



Student Government
Campus Improvement Proposals
Spring 2020

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A Note on MSOE's Response to COVID-19

Although the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 situation has limited the offerings that MSOE is able to provide, Student Government would like to extend a thank you from the student body in your efforts to be transparent and open every step of the way. Every day presents new challenges to overcome, but MSOE has been able to keep moving forward even in the midst of irksome tasks and weighty responsibility. Know that the student body is understanding of this predicament and has been appreciative of the constant communication regarding all new developments. Many students are eager to return to campus in the Fall so they can be the "experiential learners driven to solve the complex challenges of today and tomorrow."

Commented [PL1]: Maybe place this at the beginning, before the proposals. This way we can start on a gratitude note before we begin asking for things

Commented [RM2]: Looks good max!

Water, Ice, and Snow Buildup on Campus

Context

Like all of Milwaukee, MSOE often falls victim to water, ice, and snow buildup around campus. Despite efforts to have proper drainage and facilities management, there are some key areas where buildup occurs consistently. Four specific areas have been identified (in order of student impact) as described below and shown in Figure 1. In addition to these areas, there is often also snow buildup at all intersection corners around campus during and after a snowfall.

1. Sidewalk next to the spirit rock near the intersection of Milwaukee St. and State St.
2. Werwath Mall sidewalk area between the Science Building and the Library
3. Sidewalk adjacent to the Old Athletic Field near the intersection of Milwaukee St. and State St.
4. Sidewalk in front of the Campus Center near the intersection of Broadway and State St.
5. Intersection corners all around campus

Commented [RM3]: Could be alone on this, but what if we used a different word other than facts that conveys the same meaning - like situation or Context. While these are the facts, it really tells the student story



Figure 1: Campus map noting water, ice, and snow buildup locations

1. Sidewalk by the Spirit Rock

The sidewalk by the Spirit Rock has been a bad spot for water buildup for years. Figures 2, 3, and 4 show this area during three different times throughout the 2019-2020 academic year. Two segments of the sidewalk are sunk slightly into the ground, creating a reservoir where rainwater, ice, and snow reside. This is a high traffic area on campus with no easy alternate routes nearby. Students are forced to traverse this path, even when filled with undesirable liquids. Moreover, the grass/dirt immediately adjacent to this sidewalk is often saturated with water, resulting in large areas of mud. When this water freezes, it also creates slippery ice. Students have reported slipping and falling in this area on multiple occasions. This poses a safety risk not only for students, but also for the greater MSOE and Milwaukee Community. Last year, either MSOE or the City of Milwaukee planted a tree adjacent to this area. It is uncertain whether this was intended to help with the consistent buildup in this area; however, it has not proven to be successful if that was the intention. It may help as a long-term solution but does not benefit students in the interim.



Figure 2: While raining



Figure 3: After rain



Figure 4: Snow/slush buildup

2. Werwath Mall

In terms of actual water volume and affected surface area, Werwath Mall experiences the most impact in water buildup and ice. Buildup in this area is worst when the center drains are backed up so no water can drain. During the winter, there is a considerable amount of ice, again introducing a safety risk to campus. Fortunately, this area is large enough where alternate paths are usually available, unlike other sidewalks on campus. Figures 5 – 12 show examples of how this area is affected in different seasons. Unfortunately, no images were captured showing the ice buildup; however, these pictures give an idea of how much ice can form under the right conditions.



Figure 5: After rain



Figure 6: After rain



Figure 7: While raining



Figure 8: While raining



Figure 9: While raining



Figure 10: While snow melting



Figure 11: While snow melting

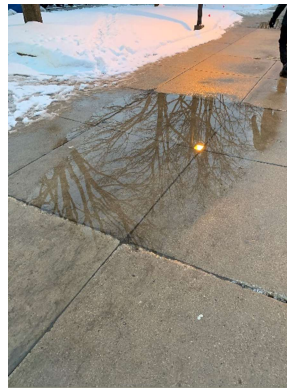


Figure 12: While snow melting

3. Sidewalk Adjacent to the Old Athletic Field

The issue here is nearly identical to the issue by the Spirit Rock, but at a lower severity. Unlike the Spirit Rock sidewalk, this location does have accessible alternate routes. Unfortunately, no images were captured of this area, but they would look like those noted in Figures 2, 3, and 4.

