



Fall 2024 State of Affairs Report

Presented by the ASI President & CEO- Yahir Flores, during the December 5, 2024, Board of Directors Meeting

Following the summer 2024 State of Affairs Report, ASI utilized the summer retreat, meetings, and training sessions to prepare incoming and appointed leaders with leadership development and workshops within their roles to have the tools needed to have a successful semester. ASI continued to have an eventful semester filled with lively programs, productive meetings, conversations with administration, and advocacy efforts that reflect student concerns. As we are ending the first semester of our terms, it is imperative that we reflect and highlight our efforts as student leaders and as an organization. To that extent, all ASI members were required to submit a report with their reflections and feedback on the organization's state of affairs to maintain transparency and accountability towards our work to the student body of Cal State LA. The three-question report alongside input from pro-staff, provided the ASI Chief of Staff, Cindy Nguyen, and the ASI President with sufficient feedback on the collective operations of ASI encompassing all units, including programmatic, student government, corporate management affairs, administrative affairs, payroll, graphics & marketing, and recognized student organization (RSO) banking. Yahir thoroughly reviewed each report to compile a summary of the shared sentiments, feedback, questions, and areas of improvement detailed below in the order of the questions outlined in the report.

Student Government

- 1. 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 events or others you have attended.*

Among various programs, we had student leaders highlight the following programs for having been instrumental in fostering student engagement, well-being, and community building. Among the standout events, the **"Meet Your Dean" series** was highlighted for its direct interaction opportunities between students and deans. This series bridged gaps between administration and students, fostering dialogue about academic and campus issues. Specific events, like the one hosted in the ECST CoLab Space, showcased strong student turnout and a tailored approach to their interests, though other colleges faced challenges with organization and engagement.

Community-wide events like the **Block Party On Main** and **Eagle Fest** exemplified ASI's commitment to school spirit and prospective student support. The Block Party energized the campus with music, games, and athletic celebrations, promoting social interaction and pride. Eagle Fest catered to future students by providing guidance on admissions, financial aid, and campus life, easing their transition to higher education, and creating a welcoming atmosphere.

Civic engagement emerged as another strength from student leaders, with initiatives like **Voter Fest 2024** and weekly voter registration drives. These programs combined fun, like crafts and interactive activities, with education on voting rights and ballot measures. The collaboration with organizations like the League of Women Voters underscored their importance. Events like "Breaking



Down the Ballot" effectively demystified voting processes, drawing significant participation and media attention.

Strengths of these programs included inclusivity, innovative engagement methods, and alignment with student needs. However, student leaders expressed areas for improvement in communication/promotion, working on being more consistent with meeting their deadlines and having more intentional conversations around current trends that could enhance participation and satisfaction from students. Key takeaways student leaders suggest for the spring semester include the need for improved coordination, targeted communication strategies, and expanding interactive, hands-on programs to ensure more engagement.

- 2. How confident do you feel performing your ASI 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 collective responses showed varied levels of confidence and a range of support needs among ASI members. Many participants express a high level of confidence in performing their duties, citing growth in areas such as public speaking, organizing events, and engaging with students. Others expressed a moderate level of confidence, attributing their progress to hands-on experiences and a supportive environment. Additionally, a few members admit to feeling less confident, especially in areas like speaking up during meetings, navigating program proposals, or understanding the broader scope of their responsibilities. These individuals emphasize the need for mentorship and clearer guidance to bolster their confidence.

Common themes emerge in the areas where support is needed or asked. Meeting participation stands out as a significant challenge for many, with student leaders noting intimidation by returning members, dominating conversations, and leaving uncertainty/hesitancy about how to propose ideas or policies comfortably. Program proposals are another area where members seek additional training to ensure their initiatives align with ASI's goals and their role; the confusion arises in the form itself, where members find it confusing to navigate the start and submission process. Similarly, many members expressed wanting structured strategies and tools to enhance their engagement with students during walkway interactions and events, such as conversation techniques or the availability of business cards. Communication with University Administrators also presents a recurring challenge, as delayed responses from individuals in the division of student affairs/administration hinder effective communication or progress on initiatives. Additionally, fostering consistent committee engagement and participation remains a concern, with members seeking mentorship to recruit passionate individuals and encourage active involvement from students in our internal ASI committees but also University-wide committees, and believe we should focus on marketing strategies to best inform students in ways that stand out to them to catch their interest of joining.

However, the programs and events discussed, such as the "Meet the Dean" series and other student-focused initiatives, have allowed ASI members to grow in confidence and skills, particularly in public speaking, event management, and collaboration. Members recognize these events as impactful in strengthening connections with the student body and building on their confidence.



The overall strengths highlighted include notable growth in confidence and professional development among ASI members, successful events that enhance student engagement and visibility, and an increased understanding of ASI's mission and operations.

