

MAS Retreat Minutes

Friday, September 14

Matt Caires' Keynote (mcaires@montana.edu)

1. Questions from Workshop

1. The administration on my campus thinks about students first
2. The students on my campus truly value student government
3. The administration on my campus values student input
4. The administration on my campus are all old and out of touch
5. The student government on my campus is a highly functional program
6. The staff in the student government office are some of the hardest working staff on campus
7. I am happy with student election turnout
8. Life is so much easier since I've been elected
9. MAS is a well-oiled organization
10. Now that I'm elected, I am working on all the things I campaigned
11. The student newspaper is out to get the student government

2. Top 10 Things to Remember as a Student Leader

12. Focus on the WHO and the HOW, not the what and the when
13. Be strategic - change is hard

i. Have an internal focus and an external focus

14. Build Future Leaders
15. You are in your role 24/7
16. Take student government Off-Campus
17. Do your homework
18. Find your allies - but remember even they might be wrong on occasion
19. Call the media back
20. It's OK to say you're sorry
21. You can sleep next year
22. Over Communicate
23. Keep it simple
24. Credibility

Saturday, September 15

Keynote - Kevin McRae (kmcrae@montana.edu)

• 5 Hats of Student Government Leadership -

- Manager
- Budgeter
- Liaison
- Troubleshooter
- Advocate

- Problems or Challenges Inherent to Student Government
 - Loss of Continuity (then little time while in office)
 - Constituents are apathetic
 - People make presumptions of current leaders based on past leaders
 - lack of support from administration
 - better interpersonal relationships should be created

- Challenges of Communication between Student and Campus Administration
 - All committees have 1 student, but that student tends to be the “token”
 - Predetermination
 - Overriding sense of administrative control

- Where the Montana University System Excels
 - Use students as a method for feedback
 - ex. faculty evaluations
 - Montana is a collective bargaining state
 - including faculty union
 - student government can serve on administration team with bargaining agreement
 - Board Policy - no fee will be increased without appropriate student awareness
 - No Major Building program can be moved forward without student approval

MAS Financial Presentation -

- Contact Isaiah Garrison with Questions
 - *asmsub_pres@msubillings.edu*
 - Only MSU Bozeman, Billings and Great Falls have paid
 - Must pay to be voting members
 - Bottom of sheet is breakdown for Lobbyist
 - Everyone will get back money for Organizer Position
 - All money for Organizer Position will be returned to individual schools for them to hire Organizer Positions on their respective campuses
 - Everyone will get back roughly \$200 - actual numbers next week
 - Let’s roll back into dues or organizer for next year
 - We’ll vote on whether or not to roll over into MAS Lobbyist position because some schools are considering not putting money into Lobbyist position next year (table until legislative discussion)

MAS Legislative Presentation -

- Contact Blake Bjornson with Questions (Kiah gave for Blake)
- *maslobbyist@gmail.com*
- Stuff in the Works -
 - We're going to hire organizer, but we divided between schools to get at what Bobby was talking about - allow each school to tailor events to each campus population
 - Divided year into 3 sections
 - Pre-election section
 - Encourage students to register to vote
 - Critical to encourage students to vote
 - Let's show that we're 47,000 strong and a force to be reckoned with
 - During Session
 - Blake coordinating MAS lobbying efforts with each specific school's events
 - Bring a Legislator to school session
 - Enable legislators to connect with students
 - Try to capitalize on all students stories
 - Legislative showcase
 - Pair with a student and faculty/staff member
 - Students would be trained on lobbying goals
 - Timeline -- end of November
 - Ryan Shore -- has game plan for MSUB
 - Pork Dinner from Cafe with students and legislators
 - Speakers, time for interaction with students, goal is to communicate with legislators that money will stop after this because they are putting education and buildings first
 - Might be good to do groups of students rather than individual students (confidence in numbers - easier to plan)
 - Joe - from regents perspective - we don't want to set up is an adversarial relationship. Over time, our priorities become their priorities. We can bring to the table that we're getting practical education that can be tied to jobs, and faculty are working hard and not overpaid. *Overriding*

concept is that we're there to educate them on what it's like to be a university system and how they can be involved in the decision making.

- We need to start identifying legislators to be participating in our events, both before the elections and after
- We hired Blake to be organizing this discussion and from some perspectives this is not happening. We elected to get started earlier and we should be rolling at this point in the game. We need to set up a time to talk.
 - Weekly discussion with Blake and all political action directors to all be on the same page
- Joe - few things to do right now and make happened. Someone identified on almost all campuses
 - put out a doodle and find time for call for student lunch with regents and coordinate with Kevin McRae (system lobbyist)
- Organizer position -
 - Every other week all organizers and Blake on phone to ensure we're having a unified effort to represent all 47,000 students
 - Organizing events on your own campus to show how critical student engagement is important
 - Legislative action database - get out to your campuses
 - Organized by county
 - Easy to do - simply require senators to do during their office hours for example
 - Ryan Shore -- offered Dan Carter's information - head of government relations for MSU Billings
 - Use all contact resources
 - MAS's purpose is to organize efforts across all campuses - no reason to reinvent wheel so we can share effectively across the system - centralize so we have everyone participating
 - Serve as constant reminders to Legislators that we are their friends
 - Act as a student, not a "lobbyist"
 - Know how to communicate with legislators
 - Remember that education is an investment - we're products and will return 100-300 fold

- Breakfast with key student leaders and legislators to talk and continue to build relationships with these legislators
- Dialogue for 10 minutes
 - Joe - tons of ideas - we should bring everyone together and coordinate ASAP - bring brainstorming mode into action mode
 - The people in the system will be willing and able to help and give us as much authority as we need

Financial Literacy -

- Contact Lindsay Murdock with Questions
 - Cell - 240 566 2122
 - Email - asmsuyp@msu.montana.edu

