

**UNIVERSITY STUDENT UNION
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
NOVEMBER 18, 2024 – FLINTRIDGE ROOM**

I. Call to Order

The regular meeting of the USU Board of Directors was called to order at 12:37 p.m. by Chair Lopez.

II. Roll Call

Present	Absent	Staff	Guests
Mishell De Leon	Nawshin Sabah	Alejandra Aparicio	
Rudy Granillo		Tari Hunter*	
Debra Hammond		Natalie Johnson	
Nidharsh Kempegowda		Sharon Kinard	
Iman Khan (A.S. Liaison)		Samantha Liu	
Daniel Lopez		Audrey Martinez	
Joaquin Macias		Janessa Reyes	
Devaansh Mann		Melonie King	
Marilyn Orantes		Kristen Pichler	
Heet Patel		Tim Rasmussen	
Vyom Pathak		Steven Wein	
Nataly Pelaez		Cesar Jimenez	
Dr. Freddie Sanchez*		Joseph Illuminate	
Dr. Mirna Sawyer		Shelley Sakoda	
Steven Wang			
Dr. Edith Winterhalter			

* TEAMS video participant

III. Approval of Agenda

M/S/P (D. Mann / V. Pathak) Motion to approve the agenda for November 18, 2024.

Motion passed 13-0-0.

IV. Approval of Minutes 10/07/2024

M/S/P (M. De Leon / D. Mann) Motion to approve the minutes for October 7, 2024.

Motion passed 13-0-0.

V. Approval of Minutes 10/28/2024

M/S/P (M. Orantes / V. Pathak) Motion to approve the minutes for October 28, 2024.

Motion passed 13-0-0.

Dr. Edith Winterhalter arrived at 12:40 p.m.

VI. Open Forum

Building Operations Coordinator, Tim Rasmussen shared that the Sol Center has launched the new portable chargers, also known as Omnichargers which will replace the previous hexagon chargers at the USU. In partnership with the USU Assessment Team, Tim launched a survey to determine student need for chargers and potential to increase the current inventory. Following the survey the students did indeed indicate a continued need for chargers and a need to increase the inventory. The USU has purchased 6 Omnichargers which can be checked out of the USU Sol Center front desk. The chargers will only be available to current CSUN students. Check-out will require the student's ID number and must be returned by 5:00 p.m. on the same day. Students may take the charger with them anywhere for the day. As an added feature, an Air-tag is attached to each portable charger for geo-tracking. If a student does not return the charger or if it is returned damaged, there will be a hold placed on their account until it is replaced or returned. The cost to replace a charger is \$400.

Pride Center Student Assistant Employee, Melonie King thanked the Board of Directors for the opportunity to attend the Association of College Unions International (ACUI) in San Diego. Melonie shared that it was nice to share space with other higher education professionals, as well as serve on the conference planning team and panel. She thanked Director Hammond for guiding her through her involvement with ACUI. Director Hammond reiterated that Melonie participated in the ACUI planning committee, student panel, and Region I leadership.

Director Patel wanted to thank the Board of Directors for sending him to his first ACUI conference. After speaking to individuals from various campuses, he acknowledged that the USU can benefit from some changes and improvements, including storage spaces on-campus, a gardening program, and space for music and art. Director Patel shared the details of University of California, San Diego's \$10 million project to establish a Starbucks on campus. Lastly, Director Patel highlighted Director Hammond's speech at ACUI, stating how relatable it was.

Assistant Director, Programs & Leadership, Audrey Martinez introduced Acting Board of Directors, Leadership & Administrative Coordinator, Janessa Reyes. She said that Janessa will support the Board of Directors and keep current processes and plans moving. Janessa shared that she was the former Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Coordinator and former Diversity & Inclusion Committee member with Chair Lopez.

