CALL TO ORDER

Approval of minutes: Senator Brost: Moved / Senator Karras: Second / Voting body: Passed

Officer accountability

PUBLIC FORUM

Amanda DeRito: I’m here with Ellis Bruch to share more about our timely warnings. The Clery Act came into existence after Jeanne Clery was raped and murdered in her dorm room. Her parents said they wouldn’t have sent her to that university if they had known what the crime statistics were, so they pushed for a bill that would require that to be disclosed.

Any university that receives funding from the government must “collect, classify, and count crime reports and crime statistics, maintain a 60-day daily crime and fire log open to public inspection, and submit annual crime statistics and publish an annual security and fire safety report. We also must provide educational programs to prevent crime, particularly sexual violence crimes, and issue campus alerts, including the Timely Warning Notices and Emergency Notifications. We have a website that explains this in detail: dps.usu.edu/clery.

When universities don’t comply with the Clery Act, they’re subject to up to $57,317 per violation. Universities get audited and sometimes fined, like Michigan State and Penn State. Michigan State received a fine of $4.2 million recently.

USU sends three different kinds of alerts: Code Blues (emergency notifications), Timely Warning Notices (which are now Crime Alerts), and safety alerts (which isn’t required but we like to send if it will increase the safety of our students).

The following definitions are verbiage from the Clery Act. Code Blues are sent when there’s a “significant emergency or dangerous situation poses an immediate threat to the health and safety of the community.” This could be a gas leak, a building fire, a tornado, an armed aggressor, etc. Most of these go through the Logan Police Department as soon as they hear something; they don’t wait to confirm it or get all of the details, because then it could be too late.

Crime Alerts (formerly Timely Warnings) include “potentially dangerous criminal situations on campus posing a serious or continuing threat,” such as burglary, sexual assault, and arson.
A safety alert covers anything else we decide to send.

“You must issue a timely warning for all Clery Act crimes that occur on your Clery Geography that are: reported to campus security authorities or local police agencies or considered by the institution to represent a serious or continuing threat to students and employees.”

Clery Crimes include criminal homicide, burglary (not auto burglary), aggravated assault, robbery, arson, motor vehicle theft, hate crimes, domestic violence, stalking, or any sex offences.

Clery Geography includes anywhere on campus, including residence halls, adjacent public property like the Logan Cemetery, and non-campus property (which is mostly fraternity and sorority houses).

Campus Security Authorities include USU Public Safety and USU officials with significant responsibility for student and campus activities, such as RAs and Res Life staff, Student Involvement, coaches, student club advisors, Title IX Coordinators, the student conduct office, and victim advocates.

“You must issue a timely warning for all Clery Act crimes that occur on your Clery Geography that are reported to campus security authorities or local police agencies and considered by the institution to represent a serious or continuing threat to students and employees.”

The most difficult situations to define are relationship violence.

Reports are made in several ways. Students report anonymously, report with limited information because they’re seeking support, or report to the police, even if they don’t know if they want to pursue.

We often have limited amounts of information, so to determine what our course of action involves us asking if the suspect is known, if they’ve been arrested, if they have a criminal or violent history, if there are other similar reports, if a crime was particularly violent or predatory (eg. Use of GHB or Rohypnol used), the relationship of the victim and suspect and whether others are threatened, and if the event occurred within the last 30 days. The timeliness criteria can be very subjective, because we know serial offenders can act out over months and even year.

Timely Warning content includes “all information that would promote safety and that would aid in the prevention of similar crimes.” There can be no personally identifying information of victim, pertinent information about the crime (including the date, time, location, and nature of the crime), information about the suspect (if they’re sought), and risk reduction and prevention tips.

We send all of these alerts as emails, texts, and push notifications.

Our timely notices are sent out to comply with Clery, but also make our campus safe. We take this opportunity to educate students about sexual violence, including how to reduce risk and be an upstander. It’s important to us to increase transparency in the spirit of the Clery Act, to create trust that crimes are taken seriously, and to establish a culture of reporting where perpetrators can be held accountable.

VP Lake: If there were a Clery Crime in an independently-owned, off-campus apartment complex like Old Farm, would we still be notified since it’s close to campus?

