

United States Student Association (USSA)

The **United States Student Association** (USSA), founded in 1947, bills itself as the oldest and largest student association in the United States. It has a historical and current commitment to diversity and breaking the barriers to educational access imposed by inequality and discrimination. It strives to build a movement that is representative of the diversity lacking in political institutions, and organize to alter the relations of power.

Vision

The student members of the United States Student Association work together with a vision for a just society in which generations of representative leaders understand their power and engage and empower diverse communities to create social change.

Mission

The United States Student Association, the country's oldest, largest, and most inclusive national student-led organization, develops current and future leaders and amplifies the student voice at the local, state, and national levels by mobilizing grassroots power to win concrete victories on student issues. The United States Student Association Foundation ensures the pipeline of effective student leadership by facilitating education, training and other development opportunities at national, state, and local levels in advocating for issues that affect students.

Core Belief Statement

US SA believes that education is a right and should be accessible for any student regardless of their socio-economic background and identity. We believe people who are affected directly by issues of access to higher education should be the ones identifying the solutions that make education accessible to them. Therefore, US SA is dedicated to training, organizing, and developing a base of student leaders who are utilizing those skills to engage in expanding access to higher education and advancing the broader movement for social justice.

Additional Information:

- [USSA Website](#)
- [USSA History](#)
- [USSA Constitution](#)
- [USSA Direct Membership](#)
- [Arguments For and Against WWU Direct Membership](#)

USSA Staff:

- Sophia Zaman (President): pres@usstudents.org
- Maxwell John Love (Vice President): vp@usstudents.org
- Kalwis Lo (Legislative Director): leg@usstudents.org
- National Field Associate
- Sesali Bowen (Trainings Director): training@usstudents.org
- Isaiah Toney (Student Labor Action Project Coordinator): isaiah@iwi.org
- Chirag Bhakta (West Coast National Field Organizer): chirag@usstudents.org
- John Aspray (Empire Gardens National Field Associate): John@usstudents.org
- Jessica Cendana (Operations Manager): manager@usstudents.org

USSA Board of Directors:

Statewide Student Associations

- University of California Student Association
- United Council of UW Students
- Oregon Student Association
- Washington Student Association
- Student Association of Michigan
- Associated Students of Colorado
- Great Lakes Chair
- Golden Pacific Chair
- Pacific Northwest Chair
- New England Chair
- Empire/Garden
- Atlantic Regional Chair
- South East Chair
- Rocky Mountain Chair

Affiliates

- National People of Color Student Coalition Chair
- National Women's Student Coalition Chair
- National Queer Student Coalition Chair

Caucuses & Coalitions

- Community College Chair
- Graduate/Professional Chair
- International Student Chair
- La Coalición Chair
- Multi/Bi Racial Chair
- National Asian Pacific American Student Coalition Chair
- National Coalition of Students with Disabilities Chair
- Non Traditional/First Generation Chair
- Students of the Jewish Community Chair
- National Queer Student Of Color Caucus Chair
- People Of African Decent Chair
- People Of Middle Eastern & South Asian Decent Chair
- First Peoples Chair
- Veterans Chair
- Women Of Color Chair
- Working Class Chair
- DREAM Caucus Chair
- Minority Serving Institution Chair
- Community & Labor Liaison
- Outreach Officer
- Grassroots Legislative Liaison
- Development & Finance Officer
- Corporate Secretary

USSA Conferences:

National Grassroots Legislative Conference and National Student Lobby Day (LegCon) 2013: March 14-18th, 2013

- **What is USSA's Legislative Conference?**

- o Each spring, the United States Student Association puts on the Grassroots Legislative Conference and National Student Lobby Day (LegCon). This three-day event provides students at every level of organizing and leadership the ability and opportunity to learn new skills in student advocacy, network, lobby their elected representatives on student issues, march through historic downtown Washington, DC, rally on Capitol Hill, and of course build lifelong friendships. LegCon 2013 will take place March 15-18.

- **Workshops**

- o A large part of LegCon consists of workshops led by student and professional experts in organizing and advocacy. Workshop topics consist of everything from the federal budget process to winning a student government election to the history of the student-labor movement. These sessions provide students with a unique chance to learn about and discuss issues critical to fighting for college access and affordability with a wide variety of student and professional organizers. Workshops are hands-on, engaging, and fun! Anyone interested in strengthening a student government association, building a Student Labor Action Project chapter, developing a grassroots campaign, or simply wanting to get involved cannot miss this incredible opportunity!

- **National Student Lobby Day**

- o The final day of the conference cultivates with a march, rally and lobby visits. Historically, we will march from the hotel to Capitol Hill. Along the way, we pass several Smithsonian museums and federal departments, including the Department of Education. Holding signs made the evening before and chanting phrases like "*No justice no peace, we want student debt relief*" conference attendees make their voices heard throughout the streets of DC as we march toward the Capitol. Once on Capitol Hill, students end the march at a USSA rally that brings together federal legislators, executive officials, student participants, media figures, and more in a dynamic and fun event that garners plenty of press attention to amplify the student voice. Past speakers have included the late Senator Ted Kennedy, Education and Labor Chairman Congressman George Miller, Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee member Patty Murray, and Undersecretary of Education Martha Kanter. After the march, students meet with their members of Congress to advocate on student issues. During the conference, students attend lobby clinics and legislative briefings so that all attendees are up-to-date on the issues and adequately prepared to meet with their Representatives and Senators.

- **The Impact**

- o Students don't come to LegCon simply to meet and have a good time — we make a difference! In past year's LegCon occurred while Congress passed historic student aid reform legislation that invested more federal into higher education than any other policy since the GI Bill. Students were at the signing with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, attended press conferences with Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pension Chair Tom Harkin and Banking Chair Chris Dodd, and even the signing of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act by President Obama. Media coverage included reports from the Washington Post, NPR, CNN, Pox News, the Nation, USA Today, and more!

- **LegCon 2013 Notes**

Annual National Student Congress (NSC)

- What is USSA's NSC?
 - o Every year student leaders from across the country attend the United States Student Associations (USSA) National Student Congress (NSC). For six exciting and busy days students debate, envision and vote on USSA's priorities and leadership for the upcoming year. The NSC is founded upon the belief that students should take the lead in determining how the organization functions on every level. USSA also fundamentally believes that students should have a say within society as a whole. NSC 2013 was the 66th anniversary of students from across the country working tirelessly to set the national student agenda. During this monumental week, each participant will join a wonderful tradition in forming USSA's goals for the year. Each participant has the opportunity to set the vision and agenda on the national level. Students will participate in regional meetings, caucus and affiliate spaces, workshops, conference governing committees, plenary, and elections for a new board of directors and president and vice president! This is also the conference where changes can be made to the organization's operations and structure. Congress is a great opportunity for students across the country to get their voices heard and prioritize their issues in the national student movement!
- Regional Meetings
 - o NSC provides an amazing space for students to meet, network, organize, and prioritize issues specifically affecting their communities. During the regional breakouts students elect representatives to the NSC committees and vote for a chair that will represent their region on the board of directors. The chair of the regional space is responsible for planning the goals and strategies for their caucus throughout the year. Only participants that attend the first regional space are allowed to vote for incoming chairs. Voting for regional chairs happens during the second regional meeting. Regional meetings are only open to participants from the states they represent.
- Caucuses and Affiliates
 - o Because USSA is founded upon the belief that equity, justice and democracy are fundamental to any student movement. USSA ensures that participants have the opportunity to convene within their identity-based communities through what we call caucuses and affiliates. Affiliate and caucus spaces ensure that every constituency within USSA has institutionalized leadership and participation in the decision making process. During NSC students within each caucus and affiliate space elect a chair that will represent their caucus and affiliate on the board of directors. Chairs of these spaces are responsible for planning the goals and strategies for their space for the year. Remember caucus and affiliate meetings are open only to participants who self identify. You must attend the first meeting in order to vote at the second.
- Workshops
 - o A mixture of skill and issue-based workshops provide conference participants with new information and tools to use on their campus. Issue-based workshops educate participants about problems currently affecting students and offer solutions that make concrete improvements in the campus community. Skills-based workshops teach useful skills, such as coalition building and planning actions.

