



**ASSOCIATED
STUDENTS INC.**
C H A N N E L
I S L A N D S

**NOTICE OF MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
ASSOCIATED STUDENTS OF CSU CHANNEL ISLANDS, INC.**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, to the general public and to all of the Board of Directors of Associated Students of CSU Channel Islands, Inc., a California nonprofit public benefit corporation, that:

A meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Thursday, October 23, 2014 at 7:40 a.m., pursuant to Education Code Section 89921 et seq., at California State University Channel Islands, Student Union Conference Room, located at One University Drive, Camarillo, CA 93012, to consider and act upon the following matters:

- 1) Call to Order: 7:53am
 - a. Members Present: Chelsea Viñas, Vanessa Bahena, Cindy Derrico, Sara Sanders, Missy Jarnagin, Cindy Wyels, Damien Peña, Nsomah Apambire, Monique Reyna, Alex Yopez, and Zachary Valladon.
 - b. Members absent: Taylor Farner, Morgan Franklin
 - c. Members of the Public: Toni Rice, Genesis DeLong, Christine Thompson, Benjamin Blanchard, Lndon Templeton and John Butzer.
- 2) Approval of Minutes:
- 3) Public Forum: No members of the public addressed the Board.
- 4) Financial Report:
- 5) Outstanding Business:
- 6) Entity Reports:
- 7) Community Report:
- 8) New Business:
 - a. **ACTION ITEM: Personnel discussion** – Ms. Apambire explained that the current Student Government president, Ms. Bahena, is currently enrolled in over 17 units of coursework. According to section IVc of the ASI Election Code, “candidates running for the President or Vice President positions can be enrolled in no more than 17 units of academic coursework while in office.” On October 14, 2014, the ASI Associate Director and the ASI Assistant Director met with Ms. Bahena to assist in providing her with an overview and solutions to this issue. Ms. Bahena has chosen to seek an appeal from the Board for the election code. Ms. Bahena will have 10 minutes to state her appeal followed by discussion.
 - i. **Discussion:**
 - Ms. Thompson provided context for the issue. This is a unique case because we do not currently have an ASI executive director. The unit requirement in the ASI election code was added last year and it is only a requirement for the Student Government president and vice president. Ms. Bahena’s course load was brought to our attention after the add/drop date for classes. In the future, the ASI staff will conduct unit grade checks earlier in the semester before the add/drop date to ensure that we are aware of the course load of the Student Government president and vice president.
 - Ms. Rice emphasized that this issue is coming to the board because we do not have an ASI executive director. This is a new situation and a new regulation that started last year.
 - Ms. Bahena provided her appeal. The 17 unit limit was something she believed in this last year and she was a part of the discussions that took place when that limit was added to the ASI

election code. This semester Ms. Bahena chose to take two courses for fun and they were of a light load. These two courses pushed her to 21 units. Before finalizing this course load she met with her academic counselor and also her EOP counselor. She also talked to her faculty chair and received support and approval to take 21 units. She neglected to address the ASI Board about the 21 units and it slipped her mind. She is seeking to appeal this portion of the election code. The things she values most at CI are serving the students. Since stepping into the role of Student Government president she noted that she has maintained a 3.0 GPA. She has been a contributing member of her courses and is passionate about the field of communications and also other areas, which led her to take other courses for fun outside of her major. She values her duty to the students. She has held Student Government very close to her heart and has met the standards of the University and has met her own standards of selflessness. She is committed to making her work so seamless that it allows the University and the students with whom she works to shine above herself. There have been times she has needed to step back from her role in order to return to her position and return to the students at full capacity. She has asked the Student Government senators and others what areas in which she needs to improve. She feels that she is capable of the academic load she is taking. She noted that it is not easy and not stress-free but, similar to yoga, once she gets used to it she has peace at the end. She has demonstrated her ability to do this.