Looking ahead to the spring semester, several key takeaways stand out. Structured training should focus on program proposals, meeting participation, and communication with administration. Establishing more mentorship and supportive opportunities could guide members and support professional growth. Enhanced communication protocols with administrators and within committees could streamline operations and reduce delays. Intentional post-event debrief sessions would provide valuable insights into performance and areas for improvement. Overall, while confidence levels and challenges vary, the responses from members reflect a shared commitment to growth and a desire to enhance ASI's impact.

- 3. 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.*

Student leaders shared a wide range of accomplishments and aspirations, demonstrating their dedication to supporting student engagement and well-being. Members highlighted significant achievements in organizing events and fostering advocacy. Notable successes include programs like "Insights of NSS," voter registration drives, and workshops that connected students with leadership, encouraged civic participation, and addressed pressing student concerns. These initiatives reflect ASI's mission to enhance student engagement and promote dialogue on campus. Furthermore, student leaders reported success in advocacy, particularly through participation in committee meetings. Their contributions helped shape policies and decisions to align more closely with student needs, emphasizing the importance of representation. Efforts to align with ASI objectives have been evident across various activities. Student leaders have focused on fostering transparency, inclusivity, and direct communication between students and decision-makers. For example, outreach to department chairs and faculty raised awareness of ASI's role, while strategic initiatives, such as the creation of a Discord server for the ECST college, improved accessibility and communication. These projects showcase how members are integrating ASI's goals into their work, ensuring students' voices are heard and their experiences on campus are enriched.

However, the responses also identify areas for improvement. Members expressed a need to refine their communication strategies, particularly in engaging with students who may be hesitant to participate or unaware of ASI's resources. Proactive communication with departments and ensuring follow-through on representatives' initiatives were highlighted as key areas to address, especially in ensuring information flows back to ASI effectively. For those who submitted SMART goals, progress was evident. Achievements included increased event participation, improved student feedback, and shifts in focus to address more pressing on-campus concerns. Despite this progress, student leaders noted opportunities to refine and expand their goals for greater impact in the upcoming semester. Many plan to finalize projects, such as advocacy agendas and targeted outreach initiatives, do collaborative events with fellow student leaders, and engage with other student organizations to continue driving ASI's mission forward.



Events organized by ASI members have significantly contributed to the well-being of the campus community. By providing platforms for student voices and encouraging stress-relief activities, members have created spaces for meaningful engagement. These events also fostered connections between students and leadership, ensuring concerns are addressed effectively. The efforts have supported a more inclusive and participatory campus environment. Looking ahead to the spring semester, members are optimistic about building on their successes and addressing challenges. Strengths such as effective networking, interpersonal skills, and impactful advocacy will serve as a foundation. However, improvements are needed in proactive communication, streamlined planning, and consistent feedback mechanisms. Key takeaways for the spring semester include revisiting student leaders' SMART goals and identifying new areas of interest or focus, to begin planning and brainstorming during the winter break and have a clear vision and goals to execute for the spring semester.

Corporate Management Affairs

Aldrich CPAs + Advisors LLP audited the financial statements of ASI for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, covering the period from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024. ASI's financial statements presented a true and fair view of the organization's financial position. ASI's audit was conducted in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (U.S. GAAP). These standards require that the audit is performed to obtain reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. The audit concluded that the financial statements of ASI for the fiscal year 2023-2024 are presented fairly, in all material respects, and in compliance with the relevant financial reporting framework. ASI's budget has remained stable over the years, largely due to increased enrollment. However, ASI is facing a challenging financial situation due to a combination of declining enrollment and continued inflation, which has negatively affected the 2024-2025 budget and potentially future years.

This situation highlights the need for careful financial management and the possibility of seeking additional revenue through initiatives like a fee referendum, which could help mitigate the impact of enrollment declines and inflation. Without a successful referendum to increase fees, ASI will continue to face significant reductions in the coming years. This could have a profound impact on the organization's ability to fund various programs and services. The decline in enrollment and budget cuts have forced ASI to make significant reductions in funding for key university support areas, including Veterans Resource Center, Dreamers Resource Center, EPIC (Educational Partnerships, Initiatives, and Communities), and Project Rebound. Despite the budget constraints, ASI has successfully advocated to secure funding for the Textbook Program (SCORE), ensuring students have access to necessary resources. To help manage the budget shortfall, ASI has had to draw from its reserves, Local Agency Investment Fund (LAIF).

The initial 2024-2025 budget was approved by the Board of Directors on May 9, 2024. An update to the budget was made on October 3, 2024, following the outcome of the audit. This update resulted in a reduction of expenses by \$24,490, which decreased the use reserves amount. The updated budget (as of October 3, 2024) is currently moving through the signature process in Adobe Sign. ASI plans to review and make further updates to the budget in January 2025, with a final



presentation to the Board of Directors in February 2025. ASI's efforts to prioritize key services and advocate for essential programs, are important steps in navigating these challenges.