- Congress Committees

- o There are three committees that are responsible for running Congress. Each region elects one representative for to sit on each committee: Congress Steering Committee (CSC), Administrative Plenary Committee (APC), and the Issues Plenary Committee (IPC).

- Congress Steering Committee (CSC)

- After the board of directors meets during the first day of NSC- the powers of the board of directors are dissolved. A new body of students organized into the Congress Steering Committee (CSC) takes responsibility for enforcing the Rules of Congress. The Rules of Congress are the NSC's governing documents. The CSC has the power to enforce and oversee elections, conflicts or any other controversies that occur during NSC. The results of all elections must be reported to the congress steering committee chair immediately after the voting period. CSC also facilitates elections upon request if a member of a region, affiliate, or caucus requests one for their space. Members of CSC are not eligible to run for president or vice president positions. Every regional space sends a student to sit on the CSC- if the CSC does not meet diversity guidelines participants from the affiliate and caucus spaces are asked to also sit on the CSC.

- Administrative Plenary Committee (APC)

- The administrative plenary committee reviews each administrative resolution submission and ensures the information is complete and meets all the criteria. APC also selects the order in which administrative resolutions are presented at plenary. If the submissions are not complete or do not meet proper criteria guidelines the APC returns the forms to the author via email and allows the authors to rewrite the submission form.
 - During the administrative plenary the body convenes to amend USSA's constitution and bylaws and to request small projects i.e. Voter ID Factsheet. Through this process the administrative plenary provides an administrative direction for the organization.
 - Administrative resolutions (AR's) are proposals that request projects and other administrative functions for the board of directors and/or staff to carry out. If passed an AR could also amend the constitution and bylaws.

- Issues Plenary Committee (IPC)

- The issues plenary committee (IPC) reviews each action agenda submission and ensures the information is complete and meets all the criteria. IPC also selects the order in which action agendas will be presented at plenary. If the submissions are not complete or do not meet the criteria, APC returns the forms to the author via email allow to allow them to rewrite the submission form.
 - During the issues plenary the body convenes to amend USSA's stance on issues and to decide the grassroots legislative campaigns for the following year.

- Action agendas (AA's) are USSA's grassroots legislative campaigns. Historically only two issue campaigns are voted to become USSA's priorities. Policy platform amendments change specific sections of the policy platform by adding, deleting or rewording USSA's position on issues impacting educational access and students.
- Officers and Board of Directors
 - o Throughout the week candidates will be campaigning for the USSA president and vice president and board of director's positions. The president and vice president positions are the only ones voted on in a general election by the entire membership. In order to participate in the elections, you must be a credentialed voting delegate from a member school and have attended the first meeting. The board of directors are nominated in their first space and elected in their second space.
- NSC 2013 Notes
- Additional Information
 - o Rules of Congress
 - o Diversity Requirements

Washington Student Association (WSA)

- **Mission**
 - o The Washington Student Association (WSA) is the only student-led organization in Washington that represents, serves and protects the collective interests of students in attending public post-secondary education. The Washington Student Association is the leader in pursuing affordable, accessible, and quality higher education for students in the State of Washington. The WSA aspires to achieve continued victories in the representation and protection of collective student interests through expanded participation, diversity of ideas, unity of voice, and a strong dedication to our mission. The WSA will involve students in higher education issues, influence decision-making, and participate in implementation of higher education policy.
- **Vision**
 - o Through 11 campuses across the state, whose student body leadership comprise our statewide Board of Directors, WSA represents more than 120,000 students studying at the associate, baccalaureate, graduate and professional levels. We aspire to achieve continued victories in the representation and protection of student interests through expanded participation, diversity of ideas and unity of voice.
- **Team**
 - o WSA is comprised of a President, five Vice Presidents, and one board member from each student government in membership (eleven). In addition to the student leadership, we have two full-time staff
 - o Staff
 - Executive Director: ed@wastudents.org
 - Organizing Director: od@wastudents.org
 - o Executive Board
 - President: president@wastudents.org
 - VP of Legislative Affairs: vpleg@wastudents.org
 - VP of Finance : vpfinance@wastudents.org

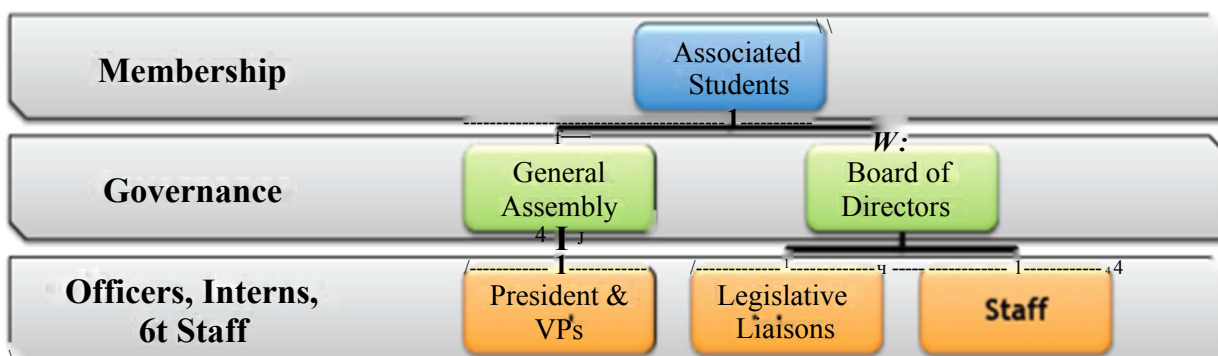
- VP of Communications: vpcomm@wastudents.org
- VP of Outreach: vpoutreach@wastudents.org
- VP of Federal Affairs: vpfed@wastudents.org
- o Board of Directors
 - Bellevue College
 - Central Washington University
 - Eastern Washington University
 - Evergreen State College
 - University of Washington
 - UW-Seattle
 - Graduate and Professional Student Senate
 - UW-Bothell
 - UW-Tacoma
 - Washington State University
 - WSU-Pullman
 - WSU-Vancouver
 - Western Washington University

• **Leadership**

- o The WSA is led by a Board of Directors with one representative from each school: The student body president unless otherwise noted in bylaws. The Director of Legislative Affairs (aka VP for Governmental Affairs) is also typically in attendance for all BOD meetings, as well as WSA Chapter Chairs (Western Votes President and/or Western Votes Statewide Representatives). The Board of Directors meets monthly,
- o The WSA is also led by a General Assembly, of which every campus has 3 representatives and 1 additional vote for every 2,500 full time enrolled students on that campus. The General Assembly meets twice a year: Once in November and once in May. General Assembly is where Bylaws are changed, the Executive Board is elected, the budget is set for the following year, and the legislative agenda is created.