MAS Financial Literacy Position

Visioning Workshop -

- SWOT
 - Strengths -
 - manpower
 - numbers
 - BOR
 - OCHE
 - enthusiasm
 - lobbyist
 - returning student regent
 - strong support group
 - cooperation instead of competition - unified motives
 - students
 - strong and genuine tradition of shared governance
 - funding for programing
 - ideas
 - MAS Leadership
 - Weaknesses -
 - communication
 - everyone has their own ASB to attend to
 - ideas, but struggling to be cohesive
 - cohesion
 - continuity
 - differences in vision, capacity and resources
 - not full buy in from all campuses

- organization
 - time to understand issues
 - ability to get student input on certain issues
 - partisan culture for how the legislators treat campuses
 - physical distance
 - few meetings
 - lack of a pipeline (senators to MAS)
 - lack of interest in participation
 - work to recruit student regents and create transition process
- Opportunities -
 - swoon legislature
 - influence MUS decisions
 - network of support for student government
 - best practices, transitioning, ideas
 - shifting culture of student government to be more accessible
 - political action director
 - representing 47,000 students
 - university policies
 - effecting change
 - trickle down effect
 - put in place models so student advocacy is in place in the system
 - relate to employer experiences
 - Threats -
 - communication breakdown
 - loss of participation
 - loss of focus
 - UM/ MSU divide
 - through legislature/ Governor
 - 2 year/4 year divide
 - flagships vs. affiliates
 - high turnover rate
 - fractured messaging in Helena
 - throwing legislature off
 - inarticulate idealism
 - new into positions
- Why does MAS exist? What is our purpose? Why are we spending our time here this weekend?

- to advocate for Montana's higher education students
 - entrusted to help the BOR allocate 1.4 billion dollars of students and tax payer dollars
- to effect change
- to provide fair and equal representation of Montana's students
- challenge system -- be watchdog for students
- holding administrators accountable
- improve statewide higher education for students
- voice - let people know we exist
- create opportunities for previously discouraged or unconventional students
- share ideas between student governments on all campuses
- check and balance to restore order to a system that is student focuses
- reconcile interests to make informed decisions
- developing future student leaders and future student regents
 - get a jump on learning curve
- All of the above are *what's* but what about the **why**?
 - USA used to be #1 in education, we want to get back there
 - to make change
 - navigate system for the students
 - give something back
 - improve student life and student experience
 - recognizing that you can be the rubber and the road
 - to be the opposite of "waiting on the world to change" - start creating change instead of waiting for it to change
 - restoring value and making them realize the potential available
 - self interest
 - insight you don't get as a normal student - to get more involved with campus
 - excitement for positive change around passions
 - educational experience for all - should be a part of what college education is
 - hands on instead of theoretical
 - hate hearing problem, without the power or resources to change it
- **What governs us? What are our values?**
- **Group norms?**
 - empathetic interaction with legislators, OCHE, BOR, colleagues
 - be honest about opposition
 - don't take it personally

- address the statement and not the person
- awareness of other persons perspective and context
- respect
 - includes dress
 - language and method of interacting
 - preparedness
 - effective communication
 - time - efficient conference calls and meetings
- representing all students
 - wear MAS hat at MAS meetings
 - interests of students of state in longterm - not your specific constituents on your campus
- you are a representative of MAS 24/7
- knowing it's ok to say sorry
- BOR has a code of expectations
 - avoid conflict of interest
 - bi-partisan
 - not bound to specific campus or area
 - decisions on long term best interest of students and montana
 - longterm state wide view
 - personal responsibility to come prepared
 - stand behind decisions once made even if we disagree
 - view student regent as equal - first and foremost reps studnets
 - personal responsibility for others opinions
 - dont sit on bad feelings or misunderstandings
 - stay focused and on time
 - speak trtuh as we see it
 - review this code
- representing students at all time
- equal opportunity
- Goals and Dreams for MAS
 - transfer of knowledge to communicate what specific schools are working on
 - improve internal or external communication
 - app
 - blog
 - website improvements
 - 2 year term for student regents - institutionalize
 - student health insurance
 - financial literacy
 - Smart Building Initiative

- non-discrimination policy
 - annual fee review
 - synchronizing spring election
 - institutionalizing May retreat and september retreat
 - code of expectations and procedures for MAS
 - formally requesting MAS advisor from OCHE
 - transition process for MAS leadership
 - civic engagement
- period of time during MAS meetings where everyone can talk/ present on their best practices
 - start with BOR meeting in Butte?
- increase collaboration so MAS students are staying with MAS students instead of in hotels - share resources
 - student experience lab - Lumina Foundation model
 - students do research on specific problem for the university system
 - present findings and make recommendations to the board/ administration
 - identify 2-3 people in MAS to do this

Action Plan -

- Internal Communication
 - Communication person on each campus
 - White Papers for task forces
 - Increase email communication
 - Increase G+ chats, decrease conference calls
- External Communication
 - VP for external affairs
 - Facebook
 - Bi-weekly Email with Board
 - Agenda for Board Lunches at BOR Meetings
 - Elevator speech for MAS
 - MAS Branding
 - MAS: 47,000 strong
 - Get OCHE advisor

Campus Task Review -

- Appoint Communications Person on each campus

To Do -

- Vote on organizer dollars
- Vote on code of ethics
- Verbiage for Tuesday's meeting - vote on this
- Vote on VP's voting
- Vote for VP of External Affairs
- Connect all Political Action Directors and organize plans by October
 - Organize PAD Phone Call by Tuesday and give date to OCHE/ Board to be on
- Set Agenda for Wednesday Lunch and Tuesday night meeting
- Set up instructional sessions with Deputy Commissioners

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