- Mr. Peña asked what is the impetus for the new clause that was added to the ASI election code last year? Why was it important to single out the positions of Student Government president and vice president for the 17 unit limit?
- Dr. Wyels asked to refer to the minutes from the meeting where the election code was modified.
- Ms. Thompson referred to the minutes from the November 7 board meeting. She explained that one of the reasons for implementing the 17 unit limit was the ability of the student to fulfill all of those requirements. The discussion at the time included the question of whether or not the Board was limiting our students' ability or if we should have them make those decisions themselves.
- Ms. Derrico clarified that this unit limit has also been in the Student Government bylaws, which preceded the ASI election code.
- Ms. Apambire read the statement from the ASI election code and noted that the statement is also present in the Student Government bylaws.
- Ms. Thompson clarified that this unit limit is the ASI election code, which does not apply to the other ASI entity leaders, who are not elected but are rather interviewed for the positions.
- Mr. Yopez asked to clarify whether or not the ASI election code applies just to students running or while they are in office.
- Ms. Apambire referred to the election code and clarified that the limit applies to students while in office.
- Ms. Derrico asked Ms. Bahena why she chose to speak with her EOP advisor and academic advisor about this matter.
- Ms. Bahena noted that she has a close relationship with her EOP counselor and frequently checks in with her EOP counselor throughout the semester. She sought approval from her faculty advisor, Dr. Tracylee Clarke, with whom she outlined her role in Student Government as well as her requirements as a student and as a senior. The advisor gave her approval of these units.
- Ms. Derrico asked why this discussion didn't occur with someone from ASI given Ms. Bahena's role as Student Government president.
- Ms. Bahena noted that she didn't feel like there was a point person in ASI who she would specifically talk to about this and she felt that the processes in place referred more to the need for a faculty member's approval. She noted that this was fairly new that she wasn't educated on the process.
- Ms. Derrico asked whether or not Ms. Bahena remembered that this was a requirement.

- Ms. Bahena confirmed that she neglected to address the issue and did not remember that it was a requirement.
- Ms. Thompson noted that the minutes from November 7 were vague but that there was a discussion on that date about the maximum number of units.
- Mr. Peña asked if the Board had put anything in place for a process if someone were to challenge the rule.
- Ms. Thompson confirmed that the appeal process is outlined in the ASI bylaws.
- Ms. Viñas asked Ms. Bahena if her understanding is correct that Ms. Bahena felt there was a lack of ASI support and that she didn't know who to go to.
- Ms. Bahena explained that she didn't think that there was anything that ASI could have done better. But this wasn't something she remembered and she did not know who to go to in ASI who would know what to do. She doesn't want to say that ASI didn't know what to do. In the future ASI should check students' units at the 3 week mark of each semester.
- Ms. Viñas noted that Vanessa was the chair of the Student Government Internal Affairs Committee and had to go through the Student Government bylaws. She asked Ms. Bahena to confirm that she just did not remember.
- Ms. Bahena confirmed that it is correct that she did not remember.
- Ms. Reyna noted that she does not feel that the course load is a good enough reason to remove Ms. Bahena from her position. She asked the board what they are expected to do about this since it is too late in the semester to drop a class.
- Ms. Derrico clarified that this is a board decision.
- Dr. Wyels clarified the process of the discussion. Asked to focus on Ms. Bahena while she is in the room.
- Ms. Rice noted that ASI does not technically have an ASI Executive Director but she does not want that to prevent Ms. Bahena from having the opportunity to go to someone serving in that capacity. Ms. Rice clarified that Ms. Bahena could speak to her or the Vice President for Student Affairs first for the appeal and then go back to the board. The appeal would still have to come to the board. However, there is the option for Ms. Rice or the Vice President for Student Affairs to be a part of the process.
- Ms. Bahena outlined the courses she is taking. She noted the options that were presented to her were dropping the extra courses, stepping back from her position as president, or appealing to the ASI Board.
- Ms. Thompson clarified that ASI did not present the option of dropping a class to Ms. Bahena.
- Mr. Peña asked Vanessa what is her plan of action if she stays in her position.
- Ms. Bahena said that she will meet with her faculty advisor. She noted that her GPA has gone up since she became Student Government president. She plans to have conversations with the ASI Assistant Director and ASI Associate Director or whoever the designee is in ASI and have check-ins throughout the year. She could also have that conversation with other departments as needed.
- Ms. Apambire asked Ms. Bahena to leave the room to allow the Board to further discuss.
- Ms. Reyna mentioned that she does not feel that it is fair to only hold the Student Government president and vice president to these requirements. She noted that the maximum units for the campus is 18 units, therefore 17 is lower than the campus' requirement. It is not fair to ask Vanessa to step down from her position. This isn't that serious of an issue. Ms. Reyna noted that she understands that Ms. Bahena was one of the people who approved this rule. She suggested that the board allow Ms. Bahena to finish off the semester with those 21 units in the position and to make it clear that for anyone running for office in the following years that 17 units is the maximum amount that they can do.
- Mr. Valladon noted that the discussion about Ms. Bahena's ability is subjective. The check for unit load was done late in the semester, and, given this circumstance, this will be different in the

