Associated Students of San Francisco State University is the primary advocate for students at San Francisco State University. Associated Students of San Francisco State University is also the official body of student governance for the campus. The Board of Directors is the division that represents the student body, advocates for their needs, and defends their interests in dealing with faculty, campus administrators, and government officials.

This year, the Associated Student of San Francisco State University Board of Directors has identified and affirmed four critical areas that will inform our work of pursuing student-centered higher education policies and strategies. Following the precedent established by student leaders in recent years at San Francisco State University, ensuring an affordable, sustainable, and equitable educational experience that promotes student success and well-being continues to be a priority for SF State students.

Acknowledging the need for students to be involved in this critical year of 2020 in a variety of areas that impact our future, we have set new priorities focusing on student outreach and resources due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We as an organization and other stakeholders need to focus on student support and remote student engagement.

Associated Students’ mission is to improve the lives of SF State students by engaging in advocacy for student needs, amplifying the voices of students, and promoting an enriched co-curricular university life experience.

Preyansh Kotecha
President, Associated Students Board of Directors
2019-2020
Missions & Values:

Associated Students serves as the voice of student interests and promotes an enriched co-curricular university life experience.

We are dedicated to the empowerment of SF State’s diverse student body with the combined efforts of various programs and departments throughout campus, to provide student services and programs while encouraging external advocacy efforts.

In order to achieve its mission statement, Associated Students believes that the following values must serve as the foundation for all decision-making and student success:

Servant Leadership Associated Students will pursue its mission by serving the San Francisco State community through responsiveness and compassion within their leadership role and as members of the campus community.

Social Justice and Equity Associated Students will pursue its mission guided by the principles and demands set forth by the Black Student Union and Third World Liberation Front by continuously advocating for an equitable and transformative educational system.

Shared Governance Associated Students will pursue its mission by practicing transparency regarding its daily operations and ensuring the student voice is being heard and acknowledged at all levels of the campus administration and beyond whenever possible.
The lack of housing affordability in the City and County of San Francisco has negatively affected the lives of students attending San Francisco State University. We need policies that focus on increasing below market rate units and rent-controlled apartments. Homesharing opportunities need to be established to keep students who do not meet the income required to rent in consideration. The affordability rate needs to be included when addressing affordable housing for low-income individuals seeking housing.

More than half of individuals living in San Francisco have a yearly income below $50,000. The lack of housing affordability results in more than just San Franciscans paying high percentages of their income on rents and mortgages. It causes students and families to be pushed out of job markets in search of affordable housing, increases displacement, and impacts the environment by elongating commutes. A more comprehensive measure of affordability would include transportation costs as well.

Increasing the supply of housing can help the effectiveness of providing affordable housing. This includes apartments, duplexes, in-law units, townhomes, and recreational vehicles. All around the San Francisco State Campus, there are students occupying motorhomes and living in their cars. By establishing specific locations for recreational vehicles, we can ensure students are living in safe, regulated locations around campus.

At San Francisco State University, the university offers eight different types of housing. In a double occupancy dorm room with a 7-day meal plan, students are expected to pay $15,217 in total per academic year. In a single occupancy room in New Student Housing on Holloway, students are expected to pay $23,288 in total. About 12% of students live on campus, compared to the 29,000 students attending the institution. By not supplying 90% of students the opportunity to live on campus, students are obligated to live in the surrounding area or forced to commute to campus. Housing insecurity at San Francisco State University has increased over the last few years. About 17.7% of students reported experiencing homelessness in 2019. In San Francisco County, the average median rent is now $3600, making it immensely difficult or impossible for students to afford rent in San Francisco County. Students are struggling to meet the financial obligations of going to school and living in the Bay Area.
Students at San Francisco State University face a great deal of financial hardships, including but not limited to housing, food, tuition, books, supplies, and other personal costs. According to the December 2019 campus study on food and housing insecurity, 17.7% of SFSU students are housing insecure and 48.6% of SFSU students are food insecure. In addition, nearly 70% of incoming students receive financial assistance, showing that our student population is already facing incredible financial hardships with the current cost of living.

The San Francisco Parking Tax is a 25% additional fee on top of the existing cost of parking, which has not been enforced on students at SFSU since the implementation of the parking tax in 1970 and its increase to 25% in 1980, 50 years and 40 years respectively. The City attempted to collect the fee from UCSF in 1983 but backed off when the university objected. The City then sued in 2014 to require public universities in San Francisco to implement the tax on top of their existing parking fees, passing this financial burden onto students, faculty, and staff.

