

# ***The Representation and Engagement Programs***

**AS Office Assessment  
Structure & Program Advisory Committee**



**The AS Assessment Process  
2013 Board Recommendations**



Mission statement(s): The AS Representation & Engagement Program Representative provides the resources, and support services, to ensure student participation in decisions that impact students, state, and the university, promote effective citizenship engagement and civic engagement, and collaborate through

a. The AS Elections Coordinator organizes the coordinated Student Spring elections and any special elections throughout the election in accordance with the Election Code and Code of Student Conduct and for encourage student participation in encouraging elections. During fall quarter the Elections Coordinator will coordinate with the AS Board to publicize and promote the general election, increase voter registration and increase among student and also help inform the student population about issues.

b. The AS Legislative Liaison represents the Associated Students on the Board of Directors in Washington to the Washington State Legislature, the Governor's Office and state agencies related to higher education in order to advocate for legislative policy issues and public policy issues. The Liaison disseminates information of Western students to the Legislature. The Legislative Liaison is the best representative of the Associated Students on the Board of Directors.

c. The AS Student Senate is an advisory Board of Directors. The purpose of the Student Senate is to advise the Student Senate and involve it in the Board's decision-making to encourage student representation and university committee development. The Student Senate Chair is responsible for the operation of the Student Senate and serves as a representative of the students of Western Washington University.

d. The AS Student Committee is responsible for coordinating the position of Students and University in facilitating committee recruitment, application, training, and recognition.

e. The AS Student Registration Coordinator is responsible for registration during even-numbered years. The AS Student Registration Coordinator is also responsible for educating the community about the campus during the general elections.

The Representation and Engagement Programs (REP) was approved by the AS Board on March 11, 2010, bringing the Student Senate Chair, Legislative Liaison, and Elections Coordinator positions into one office in addition to creating a new REP director and REP support staff position.

- The REP began its first year of operation 3 years ago in the 2010-2011 academic year.
  - The Student Senate was founded on October 30, 2000, and was made an official AS committee on May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2001 by referendum with a 77.82% majority in the general election.
  - Western Votes founded in 2005, and became an AS-contracted organization in 2010.
  - The Legislative and Voter Education Assistant Work-Study position was created in 2011.
  - The REP Assistant position that originally served as senate secretary, assistant to the office, and committee organizer, was reformed and revised into a committee coordinator position in 2012.
  - The Voter Education and Registration Coordinator was established in 2012.
  - A work-study REP Local Liaison position was approved in 2012.

## **Programs/Services Provided**

The REP serves many functions, including the following:

- Administration of the AS Committee system and recruitment efforts for those bodies.
- The Elect Her event, which seeks to encourage women-identified persons to run for office and empower those around them.
- Annual voter-registration drives - 2012 was a high-water mark

# ***Strategic Recommendations***

## **1. Strongly advise the development and implementation of standard assessment practices for internal and external use.**

- a. The creation of departmental REP standards for participant, candidate, and volunteer identification will help all REP offices determine whether they are accomplishing their strategic outcomes.
- b. This data should be collected and used for any REP-sponsored events as well.
  - i. This data should be centrally stored and maintained in order to assist future department/office personnel in learning about challenges and strengths of past programming, elections, committee participation, and (potential-)voter outreach. This in turn will help those personnel see whether their outcomes are being met - whether in the SPAC process or in real time.
    - 1. This would give more information on who engages in AS Committees and the AS spring elections.

## **2. Further the gains made during recent election cycles by establishing key resources and personnel structures.**

- a. The Vote Staff position works toward this goal, but further successes in voter registration and turnout would be accomplished by:
  - i. The establishment of a permanent ballot drop box on Western's campus.
    - 1. This would require coordination and work with the Whatcom County Auditor's Office.
  - ii. The creation of liaison responsibilities within Western Votes!' membership in order to foster regular communication and cooperation with the REP.
    - 1. This could include participation in REP departmental trainings, as well as pertinent office meetings.

## **3. Advise the development of new practices and the refinement of established ones to help ensure the strength of the AS Committee system.**

- a. This could include the maintenance of the committee system by the department's director over Summer Quarter.
- b. The possible exploration of OrgSync (or other systems) as a replacement for E-Sign forms now used by the AS Committee system.

- i. Were OrgSync to be explored, it would be advised that the REP wait until the AS/OrgSync pilot program ended before doing so.