



## “Legislative Affairs Council Charge and Charter Update”

**Proposed Motion:** Approve the updated Legislative Affairs Council Charge and Charter.

**Sponsor:** Kaylee Galloway, AS VP for Governmental Affairs

**Persons of Contact:** Kaylee Galloway

**Date:** September 5, 2013

### Attached Documents

Legislative Affairs Council Charge and Charter

### Background and Context

Each year, all chargers and charters are updated by their respective Vice Presidents.

### Summary of Proposal

**Legislative Affairs Council Charge and Charter:** Updated date to September 2013.

#### Charge:

- First sentence was rewritten to read “Legislative Affairs Council serves to empower student representation by:” in order to be more clear and concise.
- Reworded the first bullet point for clarity.
- Added Local Legislative Agenda to the second bullet point.
  - This will provide a great opportunity for the AS Local Liaison to collaborate with LAC and to be able to actively advocate on behalf of students at meetings they attend using the issues and stances on the agenda.
  - The Local Legislative Agenda provides for an outlet to focus on local issues that affect students such as rental safety, coal terminal, alternative transportation, and campus health and safety.
- Separated the third bullet point, which was a part of the second bullet point before. Two separate topics and more clear when separated.
- Bullet point four and five were edited for more clarity.
- Bullet point six was removed since it is broadly covered in the first bullet point.
- Bullet point seven was deleted and rewritten into bullet points eight and nine.
- Bullet points eight and nine aim to clarify the role in which the LAC plays with the Legislative Action Fund.
  - The edited language aims to establish additional details and accountability through:
    - Budget tracking (“monitoring the expenditures”)
    - Preparing a budget that will allocate funds for justified and appropriate purposes.

#### Membership:

- Gave the AS Legislative Liaison voting rights.
  - See Additional Background and Context for details
- Removed the “additional at-large positions may be added for content and value”.

- The benefits of flexible membership do not outweigh the administrative disadvantages.
- Removed the Student Senate Representative
  - Not applicable while the Student Senate is on hiatus
  - Should be reconsidered if the Student Senate were to be reinstated

**Quorum:**

- Added ‘During the summer, or when not in session,’ to address the fact that academic session is technically all four quarters and the LAC does not meet during summer.

**Additional Background and Context**

Something to consider is giving the AS Legislative Liaison voting rights. This decision is not an easy one as there are good reasons on both sides of the argument. Granting the AS Legislative Liaison voting rights was per the recommendation of Ben Crowther, the 2012-13 Legislative Liaison. Historically, the Legislative Liaison has not had a vote. The rationale in past board meeting minutes (September 2, 2010) was “[Byron Starkey said] The Legislative Liaison doesn’t vote because their purpose is to listen to the intent of the agenda that is being created. Majkut said the intent is that the Liaison doesn’t make the decisions about what is being lobbied for in Olympia.” I emailed Joe Meyer, the 2011-12 Legislative Liaison and he said “The Legislative Liaison position exists solely to represent the views of the Legislative Affairs Council. I think granting the vote would confuse this relationship. Also, a vote may give the liaison an incentive to hind or tweak what they present in reports to get more votes to their side. On the other hand, I think the legislative liaison is sometimes better informed about all the pieces and having a vote would add value and a check on the VP for Gov. There are arguments for giving and not giving the position a vote.” Also worth considering is the view that it seems fair and appropriate that the AS Legislative Liaison have a vote in the decisions that they are lobbying on. It is important that their expertise in legislative matters are being considered and are influential in the drafting of the agendas. It seems that the AS Legislative Liaison could function better if given more autonomy, and this is one way to achieve that. This comes down to the question, what role should the AS Legislative Liaison play? Should they be able to actively contribute to the agenda they lobby on? Or will playing an active role bias their ability to lobby?