Amanda DeRito: Just because we’re required to send alerts when it’s on campus doesn’t mean we won’t send an alert if it’s off campus. We would probably send out a safety alert, like we did with the auto burglaries last year. It’s something we can all do to keep campus safer. If there was a continuing threat, we’d send something out.
VP Lake: Great.

Spencer Bitner: Do you get those reports through the police?

Amanda DeRito: A lot of reports come through Title IX because they can remain anonymous. Once they come in, Torch gets a few people together to determine what to do. They come in through multiple sources because there are multiple channels.

Ellis Bruch: We are working to develop really strong connections with surrounding law enforcement, particularly Logan City, so that we can be notified as soon as things happen. We’re trying to do that as a community.

Amanda DeRito: Even just over the last few years we’ve gained a better understanding of what’s going on off-campus.

Any other questions? Thank you for your time.

VP Lake: If you have any questions, I’m sure Amanda and Ellis would appreciate emails so they can answer those.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

VP Lake: Thank you all for your professionalism during Fee Board. I feel like everything was exceptional and that everyone was respected. Make sure you get your Fee Board binders back to Sophia by the end of this week.

Next week is the last week for charter changes. We want them in place so that the next officer can expect things as they are running. That doesn’t require a first and second reading, just one. Send them to Anna and we’ll get them put on the agenda.

I am adjusting my charter, mostly the grammar and verbiage of things, tomorrow in Executive Council. If you’re interested, feel free to reach out.

When I ran for my position, I got a council because mine was the only position without one. We’ve made some exciting changes: we’ve had flags added at the three-way at the bottom of Old Main, at the top of the hill we have flashing pedestrian signs, we were able to get a light on the northwest corner of Aggie Boulevard and 8th because it was really dark and unsafe there, and flags were added to the crosswalk by Tandoori Oven and USU Credit Union. This week we are recording our student fee videos that will be posted on the student fee page. I’m very excited that we were able to get this all done.

Next week is the deadline for Facilities Enhancement. If there is anyone in your college that is working on something, just remind them and make sure they know that it’s due next week.

Senator Karras: Has there been any update on the legislation we worked on?

VP Lake: Yes. Patrick is meeting with the department heads next week. He and I met two weeks ago. It’s looking like we’ll need to compromise. No one wants a five-student board because it increased liability and doesn’t solve any issues, and Dr. Morales made it clear students are just as liable. Faculty’s biggest issue is student-professor relationships. The compromise I brought was to have a student sit in on some of the discussion (anything that’s not too sensitive) and then submit a write-up. We talked about how that shouldn’t matter, but it won’t get passed if we don’t compromise. I thought that would be a fair compromise, rather than having a situation where five students potentially get sued. It’s not the best, but it’s better than nothing. I’ve had the darndest
time trying to get in with the department head executive committee. I’ve emailed them like five times and they haven’t gotten back to me, so once he gets in to meet with them we’ll have met with everyone and be able to work out a compromise. Is there any other input?

Senator Lyons: I talked with my dean about this and she was very opposed to the students having their own committees. One student on a committee seemed much more feasible. She was very opposed to a separate committee.

VP Lake: That’s good to know.

Spencer Bitner: How many of you know that you are having students on hiring committees? so some have and some don’t have

Senator Dent: We do sometimes, but it’s not consistent.

VP Lake: If you have any further input, let me know. It’s happening, but it’s just very slow.

Senator Chamberlain: Will you update us with the spouse card as well?

VP Lake: Yes. That may outlast us, but if I find out anything, I’ll let you know.

Senator Dent: Looking ahead, are there any additional responsibilities we have before the end of our tenure?

VP Lake: You have to sign off on both the primary and final budget of the people running who are running for your position. They should work around your schedules; there’s no need for you to work around theirs. That’s what office hours are for. You have to be present at the announcement, and you’re done on the night of inauguration. That day and the days prior you clean out your office and do whatever you need to do so it can be their space.

Spencer Bitner: Inauguration is the 10th of April.

Senator Chamberlain: When’s the announcement?

Spencer Bitner: Friday, February 28th. You need to have your space cleared out by the 9th of April so they can have the space.

Senator Brost: I know we talked about having new officers come to our last meeting. Is that going to happen?

Spencer Bitner: That’s up to you. You can make it happen if you’d like.

