

FALL 2021

TRANSPARENCY REPORT

**329th Session
William & Mary
Student Assembly**

**President Meghana Boojala '22
Vice President Zenobia Goodman '22
Chief of Staff John Cho '23
Senate Chair Owen Williams '23**





Dear Students,

When our administration began the 329th session of the Student Assembly, we were devoted to solving real, relevant problems that students face with strategic solutions. We wanted to translate lofty goals into tangible outcomes for the community.

As students ourselves, we find that this work is incredibly fulfilling, but also challenging. We constantly face setbacks and run into dead-ends, but we have continued to make progress in volatile and uncertain times. Although it is customary for the Student Assembly to release an in-depth annual Transparency Report in the Spring, we wanted to provide you with a synopsis of the work we have done so far at the end of this semester.

Many of the milestones mentioned in this report are long-term goals gradually translating into reality and are successes that we have worked tirelessly towards — we know that many issues we are trying to address will take years to resolve, but we have learned to celebrate every small step in the right direction. We request you hold us accountable and work with us as we navigate our college experiences together.

Some of our overarching initiatives created spaces for candid conversations with students, Student Assembly, and administrators. Our Town Halls on COVID-19 and DEI resulted in new ideas and reform supported by members of administration. SA has coordinated with the Provost, the Dean of Arts & Sciences, and the WMPD to create student advisory groups, where a diverse group of students elevate relevant issues from the student body to high-level administrators and officials that can enact transformative change. These initiatives, along with the projects detailed in this report, are the wide-ranging highlights from the academic year so far.

We are deeply inspired by all the students who bravely stand up for their values and beliefs. We are thoroughly grateful to our community partners for working with us to solve issues on campus.

We are a part of the Student Assembly because we want to give back to the community that gave so much to us. We are thankful that we have this opportunity. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with questions, concerns, or ideas.

Sincerely,
The Student Assembly of William & Mary

DEPARTMENT OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

SECRETARY: MARY KARDOS

DEPARTMENT MEMBERS: MEL ONWUSIKA, ANNA PETERSON, TARUN CHANDRASEKAR

The Department of Academic Affairs is centered around improving the classroom experience for students through advocating for stress-alleviating academic policies, flexibility on Election Day, and increased DEI in the classroom. The long-term, large-scale projects have required SA to be resourceful and creative with creating working connections on campus:

- The Academic Diversity Project is a part of SA's The Plan to Tackle Systemic Racial Injustice on campus. Through this project, we are working with administration and various faculty to implement tangible changes in the classroom and within other programs on campus. Examples of these objectives were submitted in a working group proposal sanctioned by the Provost and include editing course evaluations, increasing Coll 350 enrollment seats, and advocating for the hiring of more diverse faculty
- Conducted two rounds of the Academic Climate and Curriculum Survey and is currently working on analyzing, synthesizing, and disseminating results to stakeholders
- Served as representatives on the Pass/Fail Committee to reform policy
- Working to forge future partnership with the Democracy Initiative.
- Working on increasing diversity within STEM fields with the Cohen Career Center
- Consulting to cancel classes on Election Day in future years

DEPARTMENT OF COLLEGE POLICY & STUDENT RIGHTS

SECRETARY: LAUREN MILLER

DEPARTMENT MEMBERS: AIDEN GOSSETT, AMANDA GILL, EVAN ABNEY, LAUREN GRAF

The Department of College Policy & Student Rights has continued its commitment in ensuring the protection and advocacy for the rights of all students at William & Mary

- Served on the Conduct Council Selection Committee to help interview and appoint new members
- Advised the Honor Council to reform their selection process.
- Advocated for expanded sexual assault training for student organizations
- Supported the Student Rights Initiative in bridging resources and connections

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & SAFETY

SECRETARY: AMELIA GROSSMAN

DEPARTMENT MEMBERS: EMMA HERBER, NATALIE ZYBLUT, JAI SONI, KATE MURPHY

The Department of Health & Safety has been working diligently this past semester, in partnership with campus stakeholders, to advocate for improved access to resources and information for students