future. He said that we are at a point in the semester that taking away this role from Ms. Bahena may hinder her more than help her. She is more than capable of handling this situation this semester. Mr. Valladon asked for the board to allow Ms. Bahena to continue in her role bearing in mind that the board should make it clear that no one should take over the maximum amount of units in the future according to the bylaws.

- Ms. Viñas asked the board to look at the process behind this and to stay away from talking about Ms. Bahena's ability. Ms. Viñas asked how the board is going to go moving forward – are we going to uphold this document or are we going to allow an exception? Ms. Viñas noted that she is a board of director and wants to be ethical in her decision making by following the rules set forth by the previous board.
- Ms. Derrico explained that she feels torn between two things. She noted that since Ms. Bahena is in her second year as Student Government president that she should be clear on the requirements of her position. However, the organization also needs to hold its members accountable to that standard. She said that if we are holding students to this at a time when they would be in academic jeopardy, then we are responsible for that. Aside from counseling Ms. Bahena or making a note in her file, Ms. Derrico said that the board is not in a good position to hold this student accountable. It will need to be a conversation with students at the beginning of the semester.
- Ms. Thompson confirmed that ASI will be putting processes into place and conducting unit checks in the future.
- Ms. Sanders noted that a conversation did take place at the beginning of the semester that included a discussion about units. Ms. Bahena has added her classes since those conversations took place. Ms. Sanders explained that the role of the Student Government president and vice president is to uphold the Student Government bylaws. She and Ms. Bahena signed a form saying that they have read the elections code. It is their role to uphold the bylaws and to hold the rest of Student Government accountable to do the same. Ms. Sanders noted that she sees it as her role as Student Government vice president to uphold the rules that are in place.
- Ms. Jarnagin expressed that there needs to be accountability in both parties (ASI and the student). She said that the board cannot force Ms. Bahena to drop her class. Ms. Jarnagin asked if it is right for the board to force Ms. Bahena out of Student Government 10 weeks into the semester. She noted that this needs to be taken care of at the front end. It is unfair to both parties right now. There is a need to tighten up our processes to ensure that this is happening during the add/drop period.
- Mr. Valladon explained that if the board is moving the discussion away from ability, then they shouldn't speculate about what happened or about what put Ms. Bahena in this situation, but rather about the current circumstance. He said that the board cannot know if this was intentional or an accident. The given circumstance would be harmful if the board does not grant this appeal.
- Dr. Wyels advised the board to take Ms. Bahena out of the picture for the moment and to look at good organizational structure, good practices, leadership, and reasons why organizations have bylaws. She wants the board to learn lessons here to go on and improve. She noted that the board also needs to keep in mind that there is both the reality and the perception of being fair. It is important to ensure that others do not perceive this decision as unfair. Dr. Wyels outlined the number of study hours needed for a 17 unit load, noting that for every hour in the classroom there should be an additional 2-3 hours of study outside of the classroom. She explained that there is a reason the board came up with the 17 hour maximum load. She noted that the board wants to have bylaws that allow students to excel as students and to be excellent student leaders. It is possible that the policy could be revisited. Dr. Wyels expressed that she is also troubled by what seems to be an onus on the ASI staff to check students' units when it needs to be a personal responsibility of the students. It is not efficient because classes can be added and dropped for many weeks. With the decision the board makes today, there is the possibility of