4. Sidewalk in Front of Campus Center

The sidewalk in front of the campus center often forms large puddles after it rains. These accumulations are often segregated near the curbed edge of the sidewalk. As such, students are still able to traverse around the puddles closer to the building; however, these buildups still pose a safety risk to students when ice forms. Figures 13, 14, and 15 show examples of this area.



Figure 13: After rain



Figure 14: After rain



Figure 15: After rain

5. Intersection Corners all around Campus

After a heavy rain or snowfall, intersections around campus often accumulate water and snow/slush. Although not much can be done about the water buildup given Milwaukee's infrastructure, the clearing of snow and slush is achievable. The sidewalks are often cleared well, but actual street intersections consistently have large buildups. Figures 16 and 17 show an example of these areas with water. Unfortunately, no images were captured showing snow/slush buildup, which is the larger issue.



Figure 16: While raining



Figure 17: While raining

Impact

Copious locations on campus experience water, ice, and snow buildup on a regular basis. Students often find themselves disrupted by these occurrences. Many times, there are no practical alternate routes for students to take so they can avoid these areas. Although MSOE facilities is diligent in clearing most areas, some spots are more prone to sustaining buildups. Realistically, ice, snow, and slush are the largest concerns for students. Many students have reported slipping and falling in the areas outlined earlier. With student safety as the highest priority, it would seem negligent to dismiss the risk this poses to students, faculty, and the entire greater Milwaukee community that use these paths. Moreover, seeing these buildups around campus does not bode well when campus tours are taking place. Prospective students that see unkept facilities are not as impressed with the atmosphere that MSOE conveys.

Commented [PL4]: As the highest priority?

Commented [PL5R4]:

Summary

- Student Government has identified key locations on campus where water, ice, and snow buildup occur on a regular basis
- Student routes are disrupted by uncleared paths
- There are often not alternate routes to avoid consistently problematic areas
- Ice, snow, and slush buildup pose a safety risk to students, faculty, and the greater Milwaukee community
- Uncleared and cluttered paths do not put MSOE in a good light for prospective students

Desired Outcome

Student Government is requesting that the MSOE administration investigate what measures may be taken to alleviate or clear water, ice, and snow buildup on campus, specifically in the areas identified here. This likely would require MSOE to coordinate with the City of Milwaukee to determine what the best course of action is regarding public sidewalks. As for the sidewalk areas where drains are not the limiting factor, consideration of concrete replacement, mudjacking, or polyurethane concrete raising would be appropriate. Regarding the clearing of street intersections, it is requested that MSOE Facilities expand on their efforts to clear crosswalks of snow, ice, and slush during the Winter months. The City of Milwaukee does not always make these areas clear for pedestrians, so assistance from MSOE would be appropriate to ensure student safety.

Commented [WJ6]: could we suggest more specific "green" options?

Student Representation on the Board of Regents

Context

MSOE seeks to serve its student body to the best of its ability. A key component of that service involves gathering regular feedback from students; however, student representation is not present when making decisions that impact the university on a large scale. This section provides information on norms established in higher education regarding student representation on the board of trustees/regents at universities throughout the country.

Norms in Higher Education Regarding Student Representation

The information provided below includes excerpts and adaptations from a study performed by the American Student Government Association (ASGA) in 2013 on behalf of Wesley College¹. This information helps inform statistical norms in higher education regarding student representation on the board of trustees/regents for a variety of universities.

Wesley College commissioned ASGA to survey other schools to find out information about student representatives serving on Boards of Trustees/Regents. ASGA surveyed student leaders and administrators nationwide using e-mail, fax, and social networks such as Facebook and Linked In. There were 302 replies nationwide between October 10 and November 20, 2013 while the survey was managed on Survey Monkey.

Nationwide Study Results

Nearly 64 percent indicated that they have a student member of their institution's board of trustees/regents. 30% do not have such a representative. 6.52% indicated other. Of those 64 percent that have a student member, 40.83% have a student who has an official vote. 35.50% have a student member with speaking privileges, but with no official vote. 13.61% has a student who is an observer, but isn't an official member and doesn't have an official vote.

The most common "title" for the student representative is "student trustee" (38.55%), while "student representative" (27.11%), and "Student Regent" (9.64%) come in second and third respectively. More than 60% of those with a student representative have a single student serving. 15.76% have two representatives. The term of office for the student representative is one year for 75.45%, while 9.58% serve for two years. The most common beginning for the representative's term of office is May (25%), with July (17.95%), and June (14.74%) next.