- Worked with the Senate to pass legislation to provide funding for free pregnancy testing and emergency contraceptives
- Solicited student feedback on mental health resources
- To ensure that SA upheld the same values of self-care and wellness that we promoted, we began weekly initiatives so our members could connect and engage in meaningful wellness
- Supported campus-wide Seize the Awkward and Let's Get Consensual campaigns

DEPARTMENT OF OUTREACH

SECRETARIES OF GRAPHICS AND CAMPAIGNS: ABBY VARRICCHIO AND MIKAYLA FULCHER

DEPARTMENT MEMBERS: ELLIE BOWMAN, DALY MARTORANO, ISABELLA STRAUSS, DAIWIK MUNJWANI, ANUP RANJAN, JUSTIN KELLY, MONICA BAGNOLI, ABDI HASSAN, CYDNEY HELMS

This semester our primary focus has been to increase connection between students and the Student Assembly. The Department of Outreach is increasing awareness regarding SA initiatives and at the same time organizing venues for students to voice concerns directly with SA members. Some noticeable initiatives this semester include:

- Griffin on the Go Instagram promotion where we highlight visible SA contributions to campus such as the traffic flashing beacon lights and the free menstrual products
- Increased Student Assembly presence on social media so students get to know the people within SA, not just the institution
- Updating and constantly modernizing our website so that we are transparent with our internal initiatives
- Conducting increased outreach regarding elections so that we have diverse candidates and higher voter turnout
- Soliciting homecoming t-shirt designs to involve talent within the student body with outreach efforts
- Designing and funding pronoun pins for all students on campus. We are currently printing more due to high demand
- Conducting outreach on SA's Town Hall series so that a diverse range of students, representative of the student body, attend the event
- Working on intensive website redesign and innovating outreach methods that are more accessible to students

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

SECRETARY: SULEIMAN TAHIR

**DEPARTMENT MEMBERS: MARIE THOMAS-SINDEH, KUSHALI PATEL,
SOPHIE HALKETT, DIANA TIAN**

During the last academic year, the Student Assembly passed legislation to reform the entire process of allocating the Student Activities Fee to fund Registered Student Organizations on campus. The purpose of the reform, the first in over two decades, is to make SA funding more equitable and approachable for all student organizations on campus, regardless of size or mission.

Since then, the Department of Finance has:

- Debated and structured new, more flexible guidelines for organizations
- Created an infrastructure that follows a quarterly application system so that organizations can apply as needs arise
- Simplified the application and approval process
- Aligned guidelines and workflow with the needs of organizations, rather than historical precedents
- The new guidelines and Code will be presented to the Senate by February 1st, 2022
- The Department will begin training and educating organizations next semester

Along with reform, the Department of Finance has been helping organizations with funding current activities and events.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

SECRETARY: BRYCE EARLEY

DEPARTMENT MEMBERS: ELLA COLBERT, JEREMIAH FOLTZ

The primary focus of the Department of Public Affairs dealt with off campus employment and the community labor shortage, relationships with the City of Williamsburg, dining services, and other initiatives:

- The Cohen Career Center: The Department is collaborating with the Cohen Career Center to discuss ways to increase student engagement and knowledge of off campus employment opportunities
- City of Williamsburg: As members of the Williamsburg community, we find it necessary to create and foster a relationship with the city of Williamsburg. Through this, we have gained knowledge of City Council initiatives and are actively working on making off-campus living fair and safe for students
- Bonding Events: We began preliminary meetings with Student Unions & Engagement to begin asking about class-wide bonding events as a way to incorporate the broader student community into campus-wide discussions

DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT LIFE

SECRETARY: KIRSTEN KNISELY

DEPARTMENT MEMBERS: ELIJAH POETZINGER, ALEX CHONG, MAX BERCKMUELLER, SOPHIE BRUNS

This past semester, the Student Assembly has been working to engage and reestablish student life and our sense of community. We have utilized newly created liaison positions with various campus organizations and student populations to ensure that concerns and feedback are appropriately received and elevated. This semester, the department has:

- Worked on programming to implement and educate students on the Community Values Pledge
- Advocated for dedicated parking spaces in front of the Sadler Center for pharmacy, counseling, and health center appointments
- Plan to implement "Welcome Back" initiatives next semester providing free refreshments, recreational activities, and food for students

DEPARTMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY

SECRETARY: TAIMA AL-IRIANI

DEPARTMENT MEMBERS: SYDNEY THAYER, TATE STEVENS, UBAID KAZIANGA, ALLISON DORSEY

The Department of Sustainability focuses on multifaceted sustainability goals. This past session, the department has created numerous new projects while creating partnerships with other SA departments and stakeholders on campus. Some current and future projects include:

- Advocate for campus departments to utilize electric-powered tools and vehicles
- Create partnerships and relationships with organizations with similar sustainability goals
- Receive a plot at the campus garden
- Partner with SA's Period Project to promote the use of reusable feminine products
- Advocate for more outdoor seating
- Invest in four more strategically placed compost bins in remote areas on campus
- Indexing courses related to sustainability before Fall 2022 course registration
- Work towards creating a working group to connect students passionate about sustainability projects

ATTORNEY GENERAL

ATTORNEY GENERAL: RORY FEDOROCHKO

The role of the Attorney General ensures that the Student Assembly fulfills the responsibilities detailed in its Constitution and Code through presentations, emails, and verbal reminders.

- Explained impeachment procedures to the Senate
- Filed a complaint about an illegal Senate closed session, resulting in a favorable Review Board ruling
- Provided individual legal counsel and assistance to Senators and Cabinet members on bills and initiatives

SENATE

The Senate is currently focused on a range of multifaceted issues that impact the student body. The following list of projects and tasks include annual, standard Senate actions and newly legislated and executed projects led by elected Senators across all four social classes and the Graduate schools:

- Working to develop a digestible, short newsletter for the student body including local events of interest, internships, local government and elections information
- Provided funding for research, travel, and workshops for The Plan to Tackle Systemic Racial Injustice at W&M
- Passed legislation that forges tangible connections between SA and the student body and funds outreach efforts, created specialized funds for students and student organizations to fund projects of their personal interests and meet direct needs
- Funded advertisements for flu shots and HPV vaccines
- Initiated and executed a finance reform process that moves Student Assembly and all funded registered student organizations to a quarterly budgeting system that aims to increase the accessibility of funding for student organizations and allow for greater flexibility in the planning and execution of club activities and events
- Fully funded the Steer Clear safe-ride system to restart operations beginning in the Spring 2022 semester and provide students with a resource to get home safely and securely at night
- Handled event requests each week to allocate additional funding to clubs, allocated over \$47,000 out of the Student Activities Reserves

SENATE CONTINUED...

- Called on the BOV to strategically divest the University's divestment from fossil fuels.
- Funded, organized and executed cultural events like the Sankofa Legacy Fest and Gala that showcase student excellence
- Brought outstanding civil rights leaders to campus such as Reggie Williams and Benjamin Crump (Feb. 2022)
- Provided funding for the previously created SA-adjacent diversity and equity reform task forces for them to execute their goals
- Created a working group to promote helpful counter-speech efforts to campus demonstrators and promote a culture of inclusivity
- Created a Town Hall series to provide students with a platform to voice their experiences and opinions on relevant issues to campus such as COVID-19 and DEI reform effort
- Funded pronoun pins to promote a culture of innate acceptance and inclusivity to be distributed at major campus events
- Funded a new batch of emergency contraception, feminine hygiene products, and subsidized pregnancy tests for the first time to be distributed at the Health Center
- Created a new system in coordination with the COVID Response team to gauge the food accessibility of students who test positive for COVID and connect them to an SA-subsidized food delivery network to address their needs during quarantine
- Subsidized the costs incurred for RSOs by the state-mandated change to compostable utensils