• **Structure**

- o In addition to the Board of Directors (BOD) representative, and General Assembly (GA), each campus hires one student (AS Legislative Liaison) to live in Olympia full time during Winter term and work with the WSA Executive Director out of the WSA office, located across from the Capitol in Olympia,
- o The two full-time WSA staff, the BOD, the GA, and the Liaisons make up our structure.



Additional information

- [WSA History](#)
- [WSA Statewide Legislative Agenda](#)
- [WSA 2013 End of Legislative Session Report](#)
- [Vote Campaign Information](#)
- [2013 WSA Board Retreat Notes](#)
- [2012 WSA Board Retreat Notes](#)

Western Votes

The Western Votes and Associated Students Cooperative Contract

• Purpose

- o The Associated Students and Western Votes join in partnership to:
 - Implement local, state, and federal legislative campaigns
 - Serve and protect the collective student interests through education, organization, and mobilization of students
 - Encourage civic engagement and advocacy on campus to enhance student influence on legislative issues

• Internal Operation

- o Western Votes shall maintain the sole authority to adopt and create bylaws and rules governing its operation so long as they are democratic in nature,
- o Western Votes is subject to University and AS policies.

• Membership

- o All Western Students are eligible to be members of Western Votes,
- o The membership of Western Votes will select at minimum three (3) members to serve as officers on the Executive Board that will be officially responsible for meeting the expectations laid out in this contract,
- o The ASWWU will designate the AS Vice President for Governmental Affairs and Representation & Engagement Programs (REP) Associate Director to attend Western Votes meetings and to provide oversight and strategic advisement to Western Votes.

• Expectations

- o Western Votes will work with the AS Vice President for Governmental Affairs and Representation & Engagement Programs to foster civic engagement on campus through:
 - Voter registration and education drives
 - Get out the vote efforts
 - Organizing legislative advocacy events
- o Western Votes will serve as the WWU chapter of the Washington Student Association (WSA).
 - Uphold the WSA mission and vision through active contribution
 - Have at least one Western Votes member attend WSA Board of Directors and General Assembly meetings
 - Collaborate with other institutions and their campus chapters
- o Western Votes shall remain non-partisan on all issues.

• Authorities

- o Western Votes may access funds from the Voter Registration & Education Budget, Legislative Affairs Budget, and Legislative Action Fund by going through the normal AS processes.
- o Western Votes may use AS resources through the REP.
- o Western Votes may use the official AS Logo as necessary.
- **Amendments**
 - o This contract may be amended by a majority vote of the AS Board of Directors in consultation with the Western Votes Executive Board,
 - o This contract may be ended by either Western Votes or the AS Board of Directors with a minimum notice of two (2) weeks.
- **Term**
 - o This contract will be in effect until an updated contract is approved by the AS Board of Directors in consultation with the Western Votes Executive Board.

Contract approved by the AS Board of Directors on August 14, 2013 by motion ASB-13-SUM-12.

About Western Votes

- Western Votes is a volunteer student organization at WWU dedicated to increasing student voter turnout and political awareness. Western Votes is a part of the Associated Students of WWU and the Washington Student Association.
- Western Votes is a non-partisan association of students at Western Washington University that seeks to create a student body that actively participates in politics and public policy in order to increase student representation at all levels of government.
- We seek to do this by:
 - o Registering students to vote
 - o Hosting forums for candidates and issues
 - o Providing a ballot box in the Viking Union on Election Day
 - o Organizing all manner of events and campaigns from rallies to phone banking to movie nights
 - o Lobbying for student interests, namely public funding of higher education
 - o Organizing the student body around their shared interests
 - o Promoting student participation in electoral politics
 - o Providing students an opportunity to discuss public policy
 - o Encouraging students to advocate for themselves and others
 - o Maintaining a purely non-partisan stance on elections while remaining political
 - o Collaborating with students across Washington State through the Washington Student Association
- Students in Western Votes are from all walks of life, majors, and political backgrounds. Western Votes is non-partisan and interested in civic engagement and citizenship more than advocating for specific policies.

Executive Committee:

- President
- Clubs Liaison
- Events and Campaign Coordinator
- Media and Social Media Coordinator
- Recruitment and Retention Coordinator
- RHA and Hall Council Liaison
- Statewide Representative

Advisors:

- AS Vice President for Governmental Affairs
- AS Representation and Engagement Programs Associate Director

Proposed Western Votes Bylaws

Established Spring 2011. Revised Fall 2013

Article E Mission, Connections, & Methods

1.1 Mission:

- Western Votes, a non-partisan association of students at Western Washington University (WWU), seeks to encourage active participation in politics and public policy in order to increase student representation and influence at all levels of government through advocacy, education, organization, and mobilization of students.

1.2 Organizational Connections:

- Western Votes is partnered with the Associated Students of Western Washington University (AS WWU) through a contract approved by the AS Board of Directors (See Appendix A)
- Western Votes serves as the Western Washington University campus chapter of the Washington Student Association (WSA), as stipulated in section IV(ii) of the cooperative contract

1.3 Methods:

- Western Votes will accomplish its mission by:
 - o Organizing students around shared interests
 - o Promoting student participation in electoral politics
 - o Providing students an opportunity to discuss public policy
 - o Educating and informing students about politics and public policy
 - o Encouraging student advocacy and implementing legislative campaigns
 - o Initiating collective action on issues as determined by members
 - o Remaining non-partisan in all efforts to ensure inclusivity of all student interests and ideologies
 - o Collaborating with students across Washington State through the WSA to coordinate legislative efforts such as lobbying and organized days of action.

Article II: Membership

2.1 Membership:

- Any member of the AS WWU is eligible to be a member of Western Votes
 - o Eligibility to be a member of the ASWWU is defined in the AS Charter as: all full-time, part-time, graduate, and undergraduate students who are registered for a minimum of one academic credit at Western Washington University
- To become a member of Western Votes, a student must submit a membership form to a Western Votes Officer
 - o Students shall remain a member of Western Votes as long as they are a member of the ASWWU.
- All members of Western Votes shall have a vote at the meetings of the Members Assembly
- Any member may request to have their membership terminated at any time

Article III: Executive Board

3.1 Executive Board Charge and Charter

- Charge: Members of the Executive Board shall be the officers of Western Votes. Officer positions and responsibilities shall be revised if necessary at the General Assembly. The General Assembly of Western Votes elects officers at the end of spring quarter for the upcoming academic year, or as positions open. These positions shall be responsible for:
 - o Providing leadership and direction to Western Votes
 - o Coordinating organization for all legislative and advocacy activities
 - o Collaborating with other on and off campus groups
 - o Planning events, campaigns, and recruitment drives
 - o Maintaining and recruiting membership for Western Votes
 - o Communicating and working with the media
 - o Providing updates on activities relevant to respective positions
 - o Fulfilling the terms of the Western Votes Contract with the ASWWU
- Membership:
 - o Western Votes President, Chair (non-voting)
 - o AS VP for Governmental Affairs, Advisor (non-voting)
 - o AS REP Associate Director, Advisor (non-voting)
 - o Statewide Representative
 - o Media & Social Media Coordinator
 - o Events & Campaign Coordinator
 - o Recruitment & Retention Coordinator
 - o Clubs Liaison
 - o RHA & Hall Council Liaison
 - o Other Organizers may be added as needed
- Chair: The Chairperson shall be the Western Votes President. The chairperson will convene all meetings, approve/write agendas, and preside at meetings. The chairperson shall not have a vote except in the case of a tie vote, when the chair will cast the deciding vote. In the absence of the President, one of the Western Votes advisors shall chair the meeting.
- Meetings: Meetings will be called by the chair or by any member with support of twenty-five (25) percent of the membership as needed with at least forty-eight (48) hours notice. An agenda must be provided to the membership of the committee at the time the meeting is called
- Voting: In order for a motion to pass, it must obtain a majority of the legal votes cast, but no less than three (3) affirmative votes. An abstention shall not count as a legal vote cast.
- Quorum: A majority of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum. If a quorum is not present, the Chair will adjourn the meeting and reschedule to a new day and hour.
- Rules: The Executive Board does not have the authority to Change the Bylaws, Strategic Plan, Policies, Positions, or Logo of Western Votes. The Executive Board and its membership are responsible for the management of Western Votes. All meetings of the Executive Board must follow an Agenda provided by the Chair
- Reportage: This committee reports to the General Assembly of Western Votes
- Amendment: This Charge and Charter may be amended by a vote of the General Assembly of Western Votes