Senator Chamberlain: Mason just invited me. We can invite them so they can see how we do it.

Spencer Bitner: If you have people who want to be involved on your council could also go to meetings. I would do anything to not discourage participation. Your last Academic Senate will be April 6th. That (I believe) is the combined budget meeting where you get to talk about your suggestions for next year’s budget. There are a lot of opportunities for these incoming students to see how you operate.
COUNCIL UPDATES

Senator Fry: Last week I met with a few people at the division for distance education to talk about the census and how we are going to roll that out on campus. We’ll start putting out materials, so feel free to join us in handing those out. We also discussed having each of us hand out more to our constituents.

We started planning our next grad student social, which will be in the NR building in February.

We’re purchasing things for Mental Health Week.

I scheduled a meeting with the school of graduate studies about the email list, so we’ll see what they say. We have been told no in the past.

Senator Scott: Arts Week was successful and fun! If you came, thank you! The administration in my college was really grateful for each event, which was cool.

I spoke with my council about the former Artist’s Block Café. The administration has planned to turn it into an advising office, which the students are not happy about. I talked to our dean that same day about the solidity of those plans and she said it was sure and they’d just received the funding. I told her that the students are not in favor of that. We set an appointment for this Friday to meet with the associate deans and department heads to talk about the future of that space. I sent out a survey that day to gather input about that and included some questions about future things and other food options, since we’ve talked about a food trailer but that isn’t actually feasible until it’s warmer. Within three hours of sending the survey I had 300 responses. This is the thing that arts students are most passionate about. I’m glad I got ahold of Dr. Nardo and that I have this meeting. If any of you have input or advice about this, I would gladly take it.

We just scheduled a Gripe Night for February 11th with the arts students so we can know more about their issues.

Senator Bird: I’m looking at club policy within my college and trying to figure out how to establish college clubs.

There’s supposed to be a CEHS scholarship that students raise money for, but no one really responds when I ask about it. I found out it hasn’t been awarded, it’s just sitting in an account, so they’re looking into that. I’m looking into what the criteria is and how we can implement it and get it awarded.

We want to do a Resume, Research, and some food that starts with an “R” event to show what research is being done and help with resume edits.

I sent an email to our department heads about facilities enhancement and classroom improvement. I talked in person with a couple of our associate deans to get it going.

We started a listserv for students, but we’re looking at adding faculty to the listserv so they can receive all the same information

Senator Lyons: We have some good news: Julie Robertson, the chief scientist for the ISS is already coming to campus. She’s coming for the Honors College, so we’re working with them to see what their ideas are and to see if they’ll allow other students to come see her speak. Our fingers are still crossed.

Senator Brost: When is she coming?

Senator Lyons: We don’t know yet, I haven’t heard back.
We have a STEM fair preparation event coming up. It’ll be in the ENGR lobby.

I met with the dean and the department heads last Thursday about another research mingle. Everyone loved it and it got quite a few people in contact with research opportunities. We’re going to try and host a bigger one and bring in more professors since summer is a great time for research. If you’re interested, let me know. We’re sending out an email to faculty soon.

Senator Chamberlain: Will you send that to me?

Senator Lyons: Yes.

Senator Karras: We have a research event in March that we could work together on, if you’d like.

I’m working closely with the electrical and computer engineering department on a facilities enhancement application. If you’ve ever been in the engineering lab building, you’d understand.

If you remember last semester’s discussion of the third-floor study area and getting some renovations, and it was a big deal that we got that done. We have a sponsor, JUB Engineering, paid for most of the additions. We just finished phase two, and phase three will be starting soon. I think it’s amazing to see because it was a grassroots movement from our students. It’s been very exciting.

We’re trying to work on mental health in our college. We have some “band-aid fixes” to help while you’re in the engineering building, but we’re looking for other ways to attack the roots of the stress. I might be reaching out to some of you individually to see what you do and how we can tailor that to engineers.

