

All questions have been highlighted in RED for ease of identifying questions among answers and updates

Updates have been highlighted in PURPLE for ease of identifying updates among answers and questions

Description of the room:

Artzen 100, partially filled with students, on the stage are 8 chairs and a podium with two mics one on either side of the stage, on the whiteboard next to the projector screen is a poster with big black print reading: “who is Jackie Thurman/ She has engaged in the following: misappropriation of funds, workplace violence/intimidation, harassment, conflict of interest with Leonard Jones, mishandling of queer issues.”

On the walls additional posters read “we do not feel safe in our own home” and “We are over 1500 voices strong.” outside students hold additional signs and cheer when RAs and allies enter the building.

As more students enter the signs that were held outside are posted on walls and in front of the stage “you make \$8000 every two weeks, we make \$36 can you say that you reach out to more students than us”, “2 weeks training, 12 hours per day \$24. That’s 18 cents per hour”, “You are Students First”, “We RAs Care about your safety on campus”, “4 complaints lodged with human resources and 2 with equal opportunity office”, “help us improve university residences” and many more. At 7:07 the hall is almost completely filled with more students trickling in every minute (400 in attendance, 445 is room capacity).

The lights are dimmed by Bryce Hammer: She welcomed people and asked people to close doors and remain quiet. Bryce Hammer and Wayne Rocque facilitate.

Opening address-

Two RAs welcomed the admin. They love their jobs and think they are essential to life on campus and remarked that there have been several issues with res life and they are trying to bring attention of those issue to the admin They believe that the department uses high turnover rates to avoid dealing with res life issues.

They want to collaborate with admin to improve the conditions on campus and the accountability. They thanked Admin for showing up to talk to us. (A round of applause to the AS for listening to student concerns)

The admin Present were.

Sabah Randhawa

Eileen Coughlin

Leonard Jones
Ted Pratt
Cheryl Wolf
Karen Stout
Scott Leppla
Holly Diaz

Opening AS Address- The AS Board of Directors

Wayne Rocque (he/him) and Bryce Hammer (she/hers) introduced themselves. The AS stands firmly with the RAs, the events that have happened have shown how hard it is for students to be heard by staff, Student employees deserve the respect. They stand with all student workers, but noted that the RAs need our help the most right now.

RAs will fill the first 30 minutes with questions for the admin, answers will be 2 minutes. The RAs all have green and red cards: the green cards are flashed in support or agreeance of a statement and red cards are flashed for disagreement and dissent. There is live feed where you can post questions. Students at Large will ask questions at the end

Questioning Period-

- Nikhil Amin for Leonard: **“There are different populations of students for different RAs, is it fair? Why?”**
 - Leonard- we are shooting for an ideal ratio, 68 residents per RA seems a bit high. We are currently a little bit out of whack. There are some areas where we are a bit high, we should be hiring additional staff. If there are floors below the ideal number, we should fill them.
 - In future tense right now, we should take a look at that this upcoming fall.
 - **“Does being out of whack mean you are not aware of how many students are in a given location?”**
- Jennifer Becerril- **“What is the hiring process for variety on the gender spectrum, how do you have more inclusion for non-binary students?”**
 - Leonard- We have to recognize what the national approaches are, what are the best practices. Inclusion is a value we all share. How do we go about this intentionally?

- Annie Gordon for Leonard: “how are you going to replace the identity wheel?”
 - Leonard- Identity wheel has been identified as a problem, it will be discontinued, we will work with RAs to come up with something new with the focus of that being the RAs.
 - Sabah- the equal opportunity office should be involved with that project.
 - Follow up form SHADO- “they haven’t listened to the feedback from last quarter that RAs provided”
 - Leonard- We need to have more people involved in that conversation, each staff should have those conversations, we should be more involved

- Patrick Kissinger for Eileen: “western Alerts are untimely, late, and downplay severity. Western downplays severity for public image. How is the content of Alert decided”?
 - Eileen passed it off to Vice President for University Relations, Steve Swan- “they are written by director of communications along with whichever police chief is on duty at the time, depending on circumstances of event at the time.”
 - -The Information included is in line with the national university protocols.
 - “How do I keep myself safe on campus if I don’t know what is happening?”
 - We give out information with what we have at the time
 - Clarification from student on scene- “On duty RA during event in November, cops knew what was going on. In Fact, the officer told me he was a felon at the time”
 - - the assessment was made based on the information time
 - Scott from Gamma “What kind of update are you going to provide?”
 - -that’s a great point. It’s something that we struggle with. We hear that we send too much information. (red cards - students disagree) We can work on that.
 - Bryce Hammer- people have lots to say, we will return to it later

- Caley Stafford for Leonard “what happens when we hit our cap and need to do more than 19 hours?
 - Talk to your RD if there is an “unforeseen circumstance” where you have to work more. If you are going above, it is his expectation that

you work with your supervisor to make sure you don't have to do so again.

