

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

Monday, November 28, 2011

VU567

**Present:** Ms Maute-Gibson (AS VP Governmental Affairs, Chair) PaMck Stickney (Vice Chair), Joe Meyer (Legislative Liaison), Fiona Yau-Luu, Ben Crowther, Jared McCardle, Ean Olsen (Student Senate Representative), Julia Kelley, Chris Savage, Katherine Barnard

**Absent:** Chris Brown, Carmen Winquist, Kevin Majkut (advisor)

**Secretary:** Katie Savinski

## **MOTIONS**

**L-II-F-05** Approval of the minutes of Monday, November 14, 2011 *Passed*

**Patrick Stickney, Vice-Chair for Legislative Affairs Council, called the meeting to order at 4:07p.m.**

## **I. CALL TO ORDER**

## **II. REVISIONS TO AGENDA**

## **III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*MOTION L-II-F-05 by McCardle*

*Seconded by Olsen*

Approval of the minutes of Monday, November 14, 2011

Vote: 8 - 0 - 0      Action: Passed

## **IV. REPORTS**

### **A. AS VP for Governmental Affairs**

Maute-Gibson reported that the budget reduction is looking at an approximate 17% cut to Western Washington University. The Washington Student Association (WSA) General Assembly met the previous weekend, and language for the WSA agenda will be drafted by Friday. Some of the topics on the 2012 agenda included: increased shared governance, autonomy, university funding, marriage equality, and more. Maute-Gibson gave kudos to Crowther and Stickney both of whom proposed submissions for the agenda that were adopted. She also reported that the Board of Directors will be looking at gender targeted programming and a resolution opposing the Cherry Point coal terminal. She said that this will be a huge indication on whether or not the Board of Directors will take stances on political issues not directly correlated to higher education. She welcomed attendees.

### **B. AS Legislative Liaison**

Meyer reported that he would meeting with legislative groups in hopes to endorse, cautiously, no cuts to higher education. He reported that recent excitement revolved around a "sound check" demonstration held in Olympia, Washington earlier in the day.

### **C. Western Votes**

Stickney reported that Western Votes has been hosting a campaign to fill out "story cards" to illustrate student needs to legislators.

### **D. Student Senate**

Olsen reported that student senate collected some of the responses for the question of the quarter.

## **VI. COMMITTEE INFORMATION**

**A. Presentation on WSA**

Maute-Gibson showed a Power Point presentation on WSA. Her presentation explained that WSA has changed greatly over time. Maute-Gibson explained that having policy development through WSA is a huge opportunity. She said that the structure of WSA is good at including all universities in the state. Generally the Associated Students Board of Directors has had more of a role in dealing with the WSA. She said that WSA is completely student lead and the huge number of students represented by this group has a lot of weight on legislators. In the history, she explained that during the budget crisis in 1981, the WSA became a very important aspect for advocating student needs. Maute-Gibson has been working closely with Mara, whom travels around the state to help organize and direct student ideas on the issues that they care about.

**B. Presentation on Washington State Budget**

Maute-Gibson showed a Power Point presentation overviewing the Washington State Budget. She explained that the process for special session is still unclear. She said that The Ways and Means committee has met and held their first hearing to formulate a potential budget. Sub committees will begin meeting later this week. She plans to send out an email regarding the importance of work study as soon as possible. She explained that as of the last biennium, students now support public higher education more than the state supports it. Higher Education has been disproportionately cut. She reported that Washington is the second most efficient state in the nation to get students out of college on time in five years, but we have gone from 8<sup>th</sup> in the nation to 46<sup>th</sup> in the nation for getting students into college.

**Y. ACTION ITEMS****VII. INFORMATION ITEMS****A. Legislative Agenda**

Maute-Gibson reported that she wanted to create a legislative agenda that would be easy to pull apart. She kept the document live and the committee made word-smithing changes as they read through the document. Maute-Gibson stated that she wanted the packet to begin with "Guiding Principles" in order to demonstrate to legislators the values of Western students. Majkut said that the committee should be careful in the agenda with the use of the word "right" as to not bring about conflicts with legislators on how public higher education is not a "constitutional right." She asked the committee what graphics they would like to see incorporated into the document. Maute-Gibson said that she included a letter that would come from Anna, and possibly herself to convey who Western students are. The letter will hopefully convey who Western Students are. She asked for suggestions under the heading of "Investments in Higher Education." McCardle liked the economic logic inclusion. Stickney wants to see employment rate statistics included. Majkut said it will be important to have financial aid. She moved onto "Affordability." The phrasing of "maintaining" versus that of "raising" the family income setting will be worked on. Under the "Access and Attainment" empowerment, Maute-Gibson asked where this should be located in the document if at all. McCardle said he thought it was totally appropriate to be included. Olsen dittoed. Maute-Gibson explained that "access" is such an important term to use. Crowther said that he disagreed with this section's inclusion and thinks that it should be located in the values based agenda because the DREAM act is specific while the other goals of this agenda are different and broader. Meyer explained that during a policy section it should be a priority to include a section like this under legislative priorities. Under "Accountability and Student Representation" the committee discussed the terminology of the term "membership." Crowther expressed that he felt the agenda's value statement is not as strong as he would like it to be. Maute-Gibson agreed, and she asked Crowther to send her suggestions on better language. The "Environment" section, Stickney supported the use of stronger language. Maute-Gibson expressed her willingness to make it clear that legislators should want to be supportive involved

with these student desires. Stickney would like to see composting included in the mandatory programs via the agenda. Meyer suggested that “center based” language instead of “mandatory” language would be more effective. Under the “Faculty” section, Maute-Gibson asked what the committee’s thoughts were on including in the agenda to have a faculty representative on the Board of Trustees. This was not a primary focus on the committee. Under the “Student Loan Debt” heading, Maute-Gibson asked if the committee knew of any reasonable requests to make. Olsen said that even after his research, he did not find a specific policy to adopt. Meyer expressed that he would like to endorse the creation of a new financial aid system that emphasizes real time, user friendly loan information. Maute-Gibson asked the committee to have all additional components emailed to her by Thursday so that she could forward a new draft of the agenda out on Friday.

**B. WSA Dues Funding Request**

There has been a raise in price per FTE. Maute-Gibson explained that the budget changed because there was a hired on organizing director for the WSA. This involves a small dues increase every year. She addressed her desire to make the Legislative Action Fund (LAF) an “opt in” instead of “opt out” fee to offset this. She wants all students to feel like they are members of the WSA and give to the cause. She reported that there is roughly \$24,000 in the LAF budget. This will be an action item for the committee next week.

**VIII. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**XI. OUTSIDE OF COMMITTEE WORK**

**X. NEXT MEETING DATE:** December 5, 2011 4:00pm VU 567

**XI. THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED BY ACCLAMATION AT 05:58 P.M.**