Engineer’s Week is still several weeks out. We have everything finalized and we’re just preparing. I will hound this until the day after Engineer’s Week. It’s a short week, only four days but we have 20 events. Lunch and Linger, Lightning Talks, Pizza, Prints, and Popcorn, and a design competition on Tuesday the 18th. On Wednesday we have Breakfast Snacks, Calculator Quick-Draw, Pitch Competition, Cardboard Boat Races, another design competition, and one departmental awards. On Thursday we have 3D Bridge Competition, Community Night, Pinewood Derby Competitions, and a talent show. Friday the 21st we have Beta Bowl, Writing Competition, and four of our five departmental awards and the overall college awards banquet. Saturday all day is Engineering Day across campus. It’s going to be fantastic and I’m excited, particularly about cardboard boat races. You can register for all of those events and more on the engineering website.

Senator Ward: I met with my dean last week to solidify all of the events that we’ll do for CHaSS Week and the timeline for the rest of the semester.

We’re planning to do an event with the department heads in February.

We’re planning to do a women’s history trivia event during Paulina’s Week of the Woman.

Senator Dent: What day is that?

Senator Ward: We don’t know, just during that week.

The week after that is CHaSS Week. We’re doing some traditional events like Networking Night, Awards, Cup of Joe with Joe, and Quiz Bowl, but we’ve added some new events too. We’re planning an event at the anthropology museum, and the democrats and republicans clubs want to collaborate and do a debate-type event that will probably be the hardest to plan. Our service committee does something different every year, and this year they’re enabling student to write thank-you letters to faculty and others on campus who have helped them.
After CHaSS Week, all we have is a little event just to kind of act as a transition for the new senator. Last year we did a spelling bee-type event, and this year we’re going to have the new senator take the lead on that.

It feels like a lot but it probably isn’t as bad as I think it is. If you have any questions, let me know!

Senator Brost: We had Dr. Olsen do QPR Training with the College of Ag’s council and the College of Engineering’s council two weeks ago, and then Dr. Colver came to share analytics regarding the College of Ag to show how ambassadors and council can make a difference based on the data he showed us.

We’re still planning on doing Women in Ag Day on March 12th. We’re still working on room locations for that.

Senator Dent: We’ve been focused on Mock Interview Day, which was last Friday. We had about 30 different employers come to practice interview skills and several people got job offers!

With regards to classroom improvement, the dean and associate deans don’t feel a need with the new building.

We’re planning a department head roundtable event. It’s been helpful for us in the business school because instead of a gripe night where we felt like there wasn’t any productivity, we have each department head talk with their students about the needs that they have about classes, programs, and issues in general, and were able to give more individualized feedback. That helped us a lot.

One of my initiatives was to create a Student Leadership Board made of the presidents of clubs to discuss what issues we’re seeing in the college and how we can help.

The biggest thing we’re working on is Women’s Week with Paulina’s week. We have two events for that.

I really want to create a business council handbook before the next senator comes in because it’s really hard to transition and it takes a few months to get everything together. I want to include how to plan Business Week (not what events to have, but who to contact) and how to set up the council and best practices. I think it would be a lot more helpful.

Senator Chamberlain: We’ve been planning NR Week. We met with all of our club presidents and got nearly all of our events nailed down. Our clubs are spearheading those, so we should have more involvement. We’re trying to involve the community in some of our events as well.

We did mock interviews and resume building skills last week and it was really well-attended.

Our job fair is this week, which is exciting.

We’ve been working with the dean to get a speaker for NR Week. Her name’s Emma Marris, she’s a science writer and she’ll be doing a talk and a workshop for writing. She’ll have students sign up and submit their work so she can edit them and do a whole workshop event, which will be cool.

The Student Sustainability Office has an event on Thursday with Rob Davies and Patrick Belmont about the state of climate issues on campus. That’s Thursday at 5 in the Life Science Building.

ADVISOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

Spencer Bitner: I will be gone on Thursday and Friday. If we have meetings, we need to reschedule, but I’ll still be available.
ADJOURNMENT

Senator Fry: **Moved** / Senator Chamberlain: **Second** / Voting body: **Passed**

IN ATTENDANCE: Spencer Bitner, VP Dexton Lake, Senator Jared Fry, Senator Sara Dent, Senator Sakia Brost, Senator Nathan Scott, Senator Rachel Chamberlain, Senator Naomi Ward, Senator Alex Lyons, Senator Tiffanee Bird, Senator Cooper Karras, Assistant Anna Kremnev