

SENATE BILL #2138

Title: Creation of an ASUW Housing Directory

Date: February 14, 2006

Authors: Senators McNiven and Wilson

**Sponsors: Senators Clay, McConnaughey, McNiven, Walker, Wilson; SAL
Jenniges**

1. WHEREAS, the University of Wyoming has 9,757 full and part time students
2. enrolled for the Fall Semester of 2005 on the Laramie Campus; and
3. WHEREAS, residence halls provide living accommodations to 1,286 students;
4. and
5. WHEREAS, university apartments have 606 apartments available for
6. renting; and
7. WHEREAS, Greek housing provides living accommodations to
8. approximately 400 students; and
9. WHEREAS, every student undergoes the process of searching for housing at
10. least once during their education at the University of Wyoming; and
11. WHEREAS, the lack of on-campus housing means that approximately 6,000
12. students are in need of alternative off-campus housing options; and
13. WHEREAS, the University of Wyoming currently offers no program for
14. students seeking assistance to find off-campus housing; and
15. WHEREAS, similar rental directories at comparator institutions (see
16. Addendum A) have been successful methods of allowing students to easily
17. search for housing; and
18. WHEREAS, landlords, realtors, and other interested parties have expressed


19. interest in listing housing options on a centralized student rental directory;
20. and
21. WHEREAS, this resource would be instrumental in allowing students to more
22. fully understand their rights and services available; and
23. WHEREAS, the idea for an ASUW Housing Rental Directory service
24. addresses student concern and should be a student led initiative.
25. THEREFORE, be it enacted by the student Senate of the Associated Students
26. of the University of Wyoming that an online housing directory be created for
27. use by students, faculty, and staff in order to provide a better system to search
28. for housing; and
29. THEREFORE, be it further enacted that the creation of the ASUW Housing
30. Directory website will be maintained in a “.com” format and thus not be a
31. direct service of the University of Wyoming; and
32. THEREFORE, be it further enacted that the creation of the ASUW Housing
33. Directory website include the components listed in Addendum B; and
34. THEREFORE, be it further enacted that the funding needed to hire a part time
35. employee will be earmarked from the Executive Budget Computer Tech (see
36. Addendum G); and
37. THEREFORE, be it further enacted that the part time employee be paid
38. \$7.50an hour not to exceed \$1,500 per semester for the FY06; and
39. THEREFORE, be it further enacted that continuing funding for this position
40. for subsequent summer and spring semester will be allocated at the discretion
41. of the Budget and Planning Committee (see Addendum G); and

42. THEREFORE, be it further enacted that the maintenance of the ASUW
43. Housing Directory will be a responsibility of the Public Relations Executive
44. during the Fall semester; and
45. THEREFORE, be it further enacted that this online service be evaluated
46. by March 1, 2007 by the Student Issues Committee for the effectiveness and
47. the feasibility of a rating component for students to provide feedback about
48. their rental experience (see Addendum B & F) and review the necessity of the
49. limited accessibility of the service; and
50. THEREFORE, be it further enacted that work on the creation of the ASUW
51. Housing Rental Directory service begin immediately upon passage of this
52. bill.

Referred to: Student Issues Committee

Date of Passage: March 21, 2006

Signed: _____


(ASUW Chairperson)

“Being enacted on _____, I do hereby sign my name hereto

and approve this Senate action.” _____

ASUW President

Addendum B

General Description of ASUW Housing Rental Directory Proposal

The University of Wyoming currently has no service provided to assist students in finding adequate housing off campus. This proposal is for the creation of an *ASUW Housing Rental Directory* to provide a forum for students, faculty, and the community of Laramie in finding quality housing. The proposed program will implement the creation of an *ASUW Housing Rental Directory* program and website that will provide:

- **“Search”** component for students to view available to locate housing using criteria such as price range, rental type, number of bedrooms, roommate search, etc.
- **“Submission”** capability of available housing for students, faculty, and community members.
 1. There will be a listing policy and fee policy as follows:
 - i. The listing fee only includes listing your rental on this website. ASUW fee paying students currently enrolled in classes get the use of the service free of charge, for faculty and staff there is a \$5 listing fee and for all other landlords and community members there is a \$10 fee. All submission will be listed for 30 days unless otherwise specified.
- **“Links”** will be provided to assist students in finding housing from other websites. Also the links portion will provide useful pertinent information such as contact information of:
 - m. Utility Companies
 - n. City Services
 - o. Consumer Information
 - p. Legal Services (Student Attorney and Student Legal Services Clinic)
 - q. Other Housing Resources
- **“Renter Rights”** will be a section that provides the renter with a more complete understanding the renters rights. This section should include a easily understood description of rights pertaining to:
 - r. Landlord Accountability
 - s. Tenant’s Rights
 - t. Rental Agreements
 - u. Roommates
 - v. Transportation
 - w. Safety
 - x. Eviction Notices
 - y. Utilities and Services

- *“Property Feedback” will be a forum to provide renters with a mechanism to rank the interaction of the landlords and provide comments on facilities.*
 - z. *The comments and evaluation criteria will be formatted and posted in a manner similar to the submission format of RateYourProfessor.Com (See Appendix G). Suggested areas of ranking include landlord interaction, adequacy of housing, pricing and safety. This method of acquiring feedback is suggested to be a star or unit ranking system without written comments for posting.*
 - aa. *The feedback section will also be posted with a disclaimer stating that the expressed opinions are not necessarily those of the ASUW Housing Directory or ASUW.*
 - bb. *The feasibility and necessity for the addition of the property feedback component should be review by the Student Issues Committee on November 30, 2006.*

Explanation of Direct Impact on the Student Body

The *ASUW Housing Commission* project has the projected potential to impact 100% of the student population through aiding in finding safe, available housing. Additionally this service can provide positive benefits for prospective students of the University of Wyoming, faculty and staff, and the Laramie community. To assist in alleviating the stress of finding adequate housing accommodations as well as providing the knowledge of a renter’s right is immensely beneficial and instrumental in improving quality of university students.

Timeline for Implementation

- If allocated the proposed funds, the *ASUW Housing Commission* Website would begin to be constructed immediately. The compilation of necessary information and production of a website/database would begin following the approval of funding.
- The posting and accessibility of the *ASUW Housing Commission* Website is aimed to be in full working order by spring semester of 2006 continuing into summer of 2006 to provided assistance in finding housing for 2006-2007 University of Wyoming school year.
- Concurrent to the creation and implementation of the proposed project, ASUW legislation will be generated to provide for this program to become a Category 2 project of ASUW, which will in turn provide for the maintaining and quality of this service if the trial project proves successful.

List of Research/ Estimated Project Costs

- The production of the operating *ASUW Housing Commission* website will cost \$0, because it will be produced by Information and Technology of the

University of Wyoming in accordance with past precedence of website production.

- The allocation of \$3000 will be used in the compilation of information concerning availability, safety, cost, contact information, and relevancy of rental properties. Additionally these funds will be used in start up costs of the program and the production of the service to become self-sustaining and viable for future.
 - cc. Business Manager Loraine Lupton has been briefed on the proposal of this proposed project and has agreed to oversee the management of its implementation.
- The allocation of \$1500 will be used to publicize the creation of this service as well as illicit outside community and campus support.
 - dd. This amount will also be used for unforeseen operating expenses.
- The proposed allocation of \$ 4500 was recommended and research through interaction with:
 - ee. Advisor Matt Caires
 - ff. Business Manager Lorraine Lupton
 - gg. Information and Technology
 - hh. Director of Rental Services
asuorent@gladstone.uoregon.edu
 - ii. Contacting and viewing comparative programs at University of Oregon, Washington State, and Colorado State University.

Note: This project came about through the recognized student need for assistance in finding affordable, safe, and available housing in Laramie. During ASUW Wednesday I was approached in the Union by a Graduate Student, who formally attended the University of Oregon, and expressed concern with the difficulty of finding quality housing in Laramie. He suggested the proactive approach of that the Associated Students of the University of Oregon took which lead to the creation of Oregon's Rental Directory service. Further discussion about this issue with my constituency as well personal experience highlighted the overwhelming need and benefits of such a service as the ASUW Housing Commission Program!