VII. Chair's Report

Chair Lopez shared that he hopes everyone can focus on self-care after the recent election season and that the USU remains to be a place for unity and care. The Internal Review and Visibility & Engagement Ad Hoc Committees have formally kicked-off. Formal reports will begin next month, providing time for the committees to work towards their goals. Chair Lopez and Vice Chair Orantes have been meeting with Marketing to brainstorm content ideas, including a bi-weekly series, "Questions with Torito," hosted by Vice Chair Orantes and a new series, "Keeping Up with the BOD," featuring both Chair Lopez and Vice Chair Orantes. Chair Lopez discussed his experience at Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) Conference, where he connected with higher education professionals across the country and Puerto Rico. Additionally, Chair Lopez attended the ACUI Region I Conference. He mentioned that he took in a lot of inspiration from other campuses and collaborated with individuals from CSU Stanislaus and Long Beach. Chair Lopez thanked and acknowledged Chairs, Co-Chairs, and Executive Secretaries now that all committees are up and running. He encouraged BOD committee members to attend BOD general meetings and trainings.

VIII. Vice Chair's Report

Vice Chair Orantes shared that she attended HACU's K-12 Higher Education symposium, which has shifted her career trajectory. The symposium highlighted the pipeline from kindergarten to higher education, which could impact marginalized communities, especially among at-risk youth. Since her graduate program focuses on K-12 advocacy, she mentioned that she is trying

to become more involved with K-12 as it relates to the college pipeline. Vice Chair Orantes reported that she also attended the ACUI Region I Conference, where she connected her graduate studies to the keynote speech by Doctora Vanessa Bustamante. She connected with other Boards and student unions, as well as the Executive Director from San Francisco State University. Vice Chair Orantes highlighted the USU x Housing Collaboration, "Friendsgiving," on Saturday, November 23rd from Noon to 3:00 p.m. at the University Village Apartments (UVA) and encouraged everyone to attend. She thanked the Marketing and Programs Departments for making the collaboration happen. Vice Chair Orantes discussed the Internal Review Ad Hoc Committee, which had its first meeting on November 8th and will meet again on November 22nd. Their first meeting consisted of member introductions, committee goals, and scheduling. The Internal Review Ad Hoc committee will meet every other Friday from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. She reminded the Board to email her or Chair Lopez for any accommodations and to send their status reports. She shared that the Internal Review Ad-Hoc Committee is recruiting a Board member and reviewing applications for a Student at Large member.

IX. Executive Director's Report

Director Hammond highlighted several well-received USU programs, including Programs Department's Mystic Evening, which resulted in over 600 attendees; USU's collaboration with University Village Apartments (UVA) to work with parent scholars; Veterans Resource Center's Salute to Veterans Week, which served veterans and their families through on- and off-campus programs; USU Co-sponsorships' assistance to various clubs, organizations, and departments, whether through monetary support or sponsorship for a room. The USU Resource Centers supported students in different ways, following the recent election. In response to impacted students, the USU sent out information on how we can support them, in addition to the letters of support from the CSU, the UC President, and Community College Chancellors and Associated Students (A.S.) President and Vice President. She thanked A.S. President and Vice President for including the USU as a resource in their letter. Director Hammond emphasized the USU mission of advocacy and support for students will continue. Additionally, Director Hammond highlighted that the budget will be shifting, as CSUN took a 4% budget cut last year and next year will be a 5% cut. The USU is an auxiliary organization, and its funds are dependent on headcount. This budget shift may mean that the USU will need to cut back or do things differently to continue to serve as many students as possible. Director Hammond planned to provide an update on the USU project in the next board meeting, Chair Lopez and Vice Chair Orantes have already been apprised of the changes. Director Hammond will be meeting with the Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students, Dr. William Watkins, Interim Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs, Equity & Inclusion, Dr. Freddie Sanchez, the Vice President of Administration and Finance, Collin Donahue, and the AVP for Facilities Planning Design and Construction, as well as reported that she received good feedback from CSU colleagues and the Chancellors Office about the project.

X. A.S. Report

Associated Students (A.S.) Vice President Iman Khan discussed several A.S. events related to the recent elections, such as, "District 40 Forum," where they invited local officials and hosted a candidate forum and, "Politics are a Drag," featuring an elected official who ran as a Drag Queen. A.S. Vice President Khan thanked the USU for providing inspiration through previous Drag events. A.S. also hosted, "Big PARTY (Political Awareness Registration Turnout Youthquake)," an educational program that informed students about local elections and propositions. A.S. Vice President Khan highlighted that the main student feedback they received was that they didn't previously understand how impactful propositions were. She said that they want to expand this program in the future to increase turnout for local elections. A.S. Vice President Khan attended two Cal State Student Association (CSSA) plenary meetings for System Wide Affairs and discussed Title IX. The two meetings related to Title IX dealt with the Cozen O' Connor Report, which found many shortcomings from the CSU system and called out several action steps. One meeting was spent with the Implementation team, and the last meeting featured Ellen Cesaretti-

