

Long Distance Student Leadership

How can you lead a student body if you are not all there physically and what other things should people have in mind as they are pursuing student leadership?

Working with administration

Recognize that the platform points that you had when you were campaigning is a different experience than when you are in the leadership position

Change, in many ways, can seem very nuanced.

Keep an open mind: The goals that you have when you are running for office can look different at the end of your term when you realize that you may have had to solve some of the problems that you originally had in a very different way.

Have a process for any of the ideas or platform points that you did have when you ran

Have the concept in your mind for what you want to accomplish.

Pitch to your advisor on what you want to accomplish. Usually your advisor knows who you need to talk to and how you need to go about solving an issue.

Do your research

ASGA is the place to go to learn how other schools have accomplished what you are looking to accomplish at your institution. Gather this information so you could have proposals to give to your administration.

No does not always mean no

Always remember that you can always find a way to accomplish what you are looking for even if it is not the way you originally planned.

Pros of the time we are in now

Administrations at the highest level are less distracted by the normal things we have on our campus and it allows us to get their attention.

The Administrator Test: ASGA has a tool to help understand how administration sees your government right now. You can score yourselves with this test.

If you are an ASGA member you already have access. If not, then email butch@asgaonline.com. This test will let you determine what your role is on campus officially and what does administration want us to work on. Link to test: www.asgaonline.com/asga/test-your-administrators.

At the best, student governments are seen as colleagues by administration, but administration can also see themselves as parents having to look over the student government.

Understand what is your student governments official role: Are you the official voice? This needs to be determined if you want to speak for the students. Ex. one student government got the trustees at their university to codify their role as the official representative body.

How do you make sure your relationship is established with administration?

Make it clear in writing as to what your role is through contracts and resolutions. Some may have a presidential meeting, some have a student trustee as a part of your government (ASGA has resources on how to develop this position if you don't have one).

College committee assignments and appointments are important as well (ASGA can help develop if you do not have this already).

How do you encourage the soft-spoken student to feel comfortable in working with the administration?

For soft-spoken students, go in teams. For example, if a soft-spoken student is going into a meeting with an administrator they may not have a relationship with already, have someone go with them at least for the first two meetings till they establish rapport.

If you have a staff member or administrator you have a great rapport with, they may help you out too by joining in the meeting with the soft-spoken student too.

You also don't have to do everything in person. You can build relationships through email, text, or paper.

What to do when administration is not listening to student leaders

When student government has established the relationship that they are the official voice or the official representative, employ the use of other organizations and representatives to have more "people power." When you hit a dead end, get a lot of public support (via resolution, an event, a poll, or a post on social media). Questions to ask: how your student government is perceived and what is the history of your government? If student governments are seen as being ineffective by administration (many impeachments, uncontested races, and/or many unfilled positions) administrations may not think you represent students especially if you can't back up what you are saying through data.

Leading your own team

Recognize How Easy it is to Lose People's Attention

When conducting meetings, notice the body language of the room. Are people losing interest?

If so, ask yourself this: what is the energy I am putting out? If your delivery is monotone, no matter how important the information is, you will lose people. Leaders are able to adjust their energy to capture their team.

Does your team understand what you are saying? Ask them in a way that goes beyond the yes or no response.

For example, instead of saying "did you understand" you should ask "what do you believe I just said?"

Make sure your meetings are meaningful: Don't have a meeting that could have just been summarized in an email.

Build a Sense of Community

Small things you can give your team members during difficult times mean a lot.

Birthday Wishes for your team members (could post on Instagram, send an email, or mention during a meeting).

Allocate a time during meetings to celebrate "good news" from your team members.

Certificates of Appreciation (can create for free when you search "certificate" on Canva).

Congratulating team through video messages (ex. graduating seniors, eboard members, outstanding non-eboard Member).

More ways to show you care: Rose Bud Thorn and Similar Methods

Taking the time to know the team (personal and professional) is a valuable investment.

Rose, Bud Thorn: This is a great way to recognize your team members outside of just the work they do.

Rose: something good that's happened

Bud: something that's in the "works" or in the process of happening,

Thorn: something not too great going on.

Another way to do this is to share a "high" and a "low" during the start of meetings to check in on what is going on.