3.2 Officer Position Descriptions

President: The highest officer in Western Votes responsible to the AS Board of Directors for fulfilling the requirements of the Western Votes Contract. The President is also responsible for:

- Chairing all Western Votes meetings including Executive Board Meetings and General Assembly
- Meeting regularly with the advisors of Western Votes, at minimum once per month
- Updating the strategic plan, operating procedures, and Bylaws to be recommended to the General Assembly as needed
- Ensuring that general notes are recorded at all meetings and then distributed to the appropriate members
- Keeping a record of events and campaigns with recommendations for the future and data on success and failure
- Maintaining an electronic calendar of the events, meetings, and activities of Western Votes that is accessible to at least the Executive Board
- Keeping a record of all passwords and usernames related to Western Votes
- Supporting members of the Executive Board in completing tasks and responsibilities

Statewide Representative: A member of the Executive Board who is responsible for ensuring effective collaboration between Western Votes, the WSA, and other political groups across Washington State.

The specific responsibilities for this position are:

- Attending all Western Votes meetings including Executive Board Meetings and General Assembly
- Attending WSA Board meetings as necessary
- Communicating with the WSA executive board to discuss strategy, methods, and best practices
- Maintaining contact with organizations of students around Washington State within Western Votes' scope of interest
- Communicating with other organizations that may assist or partner with Western Votes in its activities (e.g. Washington Bus, United States Student Association, League of Women Voters, American Association of University Women [AAUW], College Promise Coalition, WashPIRG, Campus Community Coalition, etc.)
- Collaborate with the WSA Organizing Director on projects
- Communicate with the AS Legislative Liaison during legislative session to discuss developments in the legislature and upcoming policy issues

Recruitment and Retention Coordinator: A member of the Executive Board who is responsible for recruiting new members to Western Votes and ensuring that volunteers are available for events. The specific responsibilities for this position are:

- Attending all Western Votes meetings including Executive Board Meetings and General Assembly
- Developing a strategy and means of increasing membership in Western Votes
- Encouraging members to become volunteers that can help regularly or at events
- Promote Western Votes at events on campus including but not limited to AS Red Square Info Fair and Club Showcases
- Collect and record a list of members of Western Votes through membership forms
- Keeping separate contact lists for members of Western Votes and those that are interested in volunteering
- Maintaining contact with volunteers and members through an email contact list or database
- Recognizing and supporting volunteers
- Collaborating with other officers to ensure each activity of Western Votes has enough volunteers

Media & Social Media Coordinator: A member of the Executive Board who is responsible for keeping the media regularly informed about the activities of Western Votes and maintaining the social media presence of Western Votes. The specific responsibilities are:

- Attending all Western Votes meetings including Executive Board Meetings and General Assembly
- Writing and sending press releases for Western Votes
- Writing letters to the editor on the behalf of Western Votes
- Maintaining the website of Western Votes on as.wvu.edu
- Outreaching to on-campus publications to keep them informed of the activities of Western Votes
- Being available for interviews with the Media or directing members of the media to other officers for interviews
- Maintaining the Western Votes presence on social media sites (e.g. Facebook)
- Exploring new avenues for media and social media outreach for Western Votes
- Communicating with the AS Communications Director as necessary

Events & Campaigns Coordinator: A member of the Executive Board who is responsible for planning the events and campaigns of Western Votes. The specific responsibilities are:

- Attending all Western Votes meetings including Executive Board Meetings and General Assembly
- Developing ideas for campaigns and events for Western Votes
- Collaborating with the members and volunteers of Western Votes to plan events and campaigns
- Working with the AS VP for Governmental Affairs and the AS REP Associate Director to make sure that logistical tasks are completed
- Developing publicity and talking points in consultation with the Executive Board for events and campaigns
- Delegating tasks to volunteers and other members of the Executive Board to ensure events and campaigns are successful

Clubs Liaison: A member of the Executive Board who is responsible for ensuring Western Votes outreaches to the clubs on campus. The specific responsibilities are:

- Attending all Western Votes meetings including Executive Board Meetings and General Assembly
- Building relationships with members of clubs
- Developing a network of Western Votes members in clubs that will facilitate cooperation and communication
- Communicating with clubs about legislative issues, upcoming elections, events and campaigns, and possibilities for collaboration
- Working with the RHA & Hall Council Liaison to outreach to the Bellingham and local off-campus community

RHA & Hall Council Liaison: A member of the Executive Board who is responsible for outreaching to the Residence Halls. The specific responsibilities are:

- Attending all Western Votes meetings including Executive Board Meetings and General Assembly
- Attending at the meetings of the Residence Hall Association (RHA)
- Meeting with and encouraging students in the residence halls to become members of Western Votes
- Recruiting and supporting students to serve as liaisons between Hall Councils and Western Votes
- Communicating with RHA and the Hall Council about the activities of Western Votes

- Working with the Club Liaison to outreach to the Bellingham and local off-campus community

3.3 Advisors:

- The AS Vice President for Governmental Affairs and AS Representation and Engagement Programs (REP) Associate Director shall advise Western Votes. At least one advisor will attend all Executive Board meetings General Advisor Responsibilities:
 - Directing staff, including but not limited to, the AS Legislative Liaison and the AS Local Liaison to assist Western Votes as needed
 - Assisting all members of Western Votes as needed
 - Approving expenditures to be used out of the AS accounts for Western Votes
- The AS REP Associate Director Responsibilities:
 - Writing annual and quarterly reports on the activities of Western Votes
 - Providing material support to Western Votes via the REP budget
 - Serving as the Western Votes liaison to AS Offices as needed
- The AS VP for Governmental Affairs Responsibilities:
 - Working with the Statewide Representative to give updates on the WSA
 - Providing regular updates to the Western Votes on AS lobbying and legislative advocacy efforts
 - Assisting Western Votes in contacting and working with the University Administration and Faculty Senate

3.4 Removal of Officers

- Officers may be removed from their position for:
 - Failure to attend three consecutive Executive Board meetings
 - Failure to meet responsibilities of position or assigned tasks
 - By the request of the Officer
 - Officers may be removed by a motion and majority vote of the Executive Board. A motion to remove an organizer must be doubly-approved by the Executive Board at consecutive meetings that take place more than twenty-four (24) hours apart
 - After a motion to remove an officer has been approved the officer must be contacted and made aware of the motion before they can be removed from their position
 - The doubly-approved requirement may be waived by the Officer being removed

