

**Western Washington University Associated Students
Legislative Affairs Council
Monday, November 19, 2012** **VU 567**

Present: Patrick Stickney (AS VP Governmental Affairs, Chair), Amy Stavig, Andrew Taylor, Ben Crowther (Legislative Liaison), Evan Fowler, Graham Marmion, Joseph Levy, and Tom Durham. *Absent:* Nathan Haugen
Advisor: Kevin Majkut
Secretary: Kaylee Galloway

MOTIONS

LAC-12-F-09 Approve the minutes from November 5, 2012. *Passed*
LAC-12-F-10 Reconsider motion LAC-12-F-03 “Include financial aid for students who are undocumented in the legislative agenda”. *Passed*

Patrick Stickney, Chair of Legislative Affairs Council, called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ADDITIONS AND CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION LAC-12-F-09 by Marmion

Approve the minutes from November 5, 2012.

Second: Levy Vote: 6-0-0 Action: Passed

IV. PUBLIC FORUM

V. REPORTS

A. VP for Governmental Affairs

Update on General Assembly. Stickney will bring a copy of the draft budget soon. They are looking into the possibility of hiring a third staff person as a Legislative Director. WSA priorities are: voter accessibility, financial aid, revenue, and state aid for students who are undocumented. Legislative agenda items are ones that the legislative liaisons work on and include Sit and Spit policy (allow underage student sip but not drink wine), increasing funding for STEM degrees, WGU accountability (need to be transparent and offer high quality higher education), opposing differential tuition (college would charge more for one degree than another; such as STEM), shared governance (WWU has a great shared governance, but other universities do not; it would allow for universities to opt-in to a shared governance), veterans’ residency (eligibility to pay in state tuition), expressing support to veteran issues and benefits, and expanding aid for childcare (making sure universities help student parents and increasing flexibility for students), and expressing interest in Pay it Forward (students would be able to attend higher education free of cost up front, but when students graduate, they pay back a percentage of their income for a 30 year period). Both the state legislative items and bylaws were discussed. An amendment was proposed to change the bylaws from 1 vote per FTE established by legislature, to each school starting with three votes plus 1 vote per actual FTE determined by the university. The FTEs determined by the legislature are different than those determined by universities. Bylaws will be voted on at the next meeting which is scheduled for December 8th.

B. Legislative Liaison

Jered McCardle was elected as the WSA VP of Federal Affairs, which is a position WWU advocated to create. McCardle will be working as a liaison between the USSA and WSA, focusing on federal issues. Crowther, Stickney, and Taylor had a meeting with a staff person from Senator Patty Murray's office. They discussed the USSA campaign issues, which include raising minimum wage, the DREAM Act and student debt. USSA targeted Murray as one of the top five politicians to contact.

C. Western Votes

WV had a great tie-dye event and collected story cards. The Western Votes meeting is tonight at 6pm in VU 460.

D. Student Senate

Stickney said the Senate is coming up with questions to poll students about increasing student involvement and created an Outreach Committee.

Amy Stavig left the meeting at 2:20pm.

VI. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Proposal for lobby trips after Viking Lobby Day

Stickney put together a funding request about setting up dedicated lobby trips in addition to Viking Lobby Day, which comes from his legislative affairs budget. He said lobby trips will be a great way to stay in contact with legislatures and make sure they are still working on WWU issues and voting favorably. The proposal is to have eight trips down to Olympia, each focused on an issue from the WWU legislative agenda. The goal would be to have a van to take students down to Olympia to speak with legislators. Stickney will work to get publicity if this passes. He encourages the committee to take a lead role and take ownership of the issues. *Neil Christianson enters at 2:21pm.* Stickney feels it is important to maintain a presence. All students are invited to participate in these lobby trips to voice their perspectives and opinions. Stickney encouraged committee members to have drivers training. The funding request does not include food. The plan would be to have the trips during the week, on different days to increase accessibility to students. Levy supported the idea of having them on different days of the week. Stickney said an hour could be set aside to train students in lobbying. Crowther said that as the legislative session progresses, the purpose and content of the lobby trips will change depending upon what bills are being considered. Stickney said that the LAF has enough money to fund more trips if necessary. He also said that the goal is to have students who are passionate about a specific issue testify.

