



Western Washington University Associated Students
Legislative Affairs Council

Thursday, October 20, 2016 6:00 PM VU 567

Members: *Present: Bryce Hammer (ASVP for Governmental Affairs), Nora Selander (AS Legislative Liaison), Galen Herz (AS Local Issues Coordinator), Rosa Rice-Pelepko (AS REP Organizing and Outreach Coordinator), Leanna Sauerlender (Student at Large), Sarah Gallagher (Student at Large), and Lisa Rosenberg.*

Absent: Katherine VenDeWalker (Student at Large).

Advisor:

Secretary: *Cora Cole (Board Assistant for Representation Committees).*

Guests:

Bryce Hammer called the meeting to order at 6:07 PM, on October 20, 2016.

I. REVISIONS TO THE AGENDA

Upcoming Lobby Day means we need to come up with link for people to register as lobbyists. The link will be on the posters that the rep is printing soon, so today at the end of the information items, the Committee will go over last year's application and see what should be changed.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The secretary will send out both last weeks and this week's minutes before the next meeting.

III. INFO ITEMS

A. Introductions: There was a new student at large, so members went around to do name, pronouns, and best pumpkin related food item.

B. Western Lobby Day Agenda Proposals: Bryce explained what we mean when we say "the agenda" and Nora's role as the liaison. Nora went through the proposal process starting with Vote and the questions that a person would have to answer a long series of questions before the issue becomes valid. Nora has been going over them and many are redundant and the background is requested

far too on along in the process. These processes were inherited both from the WSA and the USSA. Bryce interjected an explanation of the USSA and WSA for folks who didn't have any previous experience with those groups. Nora showed the committee the new format, using the example of Vote. She has spent the last couple weeks dealing with the transfer of those and will have the finalized versions released earlier in the week. She then asked for feedback on the issue, Leanna said it seemed very readable and the rest of the committee agreed that it was a vast improvement.

- i. **Dedicated Revenue:** In the past people have split into subgroups on issues and then come together to work on the whole thing. Leanna asked if there would be new issues or working on more old ones. Bryce said we would be focusing on restructuring the old issues, like Dedicated Revenue to specify some tax related issues, decouple the S and A fee from tuition, sent out debt statements, and a continued push against tuition hikes. Additionally, Bryce would like to increase the power of student trustees in the Board of Trustees and amending queer entry data, the method for gathering information about incoming students, we currently collect data on students of color and economic background. Bryce would like to expand that practice to queer students. There are some troubles there in terms of who knows that they are queer when, and also the language politics around using the word queer are complicated because it is connected to trauma for many folks and also if you use "LTBG", then there are some questions about who gets included in that. Nora said a possible solution could be looking at other schools with similar policy and looked at the proposal. Bryce explained that there is a Washington RCW 28 Data requirements which details what information you can collect from students; it has no regulation for gender identity or sexual orientation. Leanna asked how much money the school currently gets for student support programs. Bryce answered that tuition pays about 60% and 40% is from the state at this point in time. After checking she clarified that the divide is 70% and 30%. They looked for the "hard ask" for money from the state and decided eventually to talk to the WSAC about updated information. Nora also will check her documents to see. Bryce expanded on the role that Western plays in the WSA, namely that our proposals are normally what the whole body goes with because they tend to be well crafted. Nora explained that she and her counterparts lobby both for school agenda and WSA agenda during winter quarter. Rosa asked if we could stand in solidarity with other schools' agendas when we lobby to

empower the similar goals. Nora answered that the agenda of most schools in the state looks pretty similar and as such we can say our agenda is supported by other members, largely because we write much of the WSA agenda. Bryce said we could talk to them about specific endorsement. Nora said that we are more progressive than WSA because our students are interested in pretty progressive issues so that would be tricky. We cannot lobby for partisan angles and WSA waters down a lot of proposals when the whole body can't agree on an issue, so they could endorse parts of our agenda but not the whole of it.

- ii. Student Success:** Bryce added that she wants to expand the opportunities for homeless students illuminated in the Student Success section. Wayne and the financial office about that. Bryce and Nora will send out these agenda items this week and then the other items as soon as they are formatted.
- iii. Vote:** Rosa said supporting T-12 as another issue in Student Success or on its own. We need to invest in K-12 because of the impact of that issue on higher education. Bryce said we could incorporate that in Vote. Bryce briefly explained the McCleary decision to Leanna. Leanna added that she would like to work on advising for students of color under student success because she works closely with Eric. Nora said that breaking down graduation rate difference would be key there. Sara said she would be willing to work on K-12 issues because she is aiming for a career in that area. Bryce said that Western is trying to get funding for Woodring teacher prep because of the McCleary decision. Nora interjected that she was in Olympia last Thursday and met with someone who worked with democrats in the house and had talked about solidarity with K-12 education. His advice had been to say funding on early learning through to higher education. Bryce said that sounded like a new agenda item, Nora added that she would like to see the State Need Grand being fully funded again. Bryce said she would add it to the Dedicated Revenue issue. WSU financial aid advisor said that money still goes to low income brackets when the SNG isn't funded, and that money comes from other areas, resulting in less and less funding for everyone.