Article IV: General Assembly

4.1 General Assembly Charge and Charter

- Charge: The General Assembly is the governing body of Western Votes that has ultimate authority and responsibility for:
 - Deciding policy and rules governing the organization
 - Electing the Executive Board
- Maintaining or changing the bylaws, policies, positions, strategic plan, or logo of Western Votes
 - Drafting and presenting legislative agenda items to:
 - The Legislative Affairs Council to be considered for the ASWWU Local, State, and Federal Legislative Agendas
 - The WSA to be considered for the Statewide Legislative Agenda.
- Membership: All members of Western Votes shall be a part of the General Assembly. All members are entitled to an equal number of votes on all issues before the Assembly

- Chair: The Chairperson shall be the Western Votes President. The chairperson will convene all meetings, approve and write meeting agendas, and preside at meetings. In the absence of the President, one of the Western Votes advisors will chair the meeting. The Chair will not have a vote in the General Assembly, except in the event of a tie when they will cast the deciding vote
- Meetings: General Assembly meetings will be called by a motion of the Executive Board at least twice per year with fourteen (14) days notice. An Agenda must be made available to all members at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance of the meeting. A General Assembly meeting shall be called during fall quarter to vote on legislative agenda item submissions as well as during spring quarter to elect the Executive Board.
- Voting: In order for a motion to pass it must obtain a majority of legal votes cast, an abstention shall not count as a legal vote. Votes may be cast online, if all members are informed of the vote with at least five (5) business days notice
- Quorum: Twenty (20) percent of the registered members of Western Votes shall constitute a quorum. If a quorum is not present, the Chair will adjourn the meeting and reschedule to a new day and hour

4.2 Rules of Operation:

- The General Assembly will operate using Roberts Rules of Order or another approved form of Parliamentary Procedure

4.3 Election of the Executive Board:

- All members of Western Votes are eligible to run for office
- Election of new officers will happen for each academic year in the spring, but new elections can be called as needed
- The General Assembly will accept nominations up to one (1) hour before any election
- All candidates for the positions will be given an opportunity to speak to the Assembly before a vote is taken
- A candidate must receive a majority of the legal votes cast to win the election
 - If no candidate receives a majority vote, then the candidate with the fewest votes will be removed from the ballot and a new vote will be held. This process will continue until a candidate receives a majority of the legal votes cast
- A blank ballot will not count as a legal vote
- All documents to be discussed must be made available to the full membership before the meeting, either electronically or in paper form
- If for some reason an officer is removed, and no election is needed, a new officer may be appointed and approved by a majority vote of the Executive Board.
- The General Assembly is expected to meet at least once per year for election of new officers and may meet as often as necessary

4.4 Committees

- The General Assembly may create committees of Western Votes other than the Executive Board as it deems necessary through a normal motion.
- Any committee created by the General Assembly must have a Charter.
- The Executive Board has the ability to create subcommittees within its own areas of responsibility as it sees fit.
- A subcommittee of the Executive Board may include a majority of the Officers so long as decisions made are also passed by the entire Executive Board.
- All subcommittees must be given a charge, but unless otherwise stated they will follow the same rules and procedures of the Executive Board.

Article V: Strategic Plan

5.1 Development

- The Western Votes President in consultation with the Executive Board and General Assembly will develop an annual Strategic Plan
- The Strategic Plan must be approved by a motion of the General Assembly to be valid
- The Strategic Plan should contain attainable and measurable goals for the organization to accomplish each year

5.2 Assessment & Review

- At all meetings of the General Assembly, the Western Votes President or another member of the Executive Board must provide an update on the progress toward achieving the goals of the Strategic Plan
- If the Members Assembly does not meet during an academic quarter then the update on the Strategic Plan must be done by the Executive Board
- Each quarter the General Assembly or Executive Board will assess the progress on the Strategic Plan
- Assessments of the Strategic Plan should include revisions along with rationale
- Each year a review of the Strategic Plan should be done and provided to the General Assembly before the adoption of a new Strategic Plan

Article VI: Amendments and Suspension of the Bylaws

6.1 Amendments

- The Western Votes Bylaws may be edited by the General Assembly of Western Votes with a majority vote
- The Executive Board will not have the authority to edit this document, but may make recommendations to the General Assembly

6.2 Suspension

- The Western Votes Bylaws may be temporarily suspended by two thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members present at a given meeting.

Appendix A will include the Western Votes and Associated Students Cooperative Contract

Additional Information:

- [Western Votes Website](#)
- [Western Votes Facebook Page](#)

Legislative Affairs Council (LAC)

LAC Charge and Charter

(passed by the Board of Directors on September 17, 2013)

Associated Students of Western Washington University

Legislative Affairs Council Charge & Charter
September 2013

CHARGE

- Legislative Affairs Council serves to empower student representation by:
 - Encouraging civic engagement and student participation in the political process,
 - Creating, reviewing, and proposing the Local, State, and Federal Legislative Agendas to the Associated Students of Western Washington University (ASWWU) Board of Directors.
 - Submitting recommendations to the Washington Student Association (WSA) regarding the statewide Legislative Agenda,
 - Establishing contact with elected officials to ensure that student perspectives are being considered at all levels of government,
 - Formulating policy positions for all matters concerning students in higher education,
 - Reviewing funding request proposals, making financial decisions, and monitoring the expenditures of student funds donated through the Legislative Action Fund,
 - Approving a budget for the Legislative Action Fund based on projected revenue with estimated expenses in areas designed to more directly represent Western Students at the local, state and federal level.

MEMBERSHIP

- AS Vice President for Governmental Affairs (Chair)
- AS Legislative Liaison (non-voting)
- 6-8 Students at-Large, appointed by the AS Board of Directors
- 1- Western Votes! Representative
- AS Local Liaison (as needed, non-voting)
- Secretary (non-voting)
- Advisor (non-voting)

CHAIR

- The Chairperson shall be the AS Vice President for Governmental Affairs. They shall convene the meetings, approve agendas, and preside at all meetings. The Vice-Chairperson shall be selected at the discretion of the council and acts in the absence of the Chairperson.

MEETINGS

- Meetings shall be called by the Chair. The council shall meet at least twice prior to the establishment of an AS Legislative agenda. All meetings must be called with a minimum of twenty four (24) hours notice. Meetings may also be called by any member with support of at least twenty-five (25%) of the seated, voting membership.

VOTING

- In order for a motion to pass, it must obtain a majority of the legal votes cast. An abstention shall not count as a legal vote cast.

QUORUM

- A majority of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum. If a quorum is not present, the Chair will adjourn the meeting and reschedule to a new day and hour. During the summer, and when not in academic session, this council's responsibilities fall to the AS VP for Governmental Affairs with approval from the AS President and Director of Student Activities.

RULES OF OPERATION

- The council may adopt and amend rules of operation governing its operation by a majority vote of the council, subject to review or approval by the AS Board.

AMENDMENTS

- This Charter may be amended by a majority vote of the AS Board of Directors.

REPORTAGE

- This council shall report to the AS Board of Directors through the AS Vice President for Governmental Affairs.

Proposed LAC Bylaws

Article I: Mission and Purpose

1.1 Mission:

The Legislative Affairs Council works to increase on and off campus student representation and civic engagement by formulating positions of the Associated Students as related to local, state, and federal legislative issues.

