by college, with representatives of each group and some minority organizations. What is your opinion for at large seats on the city council? Perhaps similar to what we do, have seats to represent minorities like the Hmong, Ho Chunk, and homeless communities?

Reynolds: What an interesting idea. I am not sure what the rules are. I think you can do that in Minnesota. I'll look into it. I think it is a great idea to represent those who are underrepresented. Once you are on the city council, bring it to me. I don't know what that would look like or if that is even legal in Wisconsin, but we can look into that for sure.

Ericson: If elected, you will be representing three universities. This means that you have plenty of educated people, how to take advantage of that. Involving people with expertise?

Reynolds: Actually, current university professors are helping me right now. We should value education and those who are educated to help us move forward. When faced with an issue, we should always ask one of the people who know what's going on. When I was a journalist, my first call was always to the university for sources. I already do consult with these people, and I plan on continuing that. I know that I don't know a lot of stuff. I know that there is a lot



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that I don't know, and a lot of people can help me. We need to do things that are fiscally smart, and also doing things that are addressing the needs of our community.

Xiong: The Hmong population is growing here in La Crosse. In fact, they are one of La Crosse's largest minorities. Should you get the position, what would be a way you address the needs of the Hmong community? There are a lot of resources in the community, but how would you address the needs and make sure that those are met.

Reynolds: I think close to 4% of the population is Hmong. We frequently overlook them and that is tragic. There is a wide technology gap that exists. Hmong people are frequently economically challenged, people don't have internet. And that is a shared experience with the pandemic, because poverty rates are higher for African Americans and Hmong populations. Our Hmong children had a much more difficult time doing homework and going to class. I am not suggesting that my fix is to get internet to everyone. But I met with Hmong leaders to hear what problems they believe there are. I want to put the people first. Not just some of the people, all of them. I am excited to address some of the gaps in equity that we have in our community. One of the key reasons I'm running is because of that. I am not the white savior; I need to listen to what these people need and do what they need. Pay attention to what those communities need. If you have any more questions, feel free to reach out to me through my website.

V. General Student Body Open Forum

VI. Officer Reports

a. **President:** Cate Wiza

- i. This is the period for President and Vice President campaigns to gather signatures. Not campaign times yet, that is against the bylaws.
- ii. I talked to the chair of CAPS about pass/fail grading for this semester. I gave both sides. Taking away spring break is a unique situation, it is hard to learn without a break. Online, living in a pandemic, added stress if taking a lot of credits and supporting yourself is all stressful and new. Some students think that "I'm paying for these classes, then I get to choose if I want a pass/fail system." Here's what I heard back: if we want to continue this, we would need a formal presentation, and they would vote on it. They don't believe that this change isn't big enough for the change in grading systems. They say that in the fall we didn't do a break and didn't do that pass/fail then. It is also important to remember that a pass/fail grade affects your GPA where a s/u wouldn't. they did say that they changed the dates for withdrawal already to accommodate changes. Do we want to pursue this? Is it a student right? I will do whatever you all want but I need to know what you all think.
- iii. Campus climate is holding a community event at 2:30 tomorrow. It is a space for students, faculty and staff for sharing emotions, connect with everyone. Check it out. I posted it on the Student Association and my personal Instagram. Share with your constituents.



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- b. **Vice President:** Olivia Ahnen
  - i. Free STI and HIV screening at the student health center. Make an appointment in the next two weeks over the phone. Share that info with your constituents!
  - ii. Stoles for graduation. We have those for student association. There are some left over from last year, but I need to know how many we need for this semester and the fall semester. Tomorrow I am going to start ordering. Doesn't matter if you are going to be involved next semester or not. I am sending info tonight so fill out the form.
  - iii. How you feel is more important than attendance or grades. Just let me know. I am flexible but just reach out. How you are feeling is most important. If you need a break, take it.
- c. **Director of Staff:** Faith Fisher
  - i. Update for the scholarship: we are over \$2,000. Many people out there are super supportive. I reached out to the Deans to collaborate on getting the word out, and they were all willing to do so.
  - ii. Read the interview with the Racquet that Camoya and I did!
  - iii. If you need anything, please let me know.
- d. **State Affairs Director:** Grant Mathu
  - i. Statewide election coming up on April 6<sup>th</sup>. You can go to city hall Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 9-2 to vote early.
  - ii. The State building commission rejected the whole of the capital budget. It looks like a procedural thing. I don't think they are just going to ignore this, but we will see how it all plays out.
- e. **Local Affairs Director:** Amy Schweiner
  - i. Rental assistance is back for Coulee Cap, if you need help with paying for rent, reach out to them. Might as well apply. Remember that the eviction moratorium ends soon. And look at the Homestead credit for taxes if you are an independent.
  - ii. If you have more ideas about MTU, we will be working on that this week. Let me know if you want to be involved in that!
  - iii. Vote in the election!
- f. **Inclusivity Director:** Camoya Evans
  - i. I have been gathering materials to post on the UWL's social media site about the Woman of Scholarship scholarship.
  - ii. I am finalizing my training for next week.
  - iii. I know that a lot of stuff has been happening with racial injustices and everything. Recognize that if it attacks your identity, figure out how to process that, find a support system. You can always chat with me.
- g. **Public Relations Director:** Holly Korfmacher
  - i. Working on the scholarship. Please share that stuff.
  - ii. Graphics to promote the Presidential and Vice-Presidential campaign. Those will come out and promote the election in general. It's hard to get people to vote so we need student involvement.
- h. **Sustainability Director:** Jake Myers
  - i. Take a moment to appreciate everything, go outside and enjoy the world since it is getting nicer outside.
  - ii. Green fund grants: managed to get a couple this semester. Andrew has a no touch



