

**Western Washington University Associated Students  
Legislative Affairs Council  
Monday, February 4, 2013**

**YU567**

**Present:** Amy Stavig, Andrew Taylor, Ben Crowther (Legislative Liaison), Evan Fowler, Graham Marmion, Neil Christenson, Eileen Pollet, and Tom Durham. *Absent:* Patrick Stickney (AS VP Governmental Affairs, Chair), Marc Oommen, and Joseph Levy

**Advisor:** Kevin Majkut

**Secretary:** Kaylee Galloway

**Guest:** Tully Smith

*Evan Fowler, Vice Chair of Legislative Affairs Council, called the meeting to order at 4:07pm*

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. ADDITIONS AND CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**IV. PUBLIC FORUM**

**V. REPORTS**

**A. VP for Governmental Affairs**

**B. Legislative Liaison**

Crowther said that today marks the start of the fourth week of session. He said that Western Governor's University has asked to become eligible for State Need Grant. He said that HB 1322 received a hearing in the House Higher Education Committee on Wednesday with five people testifying in favor and none opposed. He said that SB 5195 will receive a hearing this Thursday in the Senate Higher Education Committee. He said that it appears that WGU will be required to report some metrics annually to the Washington Student Achievement Council in order to assess the risk for students, not to assess how WGU ranks among other universities. Crowther said that the data would not be presented via a dashboard like the four-year institutions, but would be publically available upon request. He said that he will be meeting with the Council of Presidents and WGU tomorrow to discuss student concerns, which will shape possible testimony for Thursday's hearing. Crowther said that the DREAM Act will be dropped in the Senate sometime this week. He said that a version in the House primed by Rep. Santos dropped last week (HB 1625). He said the Washington Bus has joined WSA's efforts to support the DREAM Act, and the Council of Faculty Representatives is considering a similar move. He will be asking for broader support at the Higher Education Stakeholder's meeting. Crowther also mentioned that two bills were announced at a Senate Democrats press conference on Tuesday. He said that it included SB 5420, primed by Sen. Kohl-Welles, which would institute a two-year tuition freeze pending a \$225 million increase in state funding towards four-year undergrad institutions. The other bill dropped was SB 5390, primed by Sen. Frockt, which would provide new funding the four-year institutions on a performance basis such that those who improve would receive additional funding. He said that performance based funding is cause for concern. Christenson dittoed. Crowther said that performance metrics have not been elaborated, though control of tuition seems to be included. He said that this proposal would likely not reduce tuition and that unallocated funds from the incentive program would be

directed to the State Need Grant. He said that the task force created to establish this program does not include student representatives. Crowther also mentioned SB 5548, primed by Sen. Ranker, which would eliminate differential tuition. He said that it is similar to HB 1043, which will receive a hearing this Thursday. He said that two other liaisons had a meeting last week to discuss the bills with representatives from the four-year institutions and several legislators. He said that a task force will likely be created to assess an alternative to differential tuition and that it is being debated whether differential tuition will be suspended or revoked in the two-year interim. Crowther also said that the State Treasurer and State Actuary both testified on GET in the House Higher Education Committee. He said that if there is a two-year tuition freeze, GET will be at 100% funded liability by 2016 (instead of 2032 as currently projected).

#### C. Western Votes

Taylor said that Western Votes has been working on publicity for the workshops. He said the WSA Statewide Day of Action event, themed “don’t dodge the topic”, will be on Wednesday. He said that the first workshop will also be Wednesday, taking place after the Day of Action.

#### D. Student Senate

Fowler said they had an interesting discussion regarding 50/50 by 2020 as well as the two new bills that were dropped.