1.2 Purpose

- Legislative Affairs Council serves to empower student representation by:
 - o Encouraging civic engagement and student participation in the political process,
 - o Creating, reviewing, and proposing the Local, State, and Federal Legislative Agendas to the Associated Students of Western Washington University (ASWWU) Board of Directors.
 - o Submitting recommendations to the Washington Student Association (WSA) regarding the statewide Legislative Agenda,
 - o Establishing contact with elected officials to ensure that student perspectives are being considered at all levels of government,
 - o Formulating policy positions for all matters concerning students in higher education,
 - o Reviewing funding request proposals, making financial decisions, and monitoring the expenditures of student funds donated through the Legislative Action Fund,
 - o Manage the operations of the Legislative Action Fund and appropriate funding to more directly represent WWU students in legislative matters,
 - o Approving a budget for the Legislative Action Fund based on projected revenue with estimated expenses in areas designed to more directly represent Western Students at the local, state and federal level.

Article II: Membership and Members Responsibilities

2.1 Members:

The Legislative Affairs Council will consist of:

- AS Vice President for Governmental Affairs (Chair)
- AS Legislative Liaison (non-voting)
- 6-8 Students at-Large, appointed by the AS Board of Directors
- 1- Western Votes! Representative

- AS Local Liaison (as needed, non-voting)
- Secretary (non-voting)
- Advisor (non-voting)

2.2 Term of Office

Following approval by the ASWWU Board of Directors, members will serve a term of office until the end of finals week Spring Quarter. Members may be appointed during Spring Quarter for the following year, but such appointments will not be more than one-fourth of the current membership.

2.3 Member Responsibilities

- Chair
 - o The AS Vice President for Governmental Affairs is charged with chairing all Legislative Affairs Council meetings,
 - o Must make initial recommendations to the Council regarding the legislative agenda,
 - o Must provide the Council with accurate legislative information to make informed decisions about the legislative agenda,
 - o Must keep Council members up to date about ongoing legislative activities,
 - o Act as Budget Authority for the Legislative Action Fund,
 - o Present a Legislative Action Fund budget proposal to the Council
- Vice-Chair
 - o The Vice-Chair will be elected by a majority vote of the LAC. In the case of more than two candidates, the Vice-Chair will be elected by an instant runoff vote.
 - Elections for the Vice-Chair will begin the third meeting of Fall Quarter.
 - Elections will be a two-week process. Nominations will be held the first week, and remain open until the next meeting. Voting will be held the second week.
 - Each member may make one nomination.
 - Elections will be held any time there is a vacancy in the position of Vice-Chair.
 - The two-week process will begin at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Senate.
 - o The Vice-Chair may not serve concurrently as member of the AS Board of Directors,
 - o The duties of the Vice-Chair will be to:
 - Perform the duties of the Chair in the absence of the Chair. While serving as the Chair, the Vice-Chair will not have voting privileges. If neither the Chair nor Vice-Chair is present, the meeting will be adjourned.
 - Coordinate forums and other student outreach activities as needed.
- AS Legislative Liaison
 - o Act in an advisory role, reporting legislative facts and issues,
 - o Must provide legislative updates when necessary.
 - o Must keep Council members up to date about ongoing legislative activities,
 - o Discuss legislative items and strategic planning with the Council
 - o Serve as a non-voting member
- AS Local Liaison
 - o Attend Council meetings as needed
 - o Report local legislative facts and issues
 - o Provide local legislative updates when necessary

- o Keep Council members up to date about ongoing local issues and activities
- o Serve as a non-voting member
- Student-at- large
 - o Consistently attend LAC meetings,
 - o Provide feedback and input regarding legislative issues,
 - o Represent the student perspective and their respective backgrounds,
 - o Complete all outside committee work listed on agenda and attend meetings having prepared for discussion on agenda topics
- Western Votes Representative
 - o Act as a liaison between ASWWU Western Votes and the Legislative Affairs Council,
 - o Update LAC on Western Votes activities,
 - o Bring feedback to LAC from Western Votes.
- Secretary
 - o The Board Assistant for Representation shall serve as the Secretary to LAC
 - o The duties and responsibilities include:
 - Take and publish the minutes of LAC
 - Manage and organize LAC folders and binders
 - Correspond with LAC members
 - Perform other appropriate duties as designated by the Chair
 - o The Secretary of LAC is a non-voting member

2.4 Voting Rights:

All members have the right to vote unless there is a clear personal conflict of interest, such as a voting member benefiting from or being a sponsor of a funding request from the Legislative Action Fund. Council Members whose voting privileges have been suspended due to attendance matters must have this privilege reinstated by a majority vote of the Council. Council members must be present to vote as proxy votes are not allowed.

2.5 Removal, Suspension and Reinstatement:

- Removal:
 - o Members may be removed from LAC for violating requirements as set forth in these Bylaws.
 - o Members may be recommended for removal by a two-thirds vote of the seated membership of LAC. The recommendation will be forwarded to the AS Board of Directors for a vote. Poor attendance may be grounds for removal,
 - o Members may resign if they no longer wish to serve on LAC
 - All council members who are unable to serve on the Council must notify the VP for Governmental Affairs so that a replacement may be found.
- Suspension:
 - o If a council member is unable to serve for an academic quarter or longer, their voting rights will be suspended from the Council by the VP for Governmental Affairs
 - o Each LAC member will be allowed two absences per quarter. Following a third absence, the member will have their voting rights suspended
- Reinstatement

- o In order for a Member to be reinstated, a motion for reinstatement must be passed by a simple majority of the seated Council
- o The member must be present to be reinstated
- o Discussions about reinstatement should be conducted in a closed session

Article III: Responsibilities

3.1 Fiduciary Duty

- Legislative Affairs Council shall manage the Legislative Action Fund ensuring that monies donated by students are being used to increase student representation.
 - o The Legislative Affairs Council has authority over the Legislative Action Fund and its appropriation.
 - o A majority of the Council's seated membership is required to make funding decisions
 - o Appropriation of the Legislative Action Fund
 - Requests for appropriation must be submitted to the AS VP for Governmental Affairs a minimum of three (3) business days in advance before the request may be presented as an information item to the Council.
 - Requests for appropriation must be reviewed as an information item the first week; any subsequent action is up to the discretion of council members.
 - In order for a proposal to be considered by the Council, a representative must present and answer any questions from Councilmembers.
 - After a proposal is approved, the AS VP for Governmental Affairs must make the appropriate budgetary transactions

3.2 Policy Recommendations

- Legislative Affairs Council shall formulate the positions of the Associated Students as related to local, state, and federal legislative issues
 - o A majority of the Council's seated membership is required to make policy recommendations.
 - o All policy recommendations agreed upon in the Council will be presented to the AS Board of Directors for consideration by the AS VP for Governmental Affairs or a council member.
 - o Policy recommendations are not official positions of the Associated Students of Western Washington University until adopted by the Board of Directors.

Article IV: Review and Amendments

These Bylaws will be reviewed annually. Bylaws may be amended or temporarily suspended by a 2/3 majority vote of the Legislative Affairs Council. The Legislative Affairs Council Charge and Charter supersede these rules of operation.

Proposed LAC Rules of Operation

- **Preamble:**
 - o The Legislative Affairs Council (LAC), in order to more easily facilitate meetings, does hereby adopt the following Rules of Operation, which though based upon *Robert's* are meant to supersede and stand alone of them for the purposes of LAC meetings.