Addendum G

ASUW Housing Rental Directory Student Employee

- The student employee hired to during the spring and summer to work on the maintenance of ASUW Housing Rental Directory and will be expected to:
 - jj. Be responsible for the posting and deletion of housing submissions for the ASUW Housing Rental Directory.
 - kk. Collect the Fee for submissions made by the faculty/staff and outside community members, and deposit the money with Business Manager Lupton.
 - ll. Research and compile data and updating any changes regarding the availability, safety, cost, contact information, and relevancy of rental properties.
 - mm. Create and distribute any necessary marketing material.

- Business Manager Loraine Lupton has been briefed on the proposal of the ASUW Housing Rental Directory Service and has agreed to oversee the student employee during his/her employment by ASUW.

Budgetary Considerations

- The initial funding in the amount of \$1500 will be earmarked from the 2005-2006 Executive Budget from the line item for Computer Tech. This funding will go to the hiring of a part time student to be paid \$7.50 /hour with the amount of compensation per semester to not exceed the allotted \$1500.
- Any money generated from the charging of the rental submission fee will go back into the ASUW general fund to subsidize programs such as the ASUW Housing Rental Directory.
- The production of the operating *ASUW Housing Commission* website will cost \$0, because it will be produced Mr. Stanley Skarut, the University of Wyoming website designer and developer.
- The allocation of \$3000 for the Budgetary year 2006-2007 will be used to hire or continue to employ a part time student employ as previously describe above. The amounts will be allocated as follows: \$750 for the remain month of summer 2006 (starting July 1, 2006), \$1500 for spring of 2007, and the remaining \$750 for the summer of 2007 (until June 30,2007).
- The future allocation of funding for this service, and accordingly the determination of hourly wage for the student employee, will be decide by the Budget and Planning Committee for Budgetary year 2007-2008 an all subsequent years.

2005-2006
ASUW Housing Directory
Program Directive

ASUW Housing Directory Website

The ASUW Housing Directory, as created by Senate Bill #2138, will provide the needed service of assisting students in finding adequate housing off campus. This document outlines the operation of the ASUW Housing Directory for the upcoming academic year. The *ASUW Housing Directory* program and website will be created to provide the following sections:

- “**Search**” component for students to view and locate available housing using criteria such as price range, rental type, number of bedrooms, roommate search, etc.
- “**Submission**” capability of available housing for students, faculty, and community members.
 - There will be a listing policy and fee policy as follows:
 - The listing fee only includes listing your rental on this website. ASUW fee paying students currently enrolled in classes get the use of the service free of charge, for faculty and staff there is a \$5 listing fee and for all other landlords and community members there is a \$10 fee. All submission will be listed for 30 days unless otherwise specified.
 - Submissions fees are to be paid by check either by mail or dropped by to the ASUW Business Office.
 - For FY '07, ASUW will need to receive the ok from Vice President Phill Harris to charge said fees and will attempt to add these fees in the FY'08 Feebook.
- “**Links**” will be provided to assist students in finding housing from other websites. Also the links portion will provide useful pertinent information such as contact information of:
 - Utility Companies
 - City Services
 - Consumer Information
 - Legal Services (Student Attorney and Student Legal Services Clinic)
 - Other Housing Resources
- “**Renter Rights**” will be a section that provides the renter with a more complete understanding of renters’ rights. This section should include an easily understood description of rights pertaining to:
 - Landlord Accountability
 - Tenant’s Rights
 - Rental Agreements
 - Roommates
 - Transportation
 - Safety
 - Eviction Notices
 - Utilities and Services