The student representative for 53.94% is automatically a member of Student Government. That is most commonly the student body president (42.33%). The student representative is usually not appointed by student government (47.56%). Many are elected by their peers in SG elections. Some are appointed by the institution's president or by the governor of the state.

54.88% of the representatives are selected in a campus-wide election. Of those elected by peers, 49.69% are required to report back to student government on board of trustees/regents matters. 53.37% of student representatives are not compensated for serving, while 24.54% are.

¹ Oxendine, W. H. (2013). Student Representatives on Board of Trustees Survey (ASGA Survey for Wesley College). Retrieved March 29, 2020, from <https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-8KSH93NY/>

For those institutions that do not have a student representative on the board of regents/trustees, 45.73% are still allowed to attend any meeting. 25.63% are permitted to attend by invitation only. 12.06% are not permitted to attend trustees/regents meetings at all. 34.07% attend every meeting of the board of trustees/regents. 13.24% attend monthly meetings, while 12.79% attend only under special circumstances (presentations or awards).

The current plan for student representatives has been in effect for more than 10 years at 44% of the participating institutions. It has been in place 7-10 years at 8.5%, four to six years at 9.5%, and two to three years at 8.5%. For 9%, the policies have been in place for less than a year. For those who do not have a student representative, few have been given reasons/explanations for their institution's policy. Many said through open-ended answers that they've never asked. Some indicated that their organizations are too new or fluid for them to have effective student representatives.

The Bottom Line

Overall, the number of institutions with student representatives was far higher and more common than ASGA expected. For an in-depth analysis of these collected data and a further breakdown of the institutions involved, please see this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-8KSH93NY/>. Graphics are provided at this location to further illustrate the results of this nationwide survey. This information was retrieved directly from the President of the American Student Government Association, W.H. "Butch" Oxendine, Jr. Unfortunately, no more recent data have been collected concerning this type of study.

Impact

By not having student representation at a high level in the institution, MSOE is not able to effectively consider the feedback, questions, comments, and concerns of those they seek to serve. To that end, the student voice is not heard when making long-term campus-wide changes. Students are not included proactively in these changes but are instead involved reactively. Including a vetted representative of the student body at this level would position MSOE to exemplify its core values of collaboration, inclusion, and innovation.

Summary

- Most U.S. universities (65%) have a student representative in their board of trustees/regents
- For universities that have a student representative on their board of trustees/regents, a simple majority (42%) of them recognize the student body president as said representative
- A simple majority (41%) of universities with a student representative grant said representative with an official vote on their board of trustees/regents.
- Higher education has shown a trend of including more student feedback at a high level within the administration and decision-making bodies of institutions
- MSOE would benefit from including a student representative in its Board of Regents

Desired Outcome

Student Government is requesting that the MSOE Leadership Team and Board of Regents consider including a student representative on the Board of Regents with full voting rights. This student is proposed to be the elected president of Student Government so he or she is well-vetted by the entire student body to represent them accordingly.

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Diercks Hall 24/7 Access

Context

Diercks Hall officially opened this fall, providing a gorgeous new home for Computer Science as well as a beautiful communal space for students of all majors to use. With this space being an ideal study location, coupled with its central location, all students were excited to use this addition to campus throughout their day. When first opened, Diercks Hall was accessible 24/7 for student use. Approximately three weeks after its Grand Opening, this access was restricted, and students were kicked out of the building starting at 10:00 PM (reportedly due to issues with theft). This policy has remained in effect ever since. We understand the reasoning behind the extra protection of this new space; however, this policy is not conducive to student study schedules.

Impact

Students often work into the late night and early morning hours. By limiting the availability of Diercks Hall, students are underutilizing this great space. Moreover, the impact is not limited to just the hours where Diercks is closed. Students have been actively avoiding using the space any time in the evening to prevent being kicked out later that night when still studying. For example, a student is less likely to work on a group project at 7:00 PM in Diercks Hall because they will be displaced three hours later, disrupting their workflow. Some students have gone as far as avoiding Diercks all together because they would rather have a single location where they can study any time they want. Students often choose one location and make it their “go-to” spot for studying. Unfortunately, this space has thus not been Diercks Hall. It is unfortunate to see this space be underutilized when it has such high potential.