How to Replace an in-Person Retreat

Think about the time: an in person team-building can go for hours, virtual meetings should be shorter than usual meetings time to help retention.

Find engaging speakers (one source to find speakers is ASGA as their speakers are experienced in talking to student leaders).

Find games and events to do remotely like bingo, gift card for winner, or a Netflix Watch Party.

Look within

There is a danger in misconceptions (message through email or text might be interpreted differently than in person). Make sure to be considerate of this.

Questions to ask yourself when thinking about your team:

Have I asked about how other people are doing and how their lives are going?

Do I care about what they are going through and have I asked about it?

Do I treat them with respect?

Am I only wanting things from them?

Do I have punitive punishments if they don't show or do exactly what I want?

How to keep your team accountable during this time

Reach out to your team member privately and try to understand what is going on if you sense a disconnect in the work. Make sure to follow up with them after this discussion.

Some team members may have never been involved to begin with. They may have gotten involved for the wrong reasons and this is hard to correct. You can make a mandatory training as a part of running for office and create a sample of contracts on how they will operate for the year. Get this in order by your next election cycle.

Challenge and Support (need to have a balance): A resource on how to lead in a way where you show you care personally but also challenge directly is called Radical Candor: www.radicalcandor.com/our-approach.

When student leaders who campaigned with different goals got elected and become part of the same team, how did you or would you recommend setting goals and priorities that everyone can get behind?

Have this discussion during the first meeting with your whole team and choose your top three priorities. We say three because you only have a certain amount of time (semester or year) to accomplish your goals.

If there are people who working on goals beyond the top three, that is ok, as long as the main focus is still the top three goals that were established.

Establish mutually beneficial goals from the administrative standpoint as well.

Engaging the student body

Take advantage of google forms

See what students are interested in.

Ask what specific ideas students have.

Ask what students would like to see your government do.

Take advantage of social media

Use polls and survey student body through social media.

Instagram and Facebook lives to have students to tune in.

Celebrate the successes of the students.

Use student newspapers

Promote virtual events.

Writing editorials or different opinion pieces.

What do students think about your student government?

Can you affirmatively state how the student body sees you (do they know you exist and do they know your role, do they know your accomplishments)? If you cannot affirmatively say yes, then it shows you are not connecting. Improve your website. ASGA has a resource for this (www.asgaonline.com/asga/sg-web-site-tune-up).

Model schools that already have distance learning student governments (ex. Washington State <https://online.wsu.edu/aswsug/>).

If possible, have 1 on 1 conversations with students. Try reaching out to five individual students a day.

If you know more than your administrators about student values and needs, then you are valuable and relevant as a student government.

How do we make sure the voices of minority students are heard (coalition building)

Understand what are the demographics of your university.

Whether you are at a minority majority institution or a predominantly white institution, minority voices should be heard.

One way is to look at the representation of your student government. Join if you are able to but if not, recognize the importance of coalition building.

Work with organizations on campus that specifically focus on the issues for the student (ex. Black Student Union, Native American Student Association) and have these conversations as a student government. Bring these groups into student government association meetings to have this discussion as well. Meet monthly with these organizations to check in.

What are ways to replicate tabling and events if everything needs to be virtual?

ASGA has a resource called “signature programs” that lists what student governments have done for their students.

How can we spice up our general meetings and increase the student body turnout?

Make sure to advertise meetings in social media, the student newspaper, and work with organizations to reach out to.

Brainstorm resources that students pay attention to.

But should not base effectiveness on how well attended the meetings are.

Engaging them is dependent on the project and proposal.

If possible, have a marketing class take you on as a client. Maybe students can receive academic credit for interning and marketing your student government.

If your meetings used to have free food, try sending food through GrubHub.

running start



Reaching out to Running Start and ASGA

ASGA

www.asgaonline.com

Butch's Email: butch@asgaonline.com

ASGA Email: info@asgaonline.com

Instagram: [@asgaonline](https://www.instagram.com/asgaonline)

Running Start

Join the Running Start Network: <https://runningstart.peoplegrove.com/>

www.runningstart.org

Email: info@runningstart.org

Instagram: [@runningstart](https://www.instagram.com/runningstart)

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