

**Western Washington University Associated Students  
Legislative Affairs Council Meeting**

Monday, November 7, 2011

VU567

**Present:** Iris Maute-Gibson (AS VP Governmental Affairs), Joe Meyer (Legislative Liaison), Katherine Barnard, Fiona Yau-Luu, Ben Crowther, Jared McCardle, Ean Olsen (Student Senate Representative), Carmen Winqvist, Patrick Stickney, Julia Kelley, Chris Brown

**Absent:** Chris Savage, Kevin Majkut (advisor)

**Secretary:** Katie Savinski

**MOTIONS**

**L-II-F-03** Approval of the minutes of Monday, October 31, 2011 *Passed*

**Iris Maute-Gibson, ASVP for Governmental Affairs, called the meeting to order at 4:05p.m.**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. REVISIONS TO AGENDA**

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

***MOTION L-II-F-01 by McCardle***

*Seconded by Crowther*

Approval of the minutes of Monday, October 31, 2011

Vote: 10-0-0      Action: Passed

**IV. REPORTS**

**A. AS VP for Governmental Affairs**

Maute-Gibson reported that The Washington Student Association (WSA) has extended their deadline for submissions of statewide agenda items. She along with AS Board of Directors President Anna Ellermeier plan to submit three documents to WSA: Support for the statewide Dream Act legislation, assurance that the Higher Education Coordinating Board replacement has an appointed student member, and continued expansion of anti-bullying legislation for LGBT students on campuses. She said she will email out the submission form and provide assistance as needed. Submissions will need to be sent to her by Thursday in order to see them as action items at next week's meeting. The WSA agenda is similar to the proposed 'value based' legislative agenda the committee will be putting together. The WSA General Assembly is on November 19, 2011 in Seattle at the University of Washington. Maute-Gibson opened the invitation for Legislative Affairs Council (LAC) members to attend. The voting logistics would be figured out on the way to the assembly. This vote will involve deciding which items to be included on WSA's legislative agenda. Patrick Stickney will facilitate sign ups next week. Maute-Gibson announced that the Representative and Engagement Programs (REP) Director will be taking a leave of absence for the rest of the quarter. An interim REP director and an interim second assistant REP director will fulfil her place for the rest of the quarter. Maute-Gibson will be supervising the REP office.

**B. AS Legislative Liaison**

Meyers explained that he has been doing legislative research and assisting the set of WSA's General Assembly.

**C. Western Votes**

Stickney reported that the Wells Fargo Bank Transfer Day was not as successful as planned. Two bank accounts were closed, but information on the importance of using local credit unions was handed out to roughly 30-40. Barnard announced that Western Votes still needs a few volunteers for Election Day, tomorrow, November 8, 2011.

**D. Student Senate**

Olsen reported that Student Senate held a panel discussion on the resolution regarding the removal of student information from the internet that could potentially harm reputation and future employment opportunities. Representatives from all Western publications were present. This resolution will move into and action item this week. The Question of the Month has moved from the Occupy movement more into issues regarding the Higher Once card.