## VI. INFORMATION ITEMS

### A. Federal Agenda

Taylor said that last time, it was requested that LAC look into specific bills to take a stance on. He said that he has a few he would like to share with the committee. Smith said that he has been working on some bills to provide to Crowther and Stickney. Crowther mentioned that the Tyler Clementi bill from last year was really successful. He said that it has not passed yet, but to ask him if anyone has any questions. Crowther said there were four bills included in the legislative agenda last year. He said that the committee should review over last year’s agenda and make changes where necessary. Smith noted a few bills that he has been looking through. He said that SB 5179 is regarding student veteran issues. He said that SB 5180 dealt with higher education and students with disabilities. He said HB 1494 deals with additional funding for higher education. He said that he does not have all of the details yet. Taylor said that there might not be a bill number available. Pollet suggested reviewing the agenda and seeing what the committee wants to keep. Taylor said he found SB 128 that would amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 that would improve education and prevention related to campus sexual violence, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. He said that the committee might want to include this bill if a broad health and welfare section was added. Crowther said that one bill is to raise the federal minimum wage. He said that it is a student issue on the federal level. He said that it might be worth supporting it even if it doesn’t affect Washington. Pollet said that Western should be focusing on issues that directly affect Washington students. Christenson said that it is important to consider this issue in solidarity with others. Crowther said that it can be included, but that less time can be allocated to focus on it. Pollet said that the legislative agenda should be specific with concrete asks for efficient meetings. Taylor suggested a few bills. He said that two of them do not have numbers yet. He said HR 340 deals with protecting financial aid for students and taxpayers. He said it would increase accountability in for-profit universities and ensure that more financial aid goes where it should. Taylor also said there were also a lot of health related bills. He reference S 128 again and that it would include other students, professors, coaches, and others. Taylor also mentioned S 47, which is the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013. He mentioned HR 447 regarding abortion. Taylor said we should oppose it. Christenson dittoed. Marmion wondered how that related to higher education. Taylor said that it would be more related to health. The committee decided that it would be not pertinent to put on the federal agenda. Taylor also mentioned additional bills that

would land in the access and attainment category. He said that HR 12 would expand voter access for everyone. Fowler said that with all of these bill options, and the ones from last year, he would like the committee to determine what bills and topics should be included. Marmion requested clarification on the bill regarding equal pay and its relevance. Taylor said that the bills he researched are broad. Pollet said that she would like to take the Tyler Clementi section and expand it to include student well-being and include other bills such as one about sexual harassment and mental health issues. She said that it can be more overarching. Crowther said that he would like to see last year's agenda reformatted. He said that broadening topics would be great. He said that it would be consistent with the reformatting of the priority issues and that it would make a lot more sense. Marmion suggested doing a health and safety section like the state legislative agenda. Fowler said that one section could be on finance. He said that Pollet brought up a great idea with the general student welfare and well-being. Pollet said that the committee should re-evaluate how the DREAM Act is included in the agenda. Fowler said that the DREAM Act section on last year's federal agenda is too long and that it appears that it would be the highest priority, but that there are other issues that are also of high priority. Fowler wondered about for-profit colleges accountability. Taylor said the thought process was that in order to fully fund financial aid, there needs to be accountability for for-profit colleges. Pollet suggested tying in financial aid and accountability. Marmion was concerned that combining the section would say restrict financial aid in one aspect and provide financial in another. Taylor said the message would be to use financial aid well. Fowler said that student veterans could also be included in accountability and financial aid. He said that having the accountability and financial aid would help balance the agenda out. Crowther said that lumping in financial aid and accountability would require some specific language. He said that there is discussion of that in Olympia right now. He said that there is a distinction to be made in that the goal is to get the institutions accountable. Taylor said that the section would be to use financial aid responsible. Fowler said that there would be four general areas: one on finance, one on wellness, one on attainment, and one on accountability. Pollet said that finance would be financial aid. Fowler said that it could include funding. Pollet thought that finance and financial aid could be tied into one category, but would require some specific language. Marmion wondered if there is a federal conversation regard differential tuition or different amounts of financial aid. Durham said that Western can specify in the agenda. Taylor said that this is where HR 340 comes into play. He said that it would restrict use of financial aid on marketing. Crowther said that people are concerned because for-profit colleges target lower income, non-traditional, working students and students of color who traditionally have more financial aid. He said that more money is being used for marketing. Pollet said that it is important to make the point strategically and use specific language. She said that the committee should look to see where the DREAM Act fits in the general immigration discussion. The three sections for the federal agenda are Financial aid and Accountability, Student Welfare, and Access. Fowler, Durham, and Pollet will work on Financial aid and Accountability, Taylor and Stavig will work on Student Welfare, and Christenson and Marmion will work on Access. The committee will have drafts to Galloway by Friday Morning.

## **VII. ACTION ITEMS**

## **VIII. NEXT MEETING DATE**

February 11, 2013

## **IX. ADJOURN**

*The Meeting was adjourned at 4:58pm*