B. Review legislative agenda items: please see document at the end of these minutes. Due to the large amount of editing, not all changes were noted in the minutes

1. Financial Aid: Marmion noticed a contradiction in that the leg item talks about low tuition but then also advocates for financial aid. He said that low tuition shouldn't be in the values statement, but as a point. Christenson said to keep it in values statement but add a new first bullet. Crowther recommended that the committee stay away from using language like "advocate for" because it is what the University is going to do, not what the university is asking the legislature to do. Crowther thinks the section for Work Study should be removed because it is mentioned below. Crowther wanted to change "collegiate" in the values statement to "post-secondary" because there are forms of higher education that aren't college.
2. Access and Attainment: Stickney suggested putting tuition as a guiding principle instead of mentioning several times throughout the legislative agenda. Christenson said that some of the financial language should be kept because it needs to be explicitly said. Crowther said the WSA has fought against granting universities the responsibility to set tuition. He said he

would rather have the state control tuition levels, therefore students would lobby with the state rather than with the university. Stickney wondered if differential tuition should be included. Crowther said the point of the document is to express the issues that are important to students even if the issues are unlikely to pass. *Evan Fowler enters at 2:49pm*. The committee decided to include differential tuition in this section. Stickney said that differential tuition would make it so that students pursuing STEM degrees would have to pay more per credit. They decided to remove the second to last bullet point because it is covered under the diversity section. Christenson added veteran status in the values statement.

3. Accountability and Student Representation: No edits.
4. Health and Safety: Added a values statement and moved childcare programs to the accessibility section. Added a bullet point that focuses on the promotion sexual health.
5. Diversity: the first two bullet points were moved to accessibility. Crowther said the current system of gender markers is inaccessible to students.

MOTION *LAC-12-F-10* by Christenson

Reconsider motion LAC-12-F-03 "Include financial aid for students who are undocumented in the legislative agenda".

Seconded: Marmion Voted: 7-0-0 Action: Passed

Stickney noted that WSA did vote to include State aid for students who are undocumented as a campaign issue. Marmion suggested that political ideology be included in the holistic review of applications section. Fowler noted the DREAM Act. Crowther said that is a federal issue. Stickney is curious about supporting the DREAM Act on a state level. Majkut said the primary purpose of the DREAM Act is to provide individuals with a path to citizenship. He said financial aid is not providing a path to citizenship, but it is about supporting students who are undocumented who are a part of the state society and pay taxes. There is a social justice aspect of this issue. Levy said that it doesn't fit in this particular document. Crowther said that next quarter, LAC drafts a federal agenda and the DREAM Act can be included in that document. Majkut is not sure about including political ideology. Marmion noted that political ideology should be recognized as a diversity issue. Majkut noted that Western's current application review process does take a holistic approach. Moved the bullet point on expanding anti-harassment to health and safety. The committee decided to include political ideology in the diversity section.

6. Environment: Taylor recommended last year's value statement be used. He said legislation is still in the scoping process, which will be ending soon, and after that additional studies will be done. Taylor said the best approach is to advocate for opposing the coal terminal. He said there is not much that can be done about the train and the increased train traffic. Majkut said the studies of the multi-city impact and the impact of the transportation have not been determined, but the government is currently looking for a more holistic process. He said they are trying to look at the impacts overall. Taylor said it is more than just train traffic that is of concern; rather it is the construction and presence of a coal terminal. Taylor said there are new certifications in addition to LEED. The committee decided to support recycling and composting program legislations for all public institutions. The committee also agreed to encourage the phasing out of selling and distributing bottled water while providing sustainable alternatives. Taylor suggested adding clean water. Deleted the last bullet due to redundancy.

7. Faculty: Levy spoke with a faculty member and decided to add in the last three bullet points. Taylor suggested support faculty's right to collective bargain. Fowler emphasized his support for funding faculty research.
8. Revenue: Crowther would like to change the wording to working class. Marmion doesn't know why we are advocating for capital gains. Fowler dittoed. Stickney said that capital gains tax only affects the top 3% of income earners. Fowler noted that the capital gains tax affects businesses. Christenson suggested that the marijuana funds be allocated to higher education. Christenson said that the committee has stated revenue as an issue, and therefore, the committee should provide some examples. Crowther, as legislative liaison, would like to be able to take a stance in support of capital gains. Christenson dittoed. Taylor suggested that other sources of revenue should be considered as alternatives become available. Fowler said that the capital gains tax is not the most feasible options and that other alternatives should be considered. Stickney suggested that the wording be changed to "including but not limited to a capital gains tax". He said that the capital gains would lower the business and occupations tax. Christenson wondered if the committee wanted to consider the possibility of an income tax and discuss it in the committee. Fowler was uncertain about including the issue because it is extremely controversial.

Legislative Agenda Format: Stickney drafted a legislative agenda format using last year's agenda. Crowther wants to preserve the format of the first page from last year's agenda and keep the new format for the following pages.

VII. ACTION ITEMS

VIII. NEXT MEETING DATE- November 26, 2012

IX. ADJOURN

X. OUTSIDE OF COMMITTEE WORK

Revise drafts, prepare for final document

The Meeting was adjourned at 3:59 p.m.