Nora added that Rosa had approached her about working with SFS on food justice and sustainability. And since the Council approves her lobbying positions she asked how to formally allow her to talk about food justice. Bryce answered that that was both an Environmental Lobby Day issue and also that there are some points where she can lobby on informal positions, they have done something similar with the S and A fee decoupling in the past. Lisa added

that being able to add positions during session is an important part of Nora's job. Julia added that there are huge networks behind all of the issues that we lobby for both in the college and out in the world, and that solidarity work is very important. They came back to the homeless student issue to see if there were other state schools who could ally with them on the issue, potentially an organization on Belleview College's campus. Julia proposed that they should get some ESC and ESP lobby day members on the council to send the local agendas that have some overlap with their goals. Some of those goals would be the Undocumented Voters or the Homeless Student issue. Rosa volunteered to work on the Vote issue and do some more research. She also asked to get some more background on the Dedicated Revenue, Nora said she would get that resource available to her. Most of the issues are closing tax loopholes that is no longer really effective, or is just effective for a small proportion of people. Bryce said that next week could be a proposal week where we cover the details of the agendas more in depth. The group added that there could be a benefit to reaching out to Econ Majors because they are smart and know where to find the money. Rosa added that knowing the details when lobbying is really helpful, perhaps make a sheet of reasons to shoot things down so that people can respond to that. More people will be helping out in the coming days but this meeting is pretty small. All of the other items on the agenda are going to be drafted by Bryce and Nora with other folks helping where they can. Additionally, Wayne will probably be able to help with the homeless students item. Bryce asked if rooms in new dorms could be reserved for homeless students, when it gets constructed. The request for that funding is going to be a university issue and not one we lobby for because the State isn't dedicating more funding to the University right now. In similar circumstances, buildings have been built using bonds, the VU was. There was some amount of question as to how that works. Bryce asked folks to talk to her if they want to be working on any of these projects.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Bryce pulled up the OrgSync form on the projector so that people could offer input. Both she and Nora urged everyone to go to Churros and Change next week, they will try to end the meeting early so that people can attend. On the section where you are supposed to put down your hometown, some folks thought that wording was confusing. It was there so lobbyists could talk to the representative who works for them. Rosa said that we could have the current address, hometown/permanent address and zip code, and then have a series of checkboxes for being registered to vote at any of those locations or not being registered to vote. Out of state students are traditionally hard to place and there are always a bunch of folks from

Whatcom. Bryce added that the out of state tuition hikes uniquely affect the rates for students of color. On the information about leave times, they changed “university will be closed,” to “it is a holiday and classes will not be in session.” They removed the, “select only one.” statement from the “How you heard,” bar. There was some discussion about making the preferred agenda item options less wordy. Bryce said that the purpose of this question was mostly to make sure that the lobbying items were things that the student body cares about. The actual lobbying groups were lined up with where the students were from. Bryce mentioned that she would like to have handouts about what legislator is on what committees and possible online resources about that. At the bottom of the page there was a brief question as to whether the paper should mention that we specifically ban weapons in “illegal items,” when pressed as to the necessity of that item Bryce explained that, “2016 has been weird” which the committee found to be a fair statement. Rosa asked to add a question about applicants’ experience with lobbying, they settled on “Have you ever attended a lobby day before?” Also, a question about whether people would be interested in learning more about other lobbying opportunities.

V. Reports

A. Nora has been changing over proposals to the ne format and WSA agenda proposal. She has also been preparing for the board of WSA Vancouver this weekend and working on campus outreach, part of which will be Churros and Change. People discussed the scheduling of the meeting, next week the meeting before LAC will probably not be done early so LAC will get done early hopefully.

B. Bryce has been preparing for the WSA board meeting this weekend. They will be talking about the Disability Task Force on state level, the potential tuition increase, and debrief about Campus Vote. We no longer are better than everyone else combined because Central got 2,300. Everyone applauded Rosa because we still have more than everyone else. There is no update on the USSA. The Bylaws for the REP need to be changed because they are having some growing pains.

There was some discussion of reaching out to potential new members. Particularly Poli-Sci and Econ majors. Also, lots of new hiring is going on, meaning that there are positions on hiring committees opening up soon.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:54 PM