- “What do we do, it happens in the middle of the night or a test, do we turn them away? Do we call your RD?”
- Leonard- I hope your RD can help. When you have that situation, when it becomes 21 or 22 the next day you converse with your RD to go forward
- Eileen- we need more structure. RAs need more breathing room; we can't prevent it happening but we can make sure it happens less. How do we take the RA workload and help? Under this question is that the RA is overworked, we need to make these situations a rarity. We will work on it.
- Ben Morgan- “survey of RAs shows only 2 RAs working 19 hours a week minimum everyone else works 35+ hours. How are you going to solve this?”
 - Leonard- We have to look to the RDs. We can't schedule so many mandatory things close to the 19-hour line. We need to survey more; we need RAs to be at the table as we develop this.
(surveys were already provided to Leonard by employees multiple times)
 - “We are contractually obligated to not exceed the 19 hours a week, do you want to go over that to deal with the problem.”?
 - Leonard- go over in an Emergency and the next day talk to RD to make sure it doesn't happen again.
 - Sabah- make a culture that involves RAs in the process so it doesn't happen again.
- Presley Sytsma (Fairhaven) for Leonard: “what areas of training are getting cut to make fall training 8 hours instead of 12?”
 - Scott Leppla We have a tracking system for this, we will reduce moving around campus to save time. Move much of the content to online, have more practice and less lectures on stage, we will prioritize what is most necessary. The online stuff will be more of police, wellness, and dining. We will also have a better version than we did this year. (red card for Aramark being good). A little bit will come out of everywhere. We have good opportunities this year.
- Emily Gaston (highland) for Leonard and Ted; “You use victim blaming language. How will you change?”
Citing victim blaming language used by Ted Pratt as reported to the Bellingham Herald.
(<http://www.bellinghamherald.com/news/local/article42031710.html>)

Leonard used victim blaming language in the past by exclaiming that if the doors were locked, this wouldn't have happened.

- Ted- we use title nine to word things and offer services (university police, dean of students, and title IX)
 - Eileen- we don't say things like (it wouldn't have happened if you had locked your door) that is wrong. We need to value the victims.
 - “If you all directly share that thought, how are you going to pass that along to the staff going forward.”
 - Eileen- we need to go through the system more, we should have the EOO talk about that specifically. We need to take more action.
- Micah Rubart- “Some res halls have three locked doors between their rooms and potential felons, others have one, is that equally safe?”
 - Leonard- all halls are safe (red cards everywhere) We are looking at safety and security, more card readers and less literal keys. My hope is that next year the software will make residents safer, less literal keys.
 - “Returning to outdoor areas, sexual harassing messages on doors and felons breaking in to dorms are probably indicative of a lack of safety.”
 - Leonard- we have nothing but sympathy for the survivors of these instances, and we will make sure they don't happen again.
 - Bryce- moving on, campus security marked.
 - Leonard Pingol for Leonard and Eileen: “should you have to out yourself (sexual orientation and gender expression and identity) to fulfil job requirements”?

A large number of Student workers report many residents and employees being outed during this process.

- Leonard: no.
- Scott Leppla: we added it three years ago because students and RAs wanted to talk more. You aren't required to say anything you don't want to. The wheel itself has caused issue and we don't need it, but we got there because RAs called for it
- “RAs such as myself, have brought up options, and for the sake of consistency were shot down. The training you mentioned didn't really address the wheel at all.”
- Leonard- we need to do a better job as administration, we need to bring in RAs. RAs shouldn't have to do that; other members of staff should have been more receptive.

- Chloe Callahan- “should you pay ESC (Ethnic Student Center) employees to appear in advertisements for residences?
 - Leonard- We didn’t do that
 - “Yes you did, three student employees in the ESC will cite it. Why?”
 - Leonard- I ‘m not aware of the situation, I ‘ll look into it.
Update: according to a clarification email sent by Jones, “good faith attempts were made by Residence Life staff to recruit students in Bellingham during summers months (whether from the ESC or other areas of campus), but because of the reduced student population during those times the efforts were many times not successful. Thus, the payment practice was implement 14 years ago. “
 - Leonard- I ‘m not aware of the situation, I ‘ll look into it.
Anne Lee “in response to concerns you mentioned involving RHA (residence hall association) and NRHH (national residence hall honorary) to provide solutions to gender inclusivity. Why not just use the QRC (Queer Resource Center) and EOO (Equal Opportunity Office), who want to be involved and are capable?”
(RHA & NRHH institute students that are not trained around issues of diversity)
 - Leonard- My response wasn’t meant to be exclusive. Every day we have conversations. As recently as a month ago, we have been working with the QRC and earlier today to set up training opportunities for our professional staff.
(No record of training or professional development for LGBTQ issues as of 4/16/2017)
 - Wayne- In the last month VP for student life went to your Office with QRC coordinator, we initiated that because those students have felt unsafe and their issues have been mishandled so many times that the AS had to step in.
 - Leonard- I don’t see it that way.

