



Fall State of Affairs Report

Presented by the ASI President/CEO- Yahir Flores the December 7, 2023, Board of Directors Meeting

ASI has had an eventful fall semester filled with various events, meetings, conversations, and advocacy efforts after the initial report presented by President Flores on the summer State of Affairs at the September 7th Board of Directors meeting. All members were required to submit another report with their reflections and feedback on ASI's State of Affairs for the fall semester. The report consisted of three questions to provide Cindy, the Chief of Staff, and the ASI President with sufficient feedback on the collective operation of ASI, encompassing all units, including programmatic, external, and internal advocacy, communication, finances, personnel, and initiatives. I thoroughly read each report and compiled the overall shared sentiments, feedback, and questions shared. In reference to the first question, student leaders were asked: Reflecting on the semester thus far, what ASI programs have stood out the most to you and why? Please elaborate on how the event served or further contributed to the success or well-being of our students. The programs may be your own or others you have attended. All responses were truly appreciative of the quality, commitment, and dedication to the programmatic efforts of members, speaking to great lengths about the planning process, outcome, and what did or did not go well. The shared sentiment from folks was reassuring as ASI continues to uphold its mission of providing resources and opportunities for students to get involved on campus, gain academic or leadership skills, socialize, network, build community, and provide a space for students to utilize these events/programs to their advantage that would benefit them now or forward into their careers. Ultimately, ASI has and continues to have a strong program ability to meet the needs of students that contribute to their well-being and success. Some fall programs include the Homecoming Carnival, Hispanic Heritage Month speaker panel, popsicle talk meet your college representatives, silent disco, fireside chat with president elect-Eanes, meet the CEOs, dodgeball tournament, National Voter Registration Day (NVRD), project green challenge, spill tea get tea, evening with barbie, and the cultural collaborative events ASI assisted with other departments, such as Afro Fest and Día De Muertos.

Additionally, the second question asked was: How confident do you feel performing your duties, and what areas would you like more support in? Examples of what to discuss may include participation in meetings, program proposals, engagement hours, or biweeklies. The most mentioned comments focused on the program proposal process, where there is still confusion about the process of how to write a well detailed proposal. Folks mentioned wanting more training on proposals and group brainstorming sessions to aid in alleviating these concerns, as well as collaborating with other members on programs. I will be working with Ashley and Arwa on a session for the winter retreat and start of the spring semester to ensure we are able to break down the expectations and format of program proposals. While also incorporating more committee group work sessions on planning so



committees are able to plan out their own program event agenda for the semester, increasing the number of events ASI hosts and having more communication about these events to the rest of the team. Additionally, shared sentiments were expressed on members' individual commitment and engagement in various aspects of their roles and responsibilities, where folks mentioned their self-reflections on the areas that they would like to improve on within the areas of leadership skills that would allow them to be more extrovert when engaging with students, tabling, doing presentations, and participating in meetings. Members ask for more skill-developing training during the retreat or throughout the start of the spring semester. Given the current and prospective changes within ASI, members have expressed uncertainty in their position and to what capacity they are involved with ASI, primarily the academic senators who have been struggling to navigate their responsibilities between ASI and the academic senate and the limitations they face because of the specific focus the position requires which they feel limits their ability to interact or engage with the programmatic side of ASI. As a result, I, alongside Cindy and full-time staff, will work during the break on finalizing the position descriptions to be brought up for discussion and action by the Board in January, with deep analysis of certainty on how each position will operate individually and collectively with committees and ASI initiatives. Biweeklies have been an ongoing concern from folks as there is confusion on the content that constitutes meeting the required engagement hours and the structure of the form. As mentioned in the summer and at the start of the fall semester, last year's biweekly form was not as effective in capturing detailed information/content on members' work and engagement that is required per ASI Bylaws. Hence, the updated questions and shift of office hours to engagement hours. Nonetheless, Cindy and I will work to address questions/concerns on the biweekly form and decide what changes we can make to lessen the confusion while still upholding the expected requirements of hours and ensuring folks reflect and provide details on the work they have been done that justifies the Grant in Aid (GIA) that is awarded. Additionally, as part of ASI's goal in outreach and engagement with other student groups/clubs/organizations, members would like to expand on this by aligning more of ASI's efforts to that of clubs/organizations to enhance partnerships and build a larger sense of community. Interacting more with the organizations/students through meetings or attending one another's events can increase our engagement and visibility to folks where we can have more collaboration in programs and other avenues that would cater to students' needs. The leadership summit hosted this semester is a prime example, which will be continued and altered to develop such partnerships, as well as the college representatives joining forces on programs to increase outreach.