The staff and the Board of Directors continued to update, revise, and clean up our policy documents. Several of the committee codes were revised this fall and drafts have been completed for Bylaws revisions and Elections Code. In accordance with a State Senate Bill, ASI established the Workplace Violence Prevention Plan and also approved a Flexible Work Policy for ASI employees. ASI's separation from the U-SU as employer of record will conclude this year with the establishment of ASI's retirement program. After months of working with CalPERS, ASI was informed that the Auxiliary did not qualify for CalPERS retirement and immediately engaged TIAA to establish a program for ASI full-time employees that will be established hopefully in January 2025.

Fortunately, ASI entered the academic year nearly fully staffed, however, over the course of fall several of the student positions have been vacated due to natural transitions and students leaving the University. ASI is actively recruiting for positions in graphic design, marketing, and social media. Professional development is a priority for ASI and students as well as staff have engaged in a variety of on-campus and off-campus trainings and retreats. The summer training for student government involved weekly virtual sessions and monthly in-person sessions as well as a two-day retreat. ASI and U-SU also held a combined trainings for to for both Boards over the summer to encourage greater collaboration between the two Auxiliaries. The full-time staff have attended several conferences this fall, including Adobe Max and NACA West, as well as AOA working group discussions and meetings for student leader advisors. The fall student interest survey was distributed widely on campus this fall and was developed in collaboration with the U-SU to gather feedback from students about interests, concerns, and recommendations for Cal State LA. At this time, there are over 600 responses to the survey, which will be analyzed over the winter so ASI can set action plans at their retreat to address student concerns. With the decline in student enrollment at the university, recruitment and persistence is paramount. ASI participated in Eagle Fest this fall and created a special marketing campaign, "Say yes to LA," for the event.

Administrative Affairs

42 students rented a locker this semester. Lockers are currently \$35 a term, equating to \$1,470 in revenue. In October, the Board of Directors approved a \$5.00 increase to the lockers and starting January 1st, lockers will be \$40 and provide additional revenue.

Payroll

ASI has significantly transitioned to process its payroll independently from the U-SU, utilizing Automatic Data Processing (ADP) as the platform for payroll processing. This change brings several advantages to our organization and its employees. This transition is a positive step forward for ASI, fostering both operational independence and improved service for employees.

ASI has successfully separated from U-SU and is now handling its own payroll, which ensures more direct control over payroll-related matters. The SPIN was performed in October 2024.

Employees now receive their W-2 forms directly from ASI, further solidifying the connection between the payroll and the organization. ADP provides automated payroll processing, which reduces human error and minimizes mistakes in system calculations, offering greater accuracy. ADP offers tax filing



assistance and streamlined reporting, helping ensure compliance with various regulatory requirements and making tax-related processes more efficient. ADP enhances security and compliance with payroll regulations, ensuring that both the organization and employees are protected from potential risks. The platform also provides employees with self-service options, allowing them to directly access payroll information, benefits, and other related services. Overall, using ADP helps to save time and increase efficiency while also improving the accuracy of payroll and benefit management for the organization.

Graphics & Marketing

This fall, ASI launched several impactful initiatives to connect with students and promote engagement across campus. A key focus was on the Screaming Eagles volunteer team, a weekly marketing effort designed to directly interact with students. These sessions provided a platform to collect student opinions, promote upcoming events, and share ASI's advocacy efforts. Additionally, students were informed about open leadership positions within student government, fostering a sense of involvement and encouraging them to take on active roles. The Screaming Eagles volunteer team was instrumental in bridging the gap between ASI and the student body, reinforcing ASI's commitment to amplifying student voices. Social media engagement played a central role in ASI's marketing strategy, leveraging platforms like Instagram, and now TikTok to connect with students. Regular posts highlighted upcoming events, important deadlines, and resources available to students. Interactive campaigns, such as polls, Q&A sessions, and story takeovers from our ASI president, boosted visibility and encouraged two-way communication with the student body. Social media also served as a tool to spotlight ongoing advocacy efforts, ensuring students stayed informed and engaged with ASI's mission.