- Kara Alden for Eileen: why are only some RAs not allowed to have community dialogues after traumatic events?
 - Eileen- I didn’t know; you should be able to hold those dialogues. They shouldn’t be shut down. They, need to be in respectful and accessible to residents.
(gag order was placed by Jackie Thurman on student whose room was broken into by felon)
 - Bryce- if it wasn’t you, who? Who makes the decision?

- Leonard- RAs are like everyone else. We will learn from that experience and deal with it going forward.
 - Eileen- I am in conversations with Leonard. I will not blame anyone else, it is the job of those at the top to create the context in which you work. Those decisions were made at another level; we didn't realize that a piece needed to be fixed. I heard through the grapevine about this instance later. it is painful to hear about these things but I am listening to you anyway.
 - Wayne- “that doesn't answer the question. are ADs given the power to make that decision? We have the name of the specific employee that placed this gag order on employees.”
 - Eileen- it was a mistake of a misunderstood interpretation, that isn't a decision they will make again.

- Alicia Neumann: this year Jacquelyn Thurman has been reported to HR 4 times and to EOO (Equal opportunity office) at least 2 times why was she allowed to fulfill her contract and leave and why haven't you addressed this until now.
 - Chyerl- There is a process you have to go through and it is slow. There is now an independent investigation. I can't discuss more about HR situations.
 - No students that have been harassed and physically intimidated by Jackie Thurman have been contacted by an independent investigator
 - No Resident Directors that have been verbally harassed and intimidated have been contacted by an independent investigator
 - Alicia- “there was 1-2 months where we were told we would be updated, there was nothing.”
 - No response

- Ellen Carroll for Leonard: “in your email you made a public statement that you didn't know about the sexual harassment in Mathes residence hall. Why?”
 - Leonard- I didn't connect the two incidents.
 - Bryce- did you know or not?
 - Leonard- at the time I was thinking of something else.
 - “The situation happened at the beginning of fall quarter. When did you know?”
 - Leonard- there were several concerns with the individual. I can't say much, I was working with several people

- “Did you fail to clarify which situation it was? It sounds like you didn’t clarify before you released your email to the media”
 - Leonard: I didn’t know. PR issues are confidential
 - “After you figured out the situation, why didn’t you clarify what was happening?”
 - Leonard- I spoke to the RD. Getting through all of the concerns that are out there is a lot of work.
The RD went to his supervisor (Scott Leppla) and the EOO and confronted Leonard 3 times about the sexual assault incident. Leonard has never publically acknowledged knowing.

- Hailey Canady: Leonard and Eileen: **What does it say about the system that you don’t know what is happening?**
 - Leonard- You feel like you are not heard and that is not good.
 - Eileen: Ted Pratt and Sue notify me when stuff happens.
 - “You said unaware multiple times. What does that say about university res when you don’t know what is happening to us?”
 - No response.
 - Sabah: point is well taken.

- Dominique Kudasik: **REM is an education model that brings in a lot of students and brings us closer together. Are there any other changes in mind for the REM?**
 - Leonard: We need to evaluate the REM to look at it more closely. We are hiring another Associate director and we cannot wait until they arrive to improve REM for next year.
 - Scott Leppla- One of the things that got lost about REM was how it got started, it was a grassroots effort by RAs to engage with residents. There are always tweaks to be made but the content control is difficult. REM is to help facilitate relationship and frontload education so you are better prepared. We read the things you write to us. We keep coming back to process.
 - “Mid-year hires don’t get this training. I have sixty residents. I don’t know them; I don’t have a relationship with them”

- Ben Morgan for Leonard and Eileen and Scott: “Stipend hasn’t changed since 1986. Inflation happened and tuition was \$400 a quarter then, how can you justify not having an increase in cost since then.” (loud applause and green cards)
 - Leonard- We still give housing. Compensation for training and stipend is weighed against other state institutions. We need to address this from the “western Point of View”
 - Eileen- asked for the comparisons
 - Leonard- we will have them in the next two weeks
 - Bryce- **is that a failing of the State or universities?**
 - Leonard- we value the perspective of Sabah there. The rest of the state shows us where we are, not where we hope to be. A more important conversation is how we go beyond.