Students who commute to our campus and purchase semesterly parking passes pay $640/semester for a Monday through Friday parking pass, amounting to $1280/year. As of 2017, SFSU students pay $180/semester for the Gator Pass, which provides universal MUNI rides during the fall and spring semesters, and includes a 50% reduction in rides to and from the Daly City BART Station. This generates millions of dollars paid directly towards the City and the San Francisco Municipal Transit Authority, and already incentivizes public transportation as a means of travel for students to get to campus, which is the City’s primary reasoning for wanting to implement this tax.

If this 25% parking tax is enforced, SFSU students, faculty, and staff will be expected to pay $600,000+ annually in additional parking fees. These fees would be increased by raising the daily parking rate from $8 to $10 (without tax), and would increase the current $640/semester parking permit to a potential $800/semester parking permit. This is unacceptable, especially considering that our parking is already the most expensive in the entire CSU system, nearly twice as much as the second most expensive campus.

In order to protect our students, and prevent set enforcement of this parking tax on students, faculty, and staff, Associated Students at San Francisco State University strongly opposes this tax.
At San Francisco State University, students invest in the Gator Pass, a $180 semesterly rate to access public transportation throughout the City and County of San Francisco. Students have unlimited access to ride Muni (San Francisco Municipal Railway) from Fall Semester to Spring Semester. Students also have access to 50% off BART (Bay Area Transit System) to and from the Daly City Bart Station.

Students who do not live in the City and County of San Francisco continue to pay the $180 semesterly fee for the Gator Pass, but do not take full advantage of its benefits due to the nature of their commute from homes outside of SF County. Students living in San Mateo County, for example, use SamTrans, the local public transportation system in the county. Students pay $2.05 by Clipper card for a one way trip to campus and they may invest up to $4.50 a day to and from campus. The Gator Pass does include other modes of public transportation like SamTrans for students to travel to and from campus.

Students living an hour or more commute from campus are forced to use their own personal transportation rather than public transportation. The Bay Area is not equipped to have individuals effectively traveling from city to city using public transportation. Commuting needs to be more accessible and reliable for students. San Francisco and the rest of the Bay Area needs to focus on creating a plan to expand accessible and affordable public transportation.

Students utilizing SamTrans have experienced unreliable times when trying to use public transportation to get to campus. Students traveling from cities in the Peninsula, like Pacifica, have experienced a three hour traveling time using SamTrams as a mode of transportation to and from school. By car, this same commute is approximately 15-20 minutes. Students traveling from the Sunset District have experienced overcrowding of buses and in some instances, could not get onto the bus. Students have experienced waiting for several buses until the overcrowding has stopped. The safety of students while using public transportation needs to be prioritized. Students travelling late at night after night classes need to have access to safe transportation to and from campus.

While using public transportation, we need to focus on sustainability of transportation. By encouraging students to utilize public transportation, they would be reducing the amount of carbon in the air. Public transportation can reduce the need for many separate trips by private vehicles in dense urban areas, replacing many separate emissions-producing vehicles with fewer transit vehicles that generally emit less pollution on a per person basis.
Due to COVID-19, students will be facing several obstacles and will be making tough decisions in the next couple of months. Recently, students have left campus and have started remote instruction due to the guidance of campus. Students have lost their everyday routines and had to adjust to staying at home other than essential needs.

Students have lost their jobs due to the pandemic and there is no certainty of if or when they will get their jobs back. We need to ensure students are receiving financial assistance from both the campus and city and county of San Francisco. The aftermath of the pandemic will establish a need for financial support for many students wanting to keep attending SF State in the Fall Semester. The recent Stimulus Package approved by Congress has left out several students who are claimed as dependents by their guardians. Students will not be getting either the $500 for dependents because only dependents 17 and young qualify, and students age 18 to 24 who are claimed as dependents will not be getting any federal assistance.

Institutions of higher education have also received millions of dollars worth of assistance from the CARES Act to help with COVID-19 assistance and Financial Aid assistance. Students already have a difficult time paying tuition, and with the recent pandemic, students will be seeking additional financial aid support from the university.

Proper resources that students should still have the opportunity to access during the pandemic and the start of the Fall Semester should be Associated Students programming and the food pantry. Academic resources like advising and tutoring should be available for students seeking help. Health resources such as the Student Health Center and Health, Promotion, and Wellness will keep providing the necessary resources and programming students need. Universities should supply masks and medicines to students living on campus and student employees.

The more a student feels connected to and understood by their college or university, the more likely they are to stay enrolled and engaged. Students experiencing homelessness may find that where they have been staying is no longer an option if someone in that household is sick, due to increased fear, or even pressure from the household to conserve resources.
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