- *“Property Feedback” will be a forum to provide renters with a mechanism to rank the interaction of the landlords and provide comments on facilities.*
 - *The comments and evaluation criteria will be formatted and posted in a manner similar to the submission format of RateYourProfessor.com. Suggested areas of ranking include landlord interaction, adequacy of housing, pricing and safety. This method of acquiring feedback is suggested to be a star or unit ranking system without written comments for posting.*
 - *The feedback section will also be posted with a disclaimer stating that the expressed opinions are not necessarily those of the ASUW Housing Directory or ASUW.*
 - *The feasibility and necessity for the addition of the property feedback component should be reviewed by the Student Issues Committee on November 30, 2006.*

Timeline for Implementation

- The posting and accessibility of the *ASUW Housing Directory* website is aimed to be in full working order by the end of spring semester of 2006 continuing into summer of 2006 to provide assistance in finding housing for the 2006-2007 University of Wyoming academic year.
- Concurrent to the creation and implementation of the proposed project, ASUW legislation will be generated to provide for this program to be listed under “other programs and services” of the ASUW By-Laws contingent upon passage of Senate Bill 2150, which will in turn provide for the maintaining and quality of this service if the trial project proves successful.

ASUW Housing Directory Student Employee

- The student employee will be hired for the spring, summer, and/or fall (if need arises) semesters to work on the maintenance of *ASUW Housing Directory* and will be expected to:
 - Be responsible for the posting and deletion of housing submissions for the ASUW Housing Rental Directory.
 - Collect the Fee for submissions made by the faculty/staff and outside community members and deposit the money with Business Manager Lupton.
 - Research and compile data and update any changes regarding the availability, safety, cost, contact information, and relevancy of rental properties.
 - Create and distribute any necessary marketing material.
 - Generate a report detailing the progression of the program, identify needed improvements, and total hours spent working on the program.
- The student employee will report directly to the President of ASUW

Fiscal Considerations

- The initial funding in the amount of \$1500 will be earmarked from the FY06 Executive Budget from the line item for Computer Tech. This funding will go to the hiring of a part time student to be paid \$7.50 /hour with the amount of compensation per semester not to exceed the allotted \$1500.
- Any money generated from the charging of the rental submission fee will be returned to subsidize the ASUW Housing Directory program (i.e. advertising, website costs, etc.).
- The production of the operating *ASUW Housing Directory* website will cost \$0, because it will be produced by Mr. Stanley Skrabut, the University of Wyoming website designer and developer.
- There will be an estimated cost of \$10 per month to maintain the .com domain website which will have be linked to from the ASUW page as well as WyoWeb.
- A suggested allocation of \$3000 for the FY07 from the Executive Budget would be used to continue to employ a part time student employee. The employee will be paid a suggested stipend of \$1000 per semester (summer, fall, and spring) contingent upon the completion of the assigned project.

Future Considerations

- The Student Issues Committee in conjunction with the ASUW executive over seeing the ASUW Housing Directory program, and using the input of the student employee, should evaluate:
 - The possibility of and need for implementing an electronic payment system.
 - The most effective method payment for the student employee. Determine if the hourly rate or stipend payment method would best suit the work demand of the program.
 - The time of year at which a student employee is need to handle the workload of the program and/or if it should be incorporated into an ASUW executive job description during one to all semesters.
 - The possibility of the student employee receiving scholastic credit.
 - The possibility of opening the ASUW Housing Directory to the community and beyond by discontinuing the restricted access.
 - The possibility of adding a "Property Feedback" component (see above).
 - The necessity of a submission fee or the need to raise the amount charged.

Process for Further Directive

- Pursuant to Senate Bill #2138 the ASUW Executive Branch is given the authority to oversee the implementation of the ASUW Housing Directory Website with the advice and consent of the ASUW Senate. In order for this document to comply with this mandate, a majority of the Senate must affirm its adoption. Additionally, this document shall be updated annually to be presented to the ASUW Senate for further implementation of the service. Further, any substantive changes to this document must be approved by a majority of the Senate. Because Senate Bill #2138 gives full authority for the maintenance of the ASUW Housing Directory, no further legislation is needed to continue its existence, only the adoption of this program directive on an annual basis. Upon passage of this document, copies will be kept in the ASUW President's Office as well as with the ASUW Secretary.

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