- MEETINGS: Presiding Officer, how opened and adjourned
 - The Presiding Officer (PO) shall be the AS Vice President for Governmental Affairs, or in their absence, the Vice-Chairperson in accordance with the by-laws,
 - The PO shall call each meeting of the LAC to order at the appointed time, or, in absence of a quorum as set by the by-laws, reschedule said meeting,
 - Adjournments
 - Upon the completion of all agenda items, the PO may adjourn the meeting by asking the LAC if there are any objections to adjournment; if not, the meeting shall be declared adjourned, OR;
 - The LAC may adjourn itself by motion (*see*: Motion to Adjourn).

- INFORMALITY OF DISCUSSION AND MOTIONS
 - The LAC may open discussion on an agenda-item without a main motion being made, and members may speak as many times as they wish until the end of debate or discussion,
 - Members do not need to address their comments to the PO, but must be recognized by the PO.
 - *In general*, members may ask questions of other members,
 - Decorum and respect shall be maintained at all times.
 - Regardless of whether the motion is made in the precise form used by the Rules, if its intent is clear and would otherwise be in order, it shall be in order,
 - All motions are debatable unless noted otherwise.

- MAIN MOTION; Principle, form, effect
 - A Main Motion is any motion that would cause the LAC to resolve, state, or otherwise “do something”.
 - A main motion may only be made when there is no other main motion under consideration
 - A main motion is made by stating “I move that the LAC... [resolve that, adopt the following resolution, create, state its opposition to]”
 - Longer main motions should be introduced in writing prior to the such that they may be include as a binder document

- SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS: Principle, forms, effects
 - Subsidiary motions help the LAC do something with a main motion,
 - The following are the admissible subsidiary motions, in descending order of precedence (that is, the highest ranking motion is “i,” the second highest is “ii,” etc.)
 - **Motion to Table**
 - Halts debate, but with the option of “taking from the table” at a later date (see: take from table)
 - Made by saying “I move to table”
 - Must be seconded
 - Is not amendable
 - Is not debatable
 - Must pass by a majority of those voting
 - **Motion to Call the Question**
 - Stops debate on the motion and moves to an immediate vote
 - Made by saying “I move to call the question”
 - Must be seconded

- Is not amendable
 - Is not debatable
 - Must pass by a majority of those voting
 - **Motion to Extend Debate**
 - Extends debate by the amount of time stated.
 - Made by saying “I move to extend debate for [X] minutes”
 - Must be seconded
 - Is not amendable
 - Is not debatable
 - Must pass by a majority of those voting
 - **Motion to Postpone**
 - Temporarily stops debate on the main motion until a later date.
 - If no date is specified, it is assumed to be postponed until the next meeting.
 - Made by saying “I move to postpone [... until]”
 - Must be seconded
 - Is not amendable
 - Is not debatable
 - Must pass by a majority of those voting
 - **Motion to Amend**
 - Changes the wording, meaning, etc. of a motion.
 - Made by saying “I move to amend such that... ” or “I move to amend [X] to [Y],” or some other wording.
 - Must be seconded
 - Is debatable
 - Must pass by a majority of those voting
- PRIVILEGED MOTIONS: Principle, forms, effects
 - Privileged motions may be made at any time, even when another member is speaking,
 - Privileged motions have precedence not only within their category, but take precedence over any other motion.
 - The following are the admissible privileged motions, in order of descending precedence:
 - **Motion to Adjourn**
 - Ends the meeting of the LAC immediately, with any business still pending carried over to the next session.
 - Made by saying “I move to adjourn”
 - Must be seconded
 - Is not amendable
 - Is not debatable
 - Must pass by majority of those voting
 - **Motion to Recess**
 - Pauses the meeting for a short time.
 - Made by saying “I move for a recess of [x] minutes,” or “I move that the LAC recess for [x] minutes”
 - Must be seconded
 - Is not amendable
 - Is not debatable
 - Must pass by a majority of those voting
 - **Enforce Agenda**

- If a member feels that the conversation has drifted away from what is supposed to be discussed, they may ask that the agenda be enforced by the chair
 - Also known as “Call [ing] for the Orders of the Day”
 - Made by saying “I ask the agenda be enforced,” or “I call for the Orders of the Day”
 - Action is taken immediately by the chair; no vote or second is required
- **INCIDENTAL AND OTHER MOTIONS: Principle, forms, effects**
 - An incidental motion can be made at any time and, depending upon the motion, sometimes even while another member is speaking,
 - Incidental motions do not have precedence
 - The following are the admissible incidental motions
 - **Point of Order**
 - Allows a member to point out a rule being ignored, or other error in parliamentary procedure.
 - Made by saying “Point of Order” and describing the grievance
 - May be made when another member is speaking
 - Action is taken immediately by the chair
 - **Point of Parliamentary Inquiry**
 - Question to the PO about whether an action is in order.
 - Made by saying “Point of Parliamentary Inquiry” and describing the question.
 - Answered immediately by the Parliamentarian
 - **Appeal the Decision of the Chair**
 - Used to overturn a decision made by the PO
 - Made by saying “I move to appeal the decision of the Chair”
 - Must be seconded
 - Is not amendable
 - Is not debatable
 - Must pass by a 2/3 vote
 - **Suspend the Rules**
 - Suspends either these Rules of Order or the LAC by-laws in order to accomplish an action that would not normally be allowed
 - May not be used for an action that exceeds the bounds of the LAC Charge and Charter
 - Made by saying “I move to Suspend the Rules and [do something]”
 - Must be seconded
 - Is not amendable
 - Is debatable
 - Note: Not debatable under normal parliamentary procedure, but for the purposes of the LAC, short debate is allowed.
 - Must pass by a 2/3 vote
 - **Divide the Question**
 - Separates a motion into two or more parts to be voted on separately.
 - Made by saying “I move to divide the question, [such that...]”
 - Must be seconded
 - Is not amendable
 - Is not debatable

- Must pass by a majority of those voting
 - **Rising Vote**
 - Requires the LAC to vote by raising their name placard to indicate their vote
 - Made by saying “I move for a rising vote” or “I move the LAC divide on the question”
 - Passes without a vote or second
 - **Take from Table**
 - Brings an issue that was previously tabled back before the LAC
 - Made by saying “I move to take (blank) from the table”
 - Must be seconded
 - Is not amendable
 - Is not debatable
 - Must pass by a majority of those voting
- VOTING: Counting, Unanimous Consent
 - A legal vote shall be either “Aye” or “Nay”
 - An abstention, or vote of “Oy” shall not count as a legal vote cast, but shall be entered into the record
 - Any member, including the PO, may call for Unanimous Consent if they believe there to be little or no opposition to a motion. The PO will ask if there are any objections, and if no member states an objection, the vote shall have passed by a unanimous vote of those present.
 - COMMITTEES
 - The LAC may, at its discretion, appoint a subcommittee to study a particular issue
 - Such an appointment should take the form of a written main motion, submitted before the meeting, and should include the committee’s:
 - Purpose
 - Membership, and
 - Chairperson
 - Committees appointed in this manner shall be informal and *ad hoc*
 - UNFORESEEN SITUATIONS
 - If there arises a situation that cannot be solved using these rules, then the most current edition of *Robert s’ Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall be consulted
 - AMENDMENTS
 - These rules may be amended by a 2/3 vote of the LAC and subject to the review of the AS Board of Directors

Legislative Action Fund

The Story of the Legislative Action Fund

Kaylee Galloway, VP for Governmental Affairs, 2013-2014

Starting in 2002, Western Washington University had an opt-in fee system to fund membership with the Washington Student Association (WSA), formerly referred to as the Washington Student Lobby (WSL), where all monies donated through this fund were obligated to go directly to the WSA. As a result of this fee structure, Western was paying far more than any other member institution. During the 2007-2008 academic year, Western contributed \$14,495 in membership dues to WSA compared to the

minimum campus dues set at \$4,500 per school or UW and WSU paying \$9,000. WSL leadership at the time assured Western that all monies received past the minimum would be refunded to the AS, but there was no guarantee.