Another standout initiative was the production of video stories featuring student leaders. These videos showcased the personal journeys, achievements, and contributions of ASI members, offering an inside look at the impact of student government. The storytelling approach not only highlighted the value of ASI's work but also inspired students to consider leadership roles. Shared across social media and during events, these videos became a powerful tool to humanize ASI and motivate student involvement. In addition to these efforts, ASI Studio 47 took the lead in designing, marketing, and promoting several campaigns and intercampus collaborations, including Eddie's Rodeo, a Western-themed welcome-back event, Spirit Week, and National Voter Registration Day. These initiatives reinforced school spirit, civic engagement, and community building. The marketing team spearheaded a campus-wide effort that successfully registered over 357 students to vote and encouraged participation in civic events. This included collaborations with PBI, Housing, StratCom, and other partners, with ASI leading the marketing efforts to promote voter registration drives. With a consistent emphasis on direct student engagement, robust social media strategies, and inspirational video content, these campaigns underscored ASI's commitment to fostering an active, informed, and connected campus community.

Programmatic

This fall semester, ASI curated a diverse lineup of student-focused programs and events designed to foster community engagement, inspire civic involvement, and connect students to both on- and off-campus resources. The semester began with the "Welcome Home" programming, which



warmly greeted new and returning students. Among the standout events was Eddie's Rodeo Roundup, which surpassed attendance expectations with over 350 students participating in games, music, food, and even riding a mechanical bull. Other early successes, such as *Spill Tea*, *Get Tea*, and *Poster Invasion*, helped set a strong momentum for fall programming. To increase Golden Eagle spirit, ASI collaborated with CSI and Athletics to present Spirit Week, an engaging series of events that included a scavenger hunt, a movie night co-hosted with Housing, a sneaker ball dance party, and a lively block party featuring music, food trucks, and inflatable games. These events collectively drew over 200 enthusiastic attendees. ASI's commitment to civic engagement was another major highlight of the semester. In partnership with the Pat Brown Institute (PBI), ASI hosted impactful events like *Ballots and Burritos*, which attracted 200 attendees—double the expected turnout. These efforts culminated in *Voter Fest!*, an event that brought together 200 students, seven campus organizations, and six community partners. *Voter Fest!* received coverage from seven media outlets and provided meals to the first 100 students who completed the voting passport challenge by visiting various resource and crafting tables.

Creative and cultural programming also played a key role this semester, with events like the *Hidden Voices Poetry Workshop* and *Civics & Cinema* fostering opportunities for artistic expression and meaningful discussions. While attendance for these events varied, they added depth and diversity to ASI's programming. Wrapping up the semester, ASI organized "Meet Your Dean" week, where students had the opportunity to connect with the deans of NSS, ECST, HHS, and A&L. These sessions bridged the gap between students and academic administration, providing a platform for meaningful feedback and dialogue. Overall, ASI hosted 18 diverse programs this fall, ranging from hybrid events and dance parties to civic engagement festivals and creative workshops. Looking ahead, ASI is eager to continue developing programming that meets students' needs, with exciting plans for future events like *Eddie Fest!*

RSO Banking and Funding

RSO Funding: This semester, we awarded \$21,578 to recognized student organizations (RSO). Representing 14 student organizations and 21 events in various categories - conferences (professional development), social events, community building, cultural building, career development, and educational. As we have taken on RSO banking, the reimbursement process has changed for those RSOs who bank on-campus. We are updating the Request for Payment (Check Requisition) form, which will be available to the RSOs in January 2025.

RSO Banking: In July 2024, recognized student organization banking transitioned from the University-Student Union to ASI to increase efficiency and reduce the amount of paperwork for the RSOs. ASI is currently managing 74 accounts. From the start, we wanted to ensure a smooth transition and eliminate as much confusion as possible; therefore, only a few changes to the process and documents were made. As the semester progressed, small changes were made and implemented as we got a better understanding of the process. In the spring, we will begin developing RSO Banking policies and procedures and make them available to the student organizations in Fall 2025.

To conclude, I firmly believe that ASI has succeeded in accomplishing various short- and long-term goals through our various board/committee discussions internally within ASI and externally with departments, administration, and students to address student/campus-wide issues. ASI will continue



to work toward achieving the long-term goals that will be defined as we begin a conversation on our strategic plan and will continue to address member retention, internal communication, student leader participation, and engagement, budget constraints, programmatic structures, and mentorship. We intend to continue building and fostering relationships across the University and increase campus unity. ASI also recognizes how we can continue to improve our training sessions to prepare ASI members during the winter retreat, focusing on motivation, self-assessments, goals, accountability/engagement conversations, and brainstorming. ASI continuously too grows tremendously, and we are proud to serve the campus community as student leaders in this unique transition of higher education, remaining committed to being an organization for the student by the students and upholding community, justice, equity, diversity, representation, and responsibility as our driving values.

In Solidarity,



Yahir Flores

President & CEO

Associated Students, Inc.

California State University, Los Angeles
5154 State University Drive | U-SU: Room 203
Los Angeles, CA 90032

T. 323.343.4792 | F. 323.343.6420

calstatela.edu/ASI | "For the Students, By the Students"