**VI. COMMITTEE INFORMATION****A. Introduction to WSA & SSA**

Tabled to the next meeting

**V. ACTION ITEMS****VII. INFORMATION ITEMS****A. Associated Students 2012 Legislative Agenda**

Maute-Gibson explained that it will be important to stick with a paired down, foundational document focused on funding. Additionally, she sees there being a value based legislative agenda, focused on the values of Western students. Maute-Gibson also said that it will be important to not take specific stances on political issues, but advocate for the values that relate to an issue. She explained that this group has the power to determine what a student issue is and what is not. Crowther supports a broad legislative view. He explained that student lives are not only present in the classroom. Maute-Gibson asked if the financial aid section of the agenda be grouped together or focused on as individual topics. Kelley said that historically, financial aid ties in closely with tuition, so she sees the separation of these programs on the agenda to be more beneficial. Stickney explained that he thought that the State Need Grant and other financial aid issues should be grouped together in order to show that we will not accept once being saved while losing the other. Maute-Gibson emphasized the importance of strong and proper language usage in drafting the legislative agenda. Meyers suggested using the phrasing "investment in the future" instead of "affirming higher education as a public good" under the financial aid section of the legislative agenda. Crowther reminded the committee that it is important to keep in mind the audience of this agenda. He supported Meyer's idea. McCardle dittoed. Stickney suggested changing "public good" to "necessity." Barnard explained that she thought the language "public good" demonstrated that this was something that should be provided, and that the terminology "investment in the future" suggests "necessity." McCardle wanted to drive home the point that cutting funding for higher education is harmful to the economy in the long run. He thinks this is an important voice to maintain. Olsen suggested changing "public good" to "public right." Meyers then said that it would be important to avoid language that makes students come off as entitled. Crowther agreed, saying that legislature will be keen to dismiss the argument of entitlement to higher education because it is not a constitutionally written right. Stickney agreed with using the "rights" language as he felt that it reinforced the connection between education and it being a paramount duty for it to be provided. McCardle said that using the term necessity signifies that without the aid, many students would not be able to go to a university. Stickney wanted to add "necessity to achieve." Maute-Gibson asked the committee for research ideas that can be used in the argument. Crowther said he would like to see a statement on the increase in jobs that require higher education, and how the Washington economy depends upon them. Kelley would like to see a discussion on the income difference between those who earn a bachelor's degree and those who don't. Stickney would like to see information on the differing unemployment rate of those with degrees and without. McCardle wants to point out that higher paying jobs require college degrees, thus allowing

the consumer to spend more money, which in turn boosts the economy. Under the financial aid section, Crowther supported the “accessibility” language. Barnard disagreed with using language that suggests an increase in aid. McCardle dittoed and explained that it is important to be realistic. Winqvist asked if it was even realistic to say “there shouldn’t be any cuts,” but rather she thought that the language should be configured to put a maximum on the cuts we see viable. Crowther said that “maintaining levels” would be most effective at this time. Brown dittoed. Maute-Gibson asked what the committee thought about using the language “irresponsible cuts,” as was used last at times last year.” Winqvist approved. Barnard said she thought it might be insulting, but she suggested using “unsustainable cuts” sounds more appropriate. Kelley said that as an elected official working for the people, the ability to call a legislator’s moves “irresponsible” was acceptable and useful. Crowther said that he liked the “irresponsible” language because it reminded legislator’s that they have a responsibility to higher education and students. McCardle liked the unsustainable language better. Maute-Gibson suggested saying that cuts to higher education hurt the most vulnerable population. She thought this is half way in between the two arguments. McCardle agreed. Maute-Gibson moved the discussion to work-study. She is having research being done on the number of students at Western who would be affected by a complete cut to work-study. She wants to create understanding between legislators about what the program involves. She feels that most people don’t understand it. Crowther explained that work-study students are really imperative to office functioning, as he had seen working in the Queer Resource Center in the Associated Students. Barnard suggested putting the state work-study bullet in front of the state need grant bullet on the agenda as it seems to be more vulnerable to cuts. Crowther dittoed. He also wanted to see a change made to show legislator’s that work-study involved students working for aid. Stickney wants to show support for raising revenue, to show that students are not just students when they are on campus, and that suffering does not begin and end at the university. Maute-Gibson said that we as students have the ability to say that though legislation is trying not to raise taxes on the general population, students are seeing an increase in taxes via our education (tuition increases, for example). She wants to work on language that pushes for the support of taxing those other than students.

## **VIII. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **A. Associated Students Values Agenda**

Maute-Gibson listed the focuses of the values agenda: student representation, campus life, diversity, environment, faculty, and student loan debt. She wanted each committee member to choose an area of interest to research and draft up values based language for. She asked for these to be drafted and emailed to her by Thursday, November 10, 2011. Working on Diversity: Crowther, Brown, and Yau-Luu. Working on Environment: Winqvist and Kelley. Working on Faculty: Barnard and Winqvist. Working on Student Loan Debt: Stickney and Olsen. Working on Student Representation: Meyer and Stickney. Working on Campus Life: McCardle.

## **XI. OUTSIDE OF COMMITTEE WORK**

### **A. Draft Points for Legislative Agenda**

**X. NEXT MEETING DATE:** November 14, 2011 4:00pm VU 567

**XI. THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED BY ACCLAMATION AT 05:22 P.M.**