Monroy, who wrote legislation about how Title IX affects students. During that meeting, students discussed what type of change they want to see. A.S. Vice President Khan shared that speaking with the Chancellor's Office and Implementation team was helpful in being able to provide student input. She also met with students who are inter-connected with campus activism and received feedback on how the Time, Place, and Manner policy affects them and what they want to see in their student representatives. A.S. Vice President Khan was grateful for the opportunity to listen to these students, since there has previously been a disconnect between student representatives and the general student body. She also reported on the two Student Life Tours she joined with the USU and recognized that there should be more opportunities like this for students. She said that she will be meeting with the Provost to discuss how to engage students, who are not first-time freshmen, with the campus community. A.S. Vice President Khan also met with CSUN Athletics to collaborate on student engagement efforts. CSUN Athletics said they want student representatives to be more involved with athletics, so A.S. may include the Board in future conversations about student-centered athletic experiences. A.S. Vice President Khan closed her report with her meeting with President Beck and Dr. Watkins following the elections. They discussed A.S.'s "Matadors First" statement, which aimed to provide support for students following the election. Additionally, they discussed budget cuts, specifically how CSUN will choose to respond. She said that A.S. will need to consider how to deal with the budget cuts, but ultimately, the main goal is, "Matadors First."

XI. Committee Reports

A. Diversity & Inclusion*

Director Granillo discussed his experience at HACU, where he was able to connect with Dr. Sanchez and Chair Lopez, as well as other professionals. He highlighted his discussion with Acting Director of Bronx Community College on what it is to be a Latino in leadership. Director Granillo enjoyed his cohort and felt more connected with Board members and other individuals. The D&I committee held its first and second meetings. Due to scheduling changes, the committee decided to continue their meetings on Wednesdays from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. The committee organized a team bonding event at Matador Bowl to connect. Director Granillo stated that with the guidance of the Secretaries, they planned to narrow down the goals and present them to the committee to finalize them in their next meeting on November 20th.

B. Facilities & Operations*

Director Mann reported that the committee held its first meeting on October 18th and established the following committee goals: 1) Collaborate with Marketing and Operations to enhance wayfinding within the USU, utilizing student feedback for the placement and design of new signage 2) Collaborate with Maintenance and Operations to identify any upgrades that can be done within the USU. The committee meetings are held once a month on Fridays from 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., but typically end around 3:30 p.m.

C. Finance*

Director Pathak reported that the committee met on October 21st to understand the Long-Term Financial Plan to ensure that all members are familiar with it for upcoming discussions and decision-making. He stated that their goal is to complete and prepare this financial plan to present to the USU Board of Directors and Campus Administration in the near future. The next committee meeting will be held on November 25th from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

D. Personnel*

Director De Leon reported that the Personnel committee has confirmed their meeting time, which will be held on Wednesdays from 3:45 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Their first meeting will be held on November 20th. On behalf of Director Sabah, Director De Leon thanked Executive Secretary Kristen Pichler for her guidance and support.

E. Retirement

Vice Chair Orantes stated that she met with Executive Secretary Joe Illuminate to prepare for the first meeting on October 15th.

XII. Action Items

A. Retirement Plan Investment Line Up Change

Motion out of the Retirement Plan Committee to recommend that the USU replace the Metropolitan West Total Return Bond I Fund with the Dodge & Cox Income X Fund in the investment lineup of both the 403(b) Retirement Savings and 401(a) Employer-paid Supplemental Retirement Savings plans.