In regard to communication, the remarks shared mentioned strong, effective internal communication between student leaders and full-time staff. However, an observation made throughout the semester that was consistent was the lack of email and team communication from student leaders. Not everyone was viewing and/or responding to emails, which is a big part of everyone's roles as it serves as the primary form of communication between all of ASI but also the student body and other folks in administration, departments/and offices. It is



imperative that everyone utilize the ASI emails provided to all emails to increase virtual engagement and minimize the struggle of reaching out multiple times to get responses and updates from you all. Additionally, in terms of meeting communication and engagement, it has been a constant struggle to have all members participate in pen discussion during committee meetings often times only the same people engage in the conversations, which significantly limits the content, quality, and action plans that the committee can have/do that effectively supports the student body. All perspectives are welcomed and necessary to ensure ASI can discuss multiple perspectives and ideas on topics that will have an impact on the student body. Therefore, for the spring semester, committees will be slightly re-structured to require all members' active participation through active calling on members.

Additionally, the third question asked for members to discuss how: In your role, what do you feel you have accomplished so far? How have your efforts aligned with the objectives of ASI, and where can you further improve? If you submitted a summer State of Affairs, please discuss the progress of your SMART goals and any programs or plans you have for the remaining and upcoming semester. Members discussed their progress in achieving their SMART goals, for those who drafted them in the summer, where each broke down how they are meeting these goals or have shifted their goals that reflect their values, initiatives, and focus. I did notice, by comparing both the summer and fall State of Affairs, that many members have been progressing in completing their goals and the struggles that I mentioned above that are keeping them from getting there. During the retreat, we will revisit SMART goals to allow new members the opportunity to formulate theirs and discuss how the executive and full-time staff can assist with providing advice/input for members to feel supported and brainstorm.

Regarding student government, the Board of Directors and members have interacted through various means of advocacy through initiatives, conversations, forums, and action plans/resolutions as a collective and in conjunction with other student groups and the university administration.

In meetings with Blanca, the Dean of Students, discussions on basic needs initiatives such as the food pantry, technology loan, emergency housing, and financial assistance, and student feedback on combating food and housing insecurity were discussed. With action plans in place or started with university departments and potential increase of feedback through the new advisory council formed by the office of the Dean of Students.

In the Title IX implementation group meeting, there was a deep dive into Cal State LA's individual campus assessment report. With the support of the Cozen O'Connor members who wrote the report, discussions were started on analyzing the findings and recommendations and what the implementation team has been working on since the release of the report. Which had student representation from the ASI President, who sits on the committee.



Commencement

Multiple meetings were held between ASI President Yahir Flores and Interim President Morishita on the students' concerns and wants regarding commencement. During lunch meetings and introductory meetings between ASI members and President Morishita, multiple perspectives were mentioned to provide insight into the strong sentiment toward avoiding the parking lot and having it in an off-site location or other location on campus.

- Public Safety
- Facilities
- Tuition Increase & ASI Resolution
- Parking/public transportation
- Library S.C.O.R.E Program Partnership
- BOT Public comment on tuition hike/meetings with various BOT members

Regarding the financial affairs of ASI, as of the 3&9 Budget, ASI has a total revenue of \$1,320,526.00. All areas are operating within the budget. ASI continues to be fiscally prudent with student fees in creating programs that create community engagement. As a board, we continue to seek additional ways to support students. This semester the Board revised the Textbook Scholarship program and allocated \$7,500 to the SCORE program (library). This program will serve many students by reducing the cost of textbooks. We have allocated \$18,120.12 to support clubs and orgs. These are just a few of the items that we have accomplished. Since October, ASI has spent 40% of the budget which puts us on task to finish the year within budget.

Regarding Personnel, since the start of the semester, we have had new team members join ASI in student staff and full-time staff roles. We have Ashley Foskey, Program Coordinator; Sylvia, Social Media and Outreach Assistant; Yash, Web Designer/Technician; and Diego, Outreach Assistant. ASI still does not have graphic designers, so for the time being, ASI members will ensure submitting program proposals that require marketing in a timely manner to allow Gus, our Director for Marketing and Graphics, ample time to get those and other projects done.

Lastly, it remains our firm belief that we have succeeded in accomplishing various short-term and long-term goals. We also had various board and committee discussions internally within ASI and externally with departments, administration, and students to address student issues. ASI continues to work toward achieving the long-term goals that will be defined by our strategic plan, which is a spring semester project. ASI continues to address member retention, internal communication, and low discussion participation. It is



our intention to build and foster relationships across the University and increase campus unity. ASI also recognizes the ways in which we can continue to improve with training to better prepare ASI members for the spring semester during our winter retreat, where we will focus on motivation, self-assessments, and goals. Nonetheless, ASI has grown tremendously, and we are proud to have served the campus community as student leaders during this unique environment.



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