Summary

- Diercks Hall closes daily at 10:00 PM
- Student schedules often include studying into the late night and early morning
- The limited hours of Diercks Hall have discouraged students from utilizing this space even during regular business hours
- Diercks Hall is a fantastic new space on campus, but students are not taking advantage of it to its fullest potential

Desired Outcome

Given the busy lifestyle of many MSOE students, late night studying is a regular occurrence on-campus. The addition of Diercks Hall this year has been a tremendous stride forward for the university in Expanding Our Reach. The student body would like to utilize this new space to its fullest potential; however, it must be accessible when students need it most. As such, Student Government would like to propose Diercks Hall be open to students 24/7 upon the re-opening of campus during the 2020-2021 academic year.

Evening and Weekend Hours for the Wellness Center

Context

Currently, all offerings and operations of the Wellness Center's professional staff are limited to weekdays (Monday – Friday) from 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM. Given the busy lifestyle of many MSOE students, these limited hours of operation are not conducive to best fit their schedules. Students regularly have class throughout the regular workday with their own work schedules fit between classes. As such, students are not always able to take full advantage of the services the Wellness Center provides. Moreover, students are arguably more likely to have a mental health crisis or wellness need during the evening and on weekends.

Impact

Students that need assistance from the Wellness Center may have limited availability to get help during the Wellness Center's regular hours of operation. As such, these students are being left without the help they need. Although the capacity of the Wellness Center was increased for the 2019-2020 academic year, the expansion of available times to fit student schedules was not initiated.

Commented [PL7]: To get help?

Summary

- The Wellness Center's regular hours of operation (M-F, 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM) are not always conducive to fit student schedules
- Due to the limited time availability of the Wellness Center, some students are being left unaided, because they do not seek assistance given their busy schedules
- Students may require the assistance of the Wellness Center outside in the evening and on weekends

Desired Outcome

Student Government proposes that a pilot test run of expanded hours of operation for the Wellness Center be initiated. For example, this may include having counseling sessions available after 4:30 PM or on a Saturday. Based on this pilot run, the Wellness Center may find a benefit to having at least some available hours beyond their current offerings, even if not functioning at full capacity.

Prioritization of “Athletic” Van for Student and SHIP Use

Note: Last year, Student Government made a similar proposal requesting the purchase of an additional 13-person van designated for Student Organization and SHIP usage. It was ultimately rejected due to budgetary constraints. This proposal is made out of principle in an effort to emphasize the importance of this issue to the Student Body.

Context

While the athletic vans are a great resource for Student Organizations, many times Athletics will override long-standing reservations and take the vans last minute, since they have priority. This leaves student leaders scrambling for transportation to off-campus events and activities. Student Life and Residence Life are vital in ensuring a positive student experience both on and off campus. These departments need reliable group transportation to fit the needs of events off campus. The current system for athletic van reservations does not allow for this reliability.

Additionally, the most significant weakness of SHIP is the limited passenger capacity. Most calls for SHIP are for groups of students, many exceeding the 6-person limit. These groups must either take multiple trips in the SHIP, or cancel their trip all together. For reference, both UWM’s Be On the Safe Side (B.O.S.S) shuttle service and Marquette’s LIMO shuttle service are equipped with 13-person passenger vans. This allows for larger group sizes and reduces the number of trips that need to be taken to transport the same number of passengers. Moreover, the transition of many student off campus next year will increase the need for higher SHIP capacity.

Impact

Student Life, Residence Life, and student organizations do not have prioritized use of the athletic vans. As such, coordinating transportation for off-campus events can be challenging and inconsistent. Some students feel slighted when Athletics revoke van reservations at the last minute. In addition, the 6-person limit on SHIP rides is not conducive for many students’ transportation needs. Students are then discouraged from using this service intended to increase student safety on weekends. Students moving off campus next year will also increase demand for this service.

Summary

- Athletics has the top priority for reservation of the 13-passanger vans
- Student Life, Residence Life, and student organizations find it difficult to reliably have transportation options for off-campus events
- Students often travel on weekends in groups that exceed SHIP’s 6-passanger capacity and either must take multiple trips or find alternate means of transportation
- The transition of many students off-campus next year will increase the demand for SHIP’s services moving forward

Commented [PL8]: Maybe make into one bullet point

Desired Outcome

Student Government proposes MSOE consider the acquisition or prioritization of at least one 13-passanger van for Student Life, Residence Life, student organization, and SHIP usage. This would better accommodate student needs and help prepare for the closing of RWJ next year. Moreover, most campus shuttle services for late night transportation have higher capacities than SHIP.

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