Executive Secretary Joe Illuminate shared that USU Financial Advisors, Dennis DeYoung and Sally DeYoung recommend that the USU replace the fund with the Dodge & Cox Income X Fund because of reports issued by the Standard. The Quarterly Monitoring Report produced by the Standard recommended the removal of the Metropolitan West Total Return Bond fund due to recent material organizational changes, as well as the funds ongoing under performance. Executive Secretary Joe Illuminate explained that the Metropolitan West Total Return Bond fund is the largest bond fund in the portfolio, representing 9% of total assets. The motion to replace the fund was recommended by the Standard, since it was no longer meeting basic requirements regarding management and investment return. There would be no fee for this exchange. In response to an inquiry from BOD member, Joaquin Macias, Joe Illuminate also clarified that they have asked the Standard for social- and sustainable-type funds that represent the USU's values, which will be offered as a choice for participants. This will be an upcoming discussion item for the committee.

Motion passed 14-0-0.

B. Retirement Health Benefits Plan

Motion out of the Retirement Plan Committee to recommend the allocation of \$600,000 to fully fund the Retirement Health Benefits Plan (RHBP) as of June 30, 2025.

Executive Secretary Joe Illuminate explained that the scenarios to fully fund the RHBP are based on our plan participants population and the latest assumptions, prepared by Carlos Diaz, Senior Consulting Actuary, Foster & Foster. Fully funding the RHBP by June 30, 2025 would decrease the USU's projected annual expense by \$908,308 and annual projected contributions by \$810,302 through June 30, 2039. The plan is only funded through 2039 ranging from a low of 102% to a high of 117% in 2032, which means that through 2039, the plan has projected sufficient assets for all accrued benefits and future obligations to plan participants. The additional \$600,000 funding being recommended is over and above the \$400,000 funding approved by the Board of Directors in the 2024-2025 budget, which has been common practice to contribute every year. If approved, the total funding would be \$1 million. The funding source of \$600,000 would come out of the consolidated investment pool, which has a current balance of \$9.6 million, and after taking out the \$600,000, there would be \$9 million left in the investment pool.

Motion passed 14-0-0.

XIII. Discussion Items

A. BOD Holiday E-gift cards for UVA Parent Scholars

Vice Chair Orantes explained that she originally wanted to incorporate the University Village Apartments (UVA) parent scholar e-gift cards with the Friendsgiving event on November 23rd but chose to separate them. This will be the third year that the Board of Directors provides these e-gift cards to UVA residents. Vice Chair Orantes said that she will try to gather statements from some recipients to highlight how the e-gift cards will positively impact them.

Assistant Director, Programs & Leadership, Audrey Martinez shared that this initiative originally awarded UVA parent scholars with physical gift cards, but due to hospitality policies, this process has changed. Audrey thanked Associate Director, Accounting & Finance Joe Illuminate and Executive Director, Debra Hammond for continuing to advocate and support this initiative. The e-gift cards will be worth \$100. With the help from BOD Leadership & Administrative Coordinator

Janessa Reyes, they will obtain the full list of emails of the UVA residents to send the e-gift cards, in hopes of supporting their needs through the holidays. She recognized that this initiative supports the USU mission addressing basic needs for all students, specifically parent scholars at the UVA. She clarified that the e-gift cards are only being provided to parent scholars who live in the UVA at this time, but additional considerations for non-UVA resident parent scholars can be discussed and is open to suggestions.

XIV. Announcements

Director Patel shared that after meeting with Cal-State University (CSU) and University of California (UC) students and directors, he recognized that CSUN facilities are advanced compared to other campuses and encourage our campus to continue in this path for future enhancements.

Vice Chair Orantes expressed gratitude toward USU professional staff for helping the Board's ideas come to life.

Assistant Director, Programs & Leadership Audrey Martinez reminded the Board of the BOD training and check-ins with Chair Lopez and Vice Chair Orantes on November 25th, featuring budget training from Associate Director, Accounting & Finance Joe Illuminate. She also reminded the Board to send their check-in reports. The BOD training is open for Directors and Committee members and will be held in the Thousand Oaks Room. If there is a particular Student Assistant Employee who is interested in attending, Audrey said that she can determine with them if that's something they need.

Chair Lopez reminded the Board that status reports are due to both Vice Chair Orantes and him the Sunday before they meet. He requested that they are thorough and concrete with updates on their committees. Additionally, Chair Lopez directed any questions regarding the Executive Director search to Human Resources Manager, Jenny Aw. He hoped that they would have an update in the next Board meeting, which would be in Executive Session.

XV. Adjournment

Chair Lopez adjourned the meeting at 1:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,



Debra L. Hammond,
Executive Director