



Western Washington University Associated Students

Legislative Affairs Council

Thursday, November 10th, 2016 6:00 PM VU567

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

Absent: Sarah Gallagher (Student at Large) Katie VenDeWalker

Advisor:

Secretary: Cora Cole

Guests: Becca Kenna-Schenk (Director of Government Relations at Western), Bill Lyne (President of United Faculty of Washington State) Joe Timmons (Assistant for Government Relations at Western)

Motions:

LAC-16-6 Approval of November 3rd minutes. *Passed*

LAC-16-7 Approval of the Legislative Agenda Packet for 2016-2017. *Passed*

Bryce Hammer called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM on November 10th.

I. Introductions

Names, Pronouns, Position, and if you could only wear one color for the rest of your life what would it be.

II. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

- a. **Because of the guest speakers the Vice Chair Nominees were pushed to next week.**

III. Minutes Approval

MOTION: LAC-16-6 by Sauerlender

Approval of the minutes from November 3rd, 2016.

Second: Selander Vote: 7-0-0 Action: Passes

IV. ACTION ITEMS

- a. **Faculty and Admin Agenda:** Becca Kenna-Schenk introduced the process for approving an agenda, it starts at the department level, passing through colleges to the VPs, President, and finally sitting in front of the Board of Trustees. About this time last year, the process of forming the biennium budget proposals began

in earnest. On the operating side they submitted 5 policy level packages and the capital side, there were 9-11 packages submitted. The top level policy item was the operating budget request 14.9 million for the next two years to give 4% annual increase to all western faculty and staff. That item wasn't included on the one page summary they handed out, as that page was a first draft. That compensation is consistent with other universities across the board, all are adjusting their compensation because this is the first biennium since the recession, so it is necessary for the compensation to adjust to cost of living. The next two packages are grouped together for external audiences but the actual request has them separately listed as student success and diversity and inclusion. We are asking for more academic advisors and mental health advisors, and more peer and academic tutors, which are carried over from the last request because it wasn't met. There is demand particularly for entry level math courses, because that is one of the driving points for students falling away from math/science studies. Having a liaison for those groups and targeted tutoring in res halls for those courses are the specifics of that point. Under the Inclusion and Diversity item, the requests follow the recommendation of last year's diversity taskforce. This includes targeted recruitment, hiring liaison between university and tribal communities and TGBT communities. Bill Tyne added that the need for student success is because of the strain on Counseling Services and Tutoring Services last year. Teanna Sauerlender asked why the budget hadn't gone well last time it was proposed, Becca Kenna-Schenk responded that it had been a supplemental session (making it an unlikely to get any additional funding), we got a computer lab, and that Western is doing well as far as statistical student out-come. We need to explain to State Government that we need to be able to support more marginalized and less historically privileged groups. Bill Tyne talked about the student success collaborative, which shows when students are going to fall off-track before they do, so that the university can take preemptive measures to make sure students meet their major. He continued that first generation students need to have more support/ advising resources because they can't access them at home. Bryce clarified that the biennium is when a state comes out with its budget for the next two years and then Becca Kenna-Schenk explained the state's two-year budget groups, Capital, Operating, and Transportation. Transportation is infrastructure maintenance and Operating is ongoing expenses like salaries and benefits. Capital is about construction of new buildings or renovation. The revenue sources are different for each, and the senators are different for each and there is a large disconnect in Olympia. The other two Operating Requests are for reducing Bottlenecks in STEM Degree Programs, because there is a significant shift towards STEM majors at Western, and they all need to take the same entry level courses, resulting in long waitlists for those courses. That can mean a delay in graduation for an average of two quarters. The request is two or three new professors for those fields. The guests took this time to urge students to contribute their stories and experiences to them and legislature. The last item for the Operation request is about teacher shortages in the state. There are two things forcing the state to deal with this, one is Initiative 1351 which passed

two years ago requiring class-size reduction, the other is the McCleary decision. Both of those items have requirements for teacher preparation and since Western has the best College of Education in the state we can get some aid with that. The Dean of the College of Education said that growing our programs for Science, Early Childhood, and programs in Everett and North Seattle would help us to meet that. Almost all of the other Universities have similar requests for the proposals. Our proposal would produce 250 new teachers every year that it is funded, including both new graduates and returning teachers. Bryce asked about the retirement rate and Joe Timmons said that he didn't know exact details but the pay rate and treatment is part of the cause of a high burnout rate. The decision about funding to address that problem is likely to happen, "sometime between April and September". In the Initiative requirements versus McCleary Requirements, there is a lot of overlap and solving following through with the Initiative would likely solve the problems of McCleary. To suspend or amend the Initiative after two years requires a super majority, the only real check back for that practice is that legislators might not get reelected. The Initiative has less vocal public support so it is less visible than the McCleary decision.

The top Capital request from the administration is a phased project request to expand the Environmental Studies building. Phase one is renovating with about \$56 million, phase two is the expansion. The two phase project both avoids displacing students and is also more environmentally friendly and affordable. Additionally, this building houses most of the Huxley College of the Environment which was one of the country's first Colleges of the Environment in the country and it is one of the most environmentally unfriendly buildings on campus. Bryce asked about class location for displaced students, Becca Kenna-Schenk responded that the phasing would allow for classes to have locations in new buildings when the old one gets renovated. They are expensive and take a long time, Carver pushed back the requests for a long time. Western will be competing with Eastern for funds and the allocation of those could go either way, we won't know until the Governor releases his budget proposals.