setting a precedent which speaks to fairness later on. Does this policy mean something? Is it already time to revisit it? Or as an organization should we be consistent to our policies?

- Ms. Reyna said that she was in a similar position as Ms. Bahena in her community college. She feels that as college students they should be allowed to make these decisions on their own. She noted that it is unfair to ask Ms. Bahena to step down from her position. Ms. Reyna asked what other options are available. Ms. Reyna said that she understands that we should hold people accountable, but asked what else can the board do aside from asking her to step down?
- Ms. Thompson said that the option is for Ms. Bahena to either remain in her position or not. If she remains in her position ASI can take developmental steps to ensure that she is doing well in her courses. The Board has to take ownership of Ms. Bahena's GPA if she stays in her position, so we would need to coach her through the rest of the semester. ASI would also hope to help Ms. Bahena if the option was to uphold the election code and not allow her to stay in office. ASI would take developmental steps in that as well.
- Mr. Peña expressed that as Dean of Students he believes in holding everyone accountable. This board has already made quite a few allowances this year. He has heard nothing in the discussion so far about how these 21 units have altered Ms. Bahena's ability to do her job. He asked how the board can hold itself accountable if it is not able to address those issues?
- Ms. Derrico said that there could be appeals for this type of issue held in advance. She said that as advisors we have that responsibility to remind people of that. Ms. Derrico expressed that she wants to uphold the election code but feels dubious about removing a student from office. Ms. Derrico recommended that the board censure the president on this issue and then send a strong message. It is important to note to this student that this is not good leadership practice. The early points of accountability have to be built into the system. The president didn't do her due diligence as she should have.
- Ms. Jarnagin said that as a growing campus we struggle with accountability in a lot of different areas. She noted that in her experience the one time you give the exception, students hear about it and talk about it. If you do it one time, everyone knows about it. We have to make sure that it is very well known that if this is going to pass it is a one-time exception and that this doesn't set the table for the future.
- Ms. Thompson noted that the election code was upheld earlier in the semester with another student.
- Ms. DeLong noted that she and Ms. Thompson talked to the students about academics and units early on in the summer. At this meeting Ms. DeLong and Ms. Thompson also explained to Ms. Bahena who in ASI to go to. Ms. DeLong meets with Vanessa weekly.
- Ms. Sanders noted that the allowances that have been made previously in the year were not written rules. She noted that this issue is different from that because it is a written rule in the bylaws. Ms. Sanders sought clarification on whether or not Mr. Peña felt that they needed to discuss Ms. Bahena's ability at this point in the discussion.
- Ms. Viñas called for a point of order – we are not going to talk about ability.
- Ms. Rice noted that if the board begins to talk about ability that it will be subjective. She also noted the need to be conscious of time. She asked the board to not make this decision in haste but to make the right decision for that student in that moment. Accountability is important to others that hear about this decision. What does this group want to say about this story and how this decision came to be and why the board made this decision? As a result of the discussion, there are things the board is going to be putting in place. Sometimes you have to make those decisions for the greater good. We need to talk more about what this group wants to do and decide how to continue this discussion.
- Ms. Derrico motioned to table the discussion.
- Mr. Valladon seconded the motion.
- All in favor. Motion passed.

9) Adjournment: 8:58am

Next ASI Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 16, 2014 at 7:40 a.m. in the Student Union Conference Room.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Genesis DeLong.