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- faucet one for the union. Have a small grant collaboration with President Wiza, and UWL period along with the Pride Center to create a Period pantry and getting some sustainable products in there. Also have our reusable bag grant, which we plan on distributing to people on the dining plans for a total of 1500 bags. We are hoping to have student submit artwork to be printed on the bags.
- iii. Looking forward, earth week is coming up, any ideas for events to get people together in a safe way, SFS is looking for ideas and so are we. We love trash pickups. Might do that. Other ideas are welcome too.
  - iv. Keep trying to get vaccinated.
- VII. Advisor Reports
- a. Burke: I am continuing to learn. The elections process is new so I am trying to figure out how I can support that process. I'm looking at a lot at the of end of the year purchases to make sure that everything gets wrapped up and processed. I know I am new, but I am here as a resource if you need anything. I can connect you with campus resources. My campus door is open virtually and physically.
- VIII. Committee & Organizational Reports
- a. Cayo: The Pride Center is hosting ally training on 4/14 at noon. The link is on social medias. A speaker coming on 4/13 at 7, Gabby Rivera. Also, the campus climate survey ends at end of the moth. Please complete.
  - b. Zwettler: reminder that the joint committee on free speech has the mayoral debate tomorrow. Should have been some graphics up with a QR code to submit questions sent out but I can do that again. Tomorrow at 6pm. All questions will be submitted by students.
- IX. Unfinished Business
- a. **SA2021-040**
    - i. Cayo: For context, we passed two of these last year, one for Student Association and one for Faculty Senate. We didn't see the point in doing it for all organizations last year if it couldn't be enforced, seeing as the student orgs committee couldn't do that last year. Now we have that enforcement piece in the other resolution.
    - ii. Passes with one abstention
  - b. **SA2021-041**
    - i. L'Ecuyer: This goes along with the last one, making sure that the student orgs committee can hold groups accountable when there is an infraction with hate and bias statement.
    - ii. Passes with two abstentions
- X. New Business
- a. **SA2021-042**
    - i. Wiza: This says that the commission shall consist of six voting members. And we need one more. Trying to fill it up so it is full, and they can operate. All you would need to do is just make those couple of meetings, ballot counting, and calling candidates. Yer will be the last member and Katie will be an alternate. This also will need to be passed tonight.
    - ii. Cayo: motion to suspend the two week rule

Passes unanimously



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iii. Resolution passes unanimously

b. SA2021-043

- i. Wiza: This is a resolution from the President of DSP. I wrote a resolution to formalize student senate support. I know Kyle is working on guidelines. Last summer, I wrote an exec order that told student orgs not to meet in person. Senate extended it into the fall semester. We didn't talk about it this semester. It is just the Cove and University Centers saying that you can't meet in person. Student athletes have been able to practice so orgs have brought this up as a fairness issue. There's no reason why they can't meet as long as they meet safely. I don't have a problem with that. We need to get more involved with our community.

Ericson: we do need to get back into normalcy. But with that, there is some oversight to make sure that people are adhering to guidelines. If student orgs are reserving rooms, I'm not sure how we can make sure that social distancing and all that is happening?

Wiza: Every time Olivia and I have been in the Union, there has always been a staff member walking around and telling people to wear masks and follow the guidelines. This isn't a free for all, this is just a support document. My thought process is that university centers will have a process for going about this. Every org should have an advisor and they can help make sure that everyone is following rules as well.

Zwettler: I was going to say what Cate said, it is my job as a building manager at the Union to enforce those policies.

