

Olivia Weiss

### Senate Goals 2020-20201

Prioritize communicating with my constituents, to strive to be representative of a variety of identities on campus. Specifically, I will attend 2 events on campus that focus on community engagement (student union event, student forum, etc.) to gain feedback and insight into students' needs.

Read *Between The World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates and *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by Paulo Freire, to continue to learn anti-racism and how to utilize my platform as a senator towards pursuing a more equitable campus.

Maintain open communication channels with my peers in ASLC to encourage collaboration and elevate a variety of voices. With my past experience in senate as well as other roles in ASLC, I will support and uplift my peers who are less familiar with ASLC and prioritize being an accessible resource.

Attend the *Ray Warren Symposium* to further educate myself how the structural racism at Lewis & Clark continues to impact all of us, specifically my BIPOC peers. Attend subsequent symposiums to learn more about issues students are passionate about.

Actively question if ASLC is living up to its values; but practice “calling in” rather than “calling out”. Actively examine if my personal involvement in ASLC embodies the values, as well.

## **Senate goals reflection: Fall 2020 Semester**

First and foremost, I want to acknowledge that I struggled significantly with my mental health this semester, which unfortunately impacted my ability to achieve many of my goals. The combination of Covid stress, the wildfires in Oregon, and a variety of other personal matters, I had a difficult time managing my anxiety and wellness throughout the first few months of the semester. Given that, I made a variety of changes in my life, including decreasing my academic load and finishing the semester at home. When analyzing what needed to change in my life, I consciously chose to maintain my position as a senator. Despite the personal challenges I was enduring, I feel that it did not impede on my ability to represent the student body. More than anything, being on senate gives me a sense of purpose and reminds me that the world is bigger than what is just in my head. While I did struggle these past few months, I don't believe that at any point it truly hindered my ability to be a leader on campus. I love being on senate and hope to continue to represent the needs of my constituents.

I found that this semester, communicating with constituents happened in more informal ways. Many union events focused on the specific identity groups of that union, creating a safe space that I would not want to intrude on. I did attend a variety of events focused on student engagement, such as Robin's Student Life forums as well as ASLC sponsored forums. One of my takeaways from this semester compared to last, was the ways in which Covid limited the ways in which we could comfortably engage with students. I found myself feeling distant and disconnected from the student body without the Pio Fair, SunTan (SunBurn? I'm not sure which is in the fall), and the student organizing that I know would be occurring if it weren't dangerous for us to gather. I've found it more effective to communicate with students in more informal ways, such as social media. This semester whenever I engage with students from campus and the topic of Covid comes up, I ask them what their concerns are. I try to dig past the initial "I want to see my friends" and try to ask "but what sucks about this semester that feels like it doesn't need to suck?"

This informal communication has been extremely useful this semester in the effort to understand what students truly want, especially the student body beyond my narrow community. In the absence of physical gathering, I've found that much of the political discourse on campus happens in the classroom and on social media. In my history class, my professor regularly asked students how they felt about certain decisions the school had made or policies that were being implemented. I found these conversations extremely informative, as students were more willing to speak freely about what they were struggling with. This situation also allowed me to hear the voices of a variety of students, not just those who typically attend ASLC forums or submit feedback.

All that being said, my experience at Lewis & Clark remains that of a cisgendered white girl, and therefore is biased towards addressing the issues that impact my identities. I am continuing to challenge myself to uncover and dismantle my own prejudices. This semester I have struggled with the knowledge that there are communities at Lewis & Clark that I do not represent, but it is also not their responsibility to educate me. I am always looking for resources to educate myself and expose the ways in which I perpetuate racism, classism, and other prejudices. Please feel free to message me with any concerns, suggestions, or thoughts about my

role as a senator.