Another topic to consider is the possibility of having the AS Local Liaison serve on the LAC to help draft the local legislative agenda and to provide the council with local updates much like the Legislative Liaison does. Since this idea came late, it cannot be added to the official job description. If this seems like an idea worth implementing, I could ask the individual when hired if they would be willing to serve on the committee in their official capacity as AS Local Liaison. If they agree, then there is a possibility that two additional hours per week would need to be added to the job and the funding for the additional hours would need to come out of the AS Operational Enhancement budget.

**Rationale:**

The purpose of updating the charges and charters is to ensure that they are being evaluated on a yearly basis to continue serving students. All of the suggested changes aim to make this Charge and Charter more organized and easier to understand while adding details and accountability.



## Associated Students of Western Washington University

Legislative Affairs Council Charge & Charter

~~October 2012~~ September 2013

### I. CHARGE

Legislative Affairs Council ~~will~~ serve to empower student representation by: will actively seek to advocate for students' interests and progressively alter the current position of underrepresented students and all students striving to obtain a higher education by:

- ~~Empowering Encouraging student participation and~~ civic engagement and student participation in the political process.
- Creating, reviewing, and proposing the Legislative Local, State, and Federal Legislative Agendas to the Associated Students of Western Washington University (ASWWU) Board of Directors, ~~as well as s~~
- Submitting recommendations to the Washington Student Association (WSA) regarding the statewide Legislative Aagenda.
- Establishing contact with ~~all appropriate~~ elected officials to ensure that student perspectives are being considered at all levels of government, for the purpose of to communicateing student concerns and obtaining information regarding student issues to disseminate to the student body.
- Formulating policy positions ~~concerning the impact of legislative activities, community governance and relations, national affairs and external matters to WWU students, Washington State higher education institutions, and the overall state of higher education for all matters concerning students in higher education.~~
- ~~Assuming a role in the implementation of policy positions taken (and adopted with review by the Board of Directors) through involvement in lobby days and meetings with appropriate officials.~~
- Managing the operations of the Legislative Action Fund and appropriate funding to more directly represent WWU students in legislative matters.
- Reviewing funding request proposals and monitoring the expenditures of student funds donated through the Legislative Action Fund.
- Creating a budget for the Legislative Action Fund based on projected revenue with estimated expenses in areas designed to more directly represent Western Students at the local, state and federal level.

### II. MEMBERSHIP

AS Vice President for Governmental Affairs (Chair)

AS Legislative Liaison ~~(non-voting)~~

6 - Students at-Large, appointed by the AS Board of Directors ~~—(additional at-large positions may be added for content and value)~~

1- Western Votes! Representative

~~1- Student Senate Representative~~

Secretary (non-voting)

Advisor (non-voting)

### III. CHAIR

The Chairperson shall be the AS Vice President for Governmental Affairs.- They shall convene the meetings, approve agendas, and preside at all meetings. The Vice-Chairperson shall be selected at the discretion of the council and acts in the absence of the Chairperson.

#### **IV. MEETINGS**

Meetings shall be called by the Chair. The council shall meet at least twice prior to the establishment of an AS Legislative agenda. All meetings must be called with a minimum of twenty four (24) hours notice. Meetings may also be called by any member with support of at least twenty-five (25%) of the seated, voting membership.

#### **V. VOTING**

In order for a motion to pass, it must obtain a majority of the legal votes cast. An abstention shall not count as a legal vote cast.

#### **VI. QUORUM**

A majority of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum. If a quorum is not present, the Chair will adjourn the meeting and reschedule to a new day and hour. During the summer, or when not in session, ~~When not in academic session~~ this council's responsibilities fall to the AS VP for Governmental Affairs in consultation with the AS President and Director of Student Activities.

#### **VI.VII. RULES OF OPERATION**

The council may adopt and amend rules of operation governing its operation by a majority vote of the council, subject to review or approval by the AS Board.

#### **VII.VIII. AMENDMENTS**

This Charter may be amended by a majority vote of the AS Board of Directors.

#### **VIII.IX. REPORTAGE**

This council shall report to the AS Board of Directors through the AS Vice President for Governmental Affairs.