Cayo: I would like to voice my support; I think that they should be able to do it if sport teams are. Outside of that, how we will prioritize who gets to use rooms. I don't know how many rooms allow for social distancing. This is a later conversation, but something to think about and if we can be involved with any process.

L'Ecuyer: I have a question regarding the faculty. Some faculty members are off campus or out of state and wondering what to do about that.

Wiza: What they would do if this was approved without a faculty member? Is that what you are asking?

Burke: We are working on a plan, a proposal, there are some checks and balances making sure that rules are being followed between building managers, some documents. We are trying to make sure that the advisor wouldn't need to be there. Some safety checks need to be there to make sure that protocols are being followed. Outlining results if people are caught not following that. Hope to have some info at our meeting next week.



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Zwettler: Will there be some attempt to integrate that with the student orgs committee? They could help with repercussions if orgs aren't following the guidelines.

Burke: I will add that.

Wiza: When we wrote that executive order this summer, that is what we had to do. What we had done was taken student orgs and have the committee work with reps from University Centers to make decisions if they were in violation. It wasn't like Olivia and I had to watchdog everyone.

Byrne: Is this for the remainder of the semester? Is it worth it to put the work into this, given that it is already almost April? Most clubs don't do anything in May so that isn't very much time.

Wiza: I think it is, human connection is really important. We have had a lack of it. If it only helps 5 people, I can go to bed happy. That is my mindset. Even if they don't use it, it is here if they need it. Just see some of your friends, make a networking connection.

Julson: I feel like a lot of orgs recruit new people to UWL and some of these meetings might be vital to having new freshman coming. In person interaction is unique and it is about time that we start getting back.

Burke: I would like to add on to that. Nothing is promised. The proposal involves outdoor tabling and programs. Includes meetings in rooms for up to 10, tabling and outdoor programs. Those are the things that we are going to try to incorporate for the rest of semester but it all still needs to be approved.

**c. SA2021-044**

- i. Wiza: The traditional student regent position will be vacant in May. The Presidential council met to discuss who we think would be best at this position. We reviewed resumes and cover letters. The endorsements come from the UW schools. Olivia and I reviewed the applications as well. I will write an endorsement letter and send this out supporting this candidate. It would be great if we could pass this tonight.
- ii. Zwettler: Motion to suspend the two-week rule  
Pass unanimously
- iii. Cayo: I am not sure if y'all have this info but why this person? Why did you like this person?

Wiza: I won't share their materials. But they have a lot of experience. The uw Madison board they have had a big role in that and had a lot of experience in that. Well-written cover letter, saying that they are a great





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advocate for students because of drive and determination and wanting to make the position better after they leave. Also, they gave a good presentation at that meeting.

iv. Passes unanimously

d. **SA2021-045**

i. Wiza: This waiving signature requirements happened last fall and spring. This is just a kindness. I need this to be passed tonight.

ii. Zwettler: Motion to suspend two-week rule.  
Passes unanimously.

iii. Cayo: is there a reason that we don't have this happen for President and Vice President?

Wiza: You have to collect 25 each is reduced, not suspended. That's what it is now. Normally, each candidate would need 50.

Naviochick: I know this probably isn't applicable, but the method of collecting signatures isn't user friendly and I was confused with the process.

Wiza: I didn't make that, but I will bring that up.

iv. Passes unanimously

e. **SA2021-046**

i. Byrne: y'all are probably aware of this by now. Betsy had new information that we used to edit this resolution since only 42 faculty actually use it. Recommend to Faculty Senate that they reduce the use of monitor, given that it is not inclusive for students with tech issues.

XI. Discussion

a. Mental health

i. Ericson: We have touched on one of the events of the past week, and it is clear that students are struggling. I am curious to know what we can do to put a smile on people's faces. I was thinking about bringing posters to Badger street and just showing that we support everyone.

Byrne: Maybe this is unrealistic, but I think that if we recommend to faculty senate, that on the first beautiful day, take out one assignment, lengthen the due date, or end class early or something that would be great just to give everyone a break.

Xiong: If you could get band or musical folks around campus, that would be fun to cheer everyone up.

Cayo: I know during exam weeks they bring in emotional support animals, and that might be good for now.



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Baumann: In the past, if you take a sticky note with positive notes around campus, that makes people happy.

Wiza: we will put them up everywhere!

Cayo: We could do letter writing. Just drop where to send a letter in a survey and someone else could write if they are participating. Like pen pals! Somebody just needs to talk to students and give them resources.

Ericson: It seems like we have a lot of ideas. I think we should just do something sweet. Come back next week and revisit.

- XII. Announcements
- XIII. Adjournment
  - a. 7:51