Bill Lyne introduced the United Faculty for Washington State's Legislative Agenda. It has historically lined up with the Admin and the Student Agenda and he has met with Bryce and Nora to talk about our agenda. The only difference is their proposed Academic Quality Act, this addresses hiring tenure-track professors. Tenure track professors are hired at a national level; that process guarantees that you can continue in that job without being fired for speaking politically or what you research and that protection persists indefinitely, provided you meet an annual review of teaching. The drive to privatize public education and defunding universities has led to hiring non-tenure track faculty. They have short term contracts that don't review frequently, at Western, because of unionization, non-tenure track faculty have pretty good conditions, but generally they face inferior conditions, less security, less protection for freedom, and lower pay. If that trend continues the conditions of public universities will become more like the conditions of

elementary education. That leads directly to a decrease in equality across the board. It is a nationwide phenomenon that the economic conditions you come from and the relationship you have with your professors are the predictors of student success. In order to avoid governmental micromanagement, the proposal is that if the University can create, on its budget, two tenure track professorships the state will fund an additional tenure-track position. It hopefully avoids the increase of administrators which reflects the privatization of public education. That could result in 90 new tenure-track positions in the state in the next two years. Total cost is \$30 million which is comparatively high but would benefit each institution in the state and the institutions wouldn't have to use the program if they chose not to. Nora asked if this proposal would account for making non-tenure track professors, tenure track. He clarified that when a position opens up people from all over apply, including the existing professors, the proposal is careful not to take away positions from non-tenure track faculty but to provide more opportunities. Rosa asked about the possibility for a return of the plan, Bill Tyne clarified that this is specifically for this budget cycle, but if they wanted to run it again next biennium they could. The funding for the positions that got created would continue into the future as long as those positions exist. Bryce said that the committee is interested in sending students down to lobby, so the guests should ask for students to come down and testify if they want that support. Bill Tyne said that the offer for support would go both ways, and that faculty would be glad to support student lobbying efforts. They talked about how effective the testimony for Carver Toby Day had been. They are located in Old Main 490 on campus.

Becca Kenna-Schenk and Joe Timmons left at 7:13.

- b. Bryce showed the final version of the Western Toby Day agenda after explaining the process for its creation, which can be found in the TAC Charge and Charter on the AS website. The perfection of items and creation of pamphlets will happen by the power of Nora over Winter Break. Nora introduced the Tuition and Revenue Proposal has been polished since last week, with added infographics about shares of state funding for higher education. This week she met with the University staff for Governmental Relations about the tuition increase, they have not yet developed a stance. She also went over the item on fully funding the state need grant and decoupling the S and A fee permanently. She asked for the committee's input on what level of funding we want to ask for, the general feedback was that pre-recession might be easier for legislators to wrap their minds around. Nora said that having a time line might be easier for legislators to do, then have that continued by next year's council. Then Bill Tyne asked why we couldn't make college free. Bryce responded that the problem is when they see it they don't take us seriously and aren't likely to meet that demand. Bill responded that the 20% cut and state backfill would have seemed crazy two years ago and that making "outrageous" demands is the only real way to get them met. The organization and lobbying efforts in the last eight years have mobilized the supporters for free college. He

also argued that McCleary will break the back of current state finance systems and push them towards real change. The only people who are listened to are the ones who have concrete demands and organization. Bryce responded that she would like to have a couple options for the Board and we need to have a timeline. That could be Pre-Recession this biennium and free tuition as a long term goal. The committee added the point to fully fund education from early education through to higher education as a long term goal. They also added backfill for the 2.1% tuition freeze. These amendments will be brought back to the committee after the Board sees it.

Moving on to Revenue, that hasn't changed since last week, except for updates on the numbers. It is detailed online or in the minutes from the last two weeks and the most recent numbers can be found in the documents from the November 16th Board of Directors meeting.

Support and Success has added statistics on men and gender non-conforming survivors as well. They also changed the "victim language" to "survivor language" because our agenda depends on support rather than prevention because the Western AS sees the governmental role to be support and the individual/educational role to be prevention. The statistics for the Student Success items have been updated, and the information on students who are experiencing homelessness is all up to date. We are advocating for a minimum of one month stay and removal of fees for emergency housing. On an administrative level they would like to see options in honors and alcohol-free dorms.

Leanna Sauerlender left at 7:43 PM

The representation items have updated the information on what progress items made last legislative session. In the Civics portion, Sara added research and testimony on civic participation (she sits on Washington Education Association Board). The desired outcomes for that education are listed on the sheet. There was no significant change to the Student Trustee item other than the clarification on the laws that regulate the Board of Trustees.

MOTION: LAC-16-7 By Herz

Approve the Tegislative Agenda Proposals for 2016-2017

Second: Perry Vote: 6-0-0 Action: Passes

Bill Lyne left at 7:58 PM.

V. REPORTS

- A. Galen** reported that the Comp plan passed at the last city council meeting. He met with Anne Mackey and building and developing groups, along with the neighborhood association to talk about housing issues. Additionally, he polled the room to see what they would like to name the campaign for Western's wind farm, the committee unanimously supported Western Wind United.
- B. Nora** reported that she has been working on the agenda.

- C. **Bryce** Reported that WSA is next weekend and that if you want to go just tell her, there are plenty of places available for Students at Large. Wester Lobby Day registration is officially open. The REP center finished up Get Out The Vote, with 4,985 ballots approximately, everyone was very proud of Rosa and the others involved. There were no Board Updates.

Bryce Hammer adjourned the meeting at 8:02 PM.