- Aaron Joy for Leonard- **a lot of us feel that spring training is inadequate for gender issues and trauma issues. Is it fair to put students behind for that?**
 - Leonard- you need some qualification to be an RA. We can work to make this training better.
 - Karen Stout- I taught the course last week and wasn’t familiar with the content. We were rethinking the leadership training and have been continuing that path ongoing. We appreciate the suggestions about working with non-binary identifying individuals. We try to keep the content generic enough that it speaks to all. We are looking at it every quarter.

- Melissa Luper for Leonard: **“RDs are regularly reminded of their status as at-will employees at staff meetings by Leonard jones. Because of this RAs are led to believe RDs are responsible for things that are not really within their control. Please respond.”**
 - Leonard- I don’t remember this being in meetings. But specific changes are supposed to take place. It was one of many conversations. **AS has multiple reports of this specific language being used in meetings.**

- Dakota Nixon for Eileen- **“contracting elevator companies in Seattle means it takes a long time for them to be fixed.”**
 - Leonard’s staff handles that, we have a \$200 million investment over the next couple years, we are prioritizing accessibility and security. Elevators on that list must be evaluated. What is the best we can do to invest?

- Ben Morgan for Leonard and Ted: “residents who steal fruit from dining halls receive the same punishment as those who get caught smoking multiple times, how will you amend and implement those changes.”
 - Leonard- We need to change that because it doesn’t feel equal. They need to be supported by the system.
 - Scott Leppla- stealing stuff from the dining hall can be very serious, taking an entire box of cereal for example, we need to analyze on a case by case basis, including previous violations. there is an appeals process that can make it more equitable. Conduct is a system and we all have to work together.

- Bri Pedicone- “if RAs work 19 hours a week we could hold off campus jobs to pay for school. Why don’t you allow this?”
 - Leonard- it is my understanding that an RD can grant the RA permission to hold an outside job. We have an expectation that the RAs will prioritize the need of their students. It is a conversation, not asking for permission with your RD.
 - Bri- I did this last year, and the teacher of the RA class told us it was forbidden so I had to keep the necessary job a secret.
 - Leonard- I will clear up that miscommunication tomorrow
-No follow up since 4/17/2014

- “What is your dedication to undocumented RAs and residents”
 - Sabah- the safety of undocumented students is important to me and the administration. In my conversations with students, we have discussed having a hotline for undocumented students 24 hours to get in touch with help and/or Sabah. At the same time, we want to make sure that we don’t draw attention to those students necessary, to ensure their feeling safe on campus.
 - Leonard- we want you to feel safe in your homes.
 - Eileen- Rick Sanchez and I have been working on an information packet on this subject. Vicky [Matey] has been very important for this and I want to keep working with her to improve our policy, it is important.
 - Student - “The staff always has to be continuously corrected because you don’t functionally know what undocumented means”

- Dakota Nixon for Leonard- “What was the purpose of postponing hire of qualified female RAs in Fairhaven for the hire of male RAs.”

- Scott Leppla: That isn't what happened. We try to not create a process that prioritizes anything that but the candidate score, which doesn't represent bias. The applicants are 70% men (?? I think that's what he said here) we want equality but we don't want to be biased.
- “We've heard that you are going to have this looked into a lot, how are you going to be accountable for this?”
 - Sabah- Thank you RAs and AS Board for bringing this to my attention, especially the issues that have been around for some time. Apologizing on behalf of admin for the situation. It shouldn't be to this point. There are things we can do quickly, regarding applying and training. This shouldn't fall by the wayside. The concerns about physical space will take some time, but we will keep you engaged with them. (applause)
 - Leonard-. I would like to hold myself accountable to make sure that the summer doesn't push these issues aside.

Closing remarks

Bryce Hammer posted her email and Wayne's email. She had the other board members stand and offer their contact as well. (applause) She thanked the admin for showing up to answer difficult questions.

She thanked the RAs for coming, for being brave, and holding the admin accountable (applause)

If you have not signed the petition yet you can sign it at https://www.change.org/p/wwu-university-residences-administration-end-systematic-exploitation-by-university-residences-at-wwu/w?source_location=petition_show

check out the RA website, <https://therasofwwu.wixsite.com/liberated>

you can write a letter of support and send it to Bryce or Wayne. We hope this is the beginning of a productive conversation moving forward.