In 2007, the AS led the charge to change the funding structure to a more equitable system that was based on state regulated Full Time Equivalencies (FTEs), which is essentially the full-time student population. Starting in 2008, WS A implemented minimum membership dues of \$.75 per FTE. This would mean that Western would be paying just over \$9,000 annually while UW would pay over \$25,000 and WSU would pay over \$14,000. Starting in 2013 as a result of changes in the WSA Bylaws, membership dues are now based on actual FTEs rather than the FTEs budgeted by the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM). Since there is a large difference between the actual and budgeted FTEs (view [here](#)), WSA member dues increased substantially providing WSA with more revenue. Membership dues for the 2013-2014 academic year are set at \$1.05 per FTE.

The proposal that would later be implemented in 2009 would put a referendum to student vote that would abolish the previous WSL fee structure and establish in its place a “Legislative Action Fee”. The revenue from this fee would be controlled by the AS Board of Directors in a process similar to the management of the AS budget. The rationale was that changing the fee would give more flexibility to spend the funds on WSA membership dues as well as spending left over money on other legislative activities. If enough revenue is collected by the fee, there could be the ability to supplement and eventually cover all costs of ASWWU’s legislative activity. This could potentially include covering the costs of lobby day and funding legislative and electoral trainings as well as help fund the annual Washington, D.C. lobby trip, fund a second lobby day or start an ASWWU specific legislative office in Olympia. Broadly speaking, the legislative action fund was established to help increase student representation and advocacy.

During the 2008-2009 Associated Student body elections, the students of Western Washington University voted in favor of the following language:

Shall the students of Western Washington University propose that the “Administration shift the recipient of the Washington Student Lobby (WSL) donation monies from the WSL to a Legislative Action Fund maintained by the Associated Students for the purpose of more directly representing Western students?”

Total 1635 responses

- Yes: 87.0% (1423 Votes)
- No: 12.97% (212 Votes)

The Legislative Action Fund was brought to the June 12, 2009 Board of Trustees. The proposed motion was: “Moved, that the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University, upon request of the Associated Students Board of Directors, authorize the establishment of a student donation process to the Legislative Action Fund via the fee system. The purpose of this fund is to more directly represent WWU students in legislative manners through the decisions of the ASWWU. The establishment of this fund system will replace the current Washington Student Lobby (WSL) donation access to the fee system.”

“The Board of Trustees, at the request of the Associated Students, in 1982 established a process for students to donate to legislative representation by the Washington Student Lobby (WSL) through the fee system. That access has been modified over the ensuing years with the current positive check-off system authorized by the Trustees in 2002. Over many years, this process has provided the central financial support for the WSL. The amount collected for the WSL has been significantly higher than

dues that WWU students would have paid to the organization on a proportional basis. Recent changes in the WSL organizational and dues structure have raised questions if the current system provides WWU students the best use of funds donated for legislative representation. Over the course of the 2008-2009 academic years, the Associated Students researched the current donation system for our statewide student association, the Washington Student Lobby. The AS President, Erik Lowe, presented information to the Board of Trustees at the December 12, 2008 meeting that outlined potential changes in the donation system. The AS Board felt it necessary to modify the current system to better represent Western students because of changes to the WSL funding structure in the 2007-2008 academic year and the structural changes including a name change from Washington Student Lobby to Washington Student Association (WSA) in May of this year. The AS Board believes that WWU students will be best represented if the funding is under the control of the Associated Students rather than donated directly to the WSA. This shift in control will still allow for membership and payment of dues to continue to WSA while providing more direct authority over funds donated by Western students. In addition, funds donated above the WSA dues amount can be utilized to more directly represent Western student interests in legislative affairs. In consultation with multiple student groups including the AS Student Senate and Legislative Affairs Council, the AS Board developed a referendum that was put to student vote in the 2009 student government elections.” (June 12, 2009 Board of Trustees document).

In anticipation of the ratification of the referendum that was passed, the 2008-2009 Board of Directors recommended the establishment of a Legislative Action Fund Committee. The committee would be “designed to monitor the expenditure of student funds donated through the Legislative Action Fund opt-in program (FAF). It is recommended that, at minimum, the committee be responsible for creating quarterly budgets and reviewing funding proposals for activities designed to more directly represent Western students on the state and federal level. The committee is also responsible for reporting to the A. S. Board of Directors at least once per quarter through the V.P. for Governmental Affairs. At minimum these reports should include information detailing the activities and finances of the FAF including, but not limited to, project proposals, expenditures and budgetary status. Ensure that the committee drafts a document outlining the appropriate expenditure of monies from the FAF in accordance to the language that was passed by the students during the 2009 elections. Make certain that current funding for legislative activities through the Associated Students be maintained. Require that all students be notified of the change in recipients and that the funds donated during spring registration will be distributed to the Washington Student Association. Require that the funds be categorized as an independent entity under the purview of the Vice President for Student Affairs and Academic Support Services. Provide a comprehensive report to the A. S. Board of Directors with at least the following information: revenue, quarterly budgets, expenditures and projects by no later than spring quarter 2010. Suggest that the committee have formal interaction with the Student Senate and Legislative Affairs Council. Guarantee that the actions of the committee, in every project and procedure, further the mission and values of the Associated Students.” (June 3, 2009 AS Board of Directors document)

Currently, the Legislative Affairs Council (FAC) serves as the body that oversees the Legislative Action Fund with the VP for Governmental Affairs serving as the official budget authority. The FAC reviews and approves all expenses from the Legislative Action Fund except for when the council is not in session. When not in session, the VP for Governmental Affairs, in consultation with the AS President and the Director of Student Activities, can approve funding. The Legislative Action Fund has been used in a variety of ways, including but not limited to, WSA membership dues, transportation for WSA Lobby Day, USSA Conferences (Congress and LegCon), smaller lobby trips, additional Viking Lobby Day expenses, organizing efforts on campus, and workshop/conference expenses. As stated in the Legislative Action Fund service fee form, the Legislative Action Fund can be used in “Funding bus transportation to Olympia during the legislative session for students to meet with legislators and staff”.

In terms of legislative context, the Legislative Action Fund falls under [RCW 28B.15.610](#) on Voluntary fees of students, which states: “The provisions of this chapter shall not apply to or affect any student fee or charge which the students voluntarily maintain upon themselves for student purposes only. Students are authorized to create or increase voluntary student fees for each academic year when passed by a majority vote of the student government or its equivalent, or referendum presented to the student body or such other process that has been adopted under this section. Notwithstanding [RCW 42.17A.635](#) (2) and (3), voluntary student fees imposed under this section and services and activities fees may be used for lobbying by a student government association or its equivalent and may also be used to support a statewide or national student organization or its equivalent that may engage in lobbying.”

There are still many ways in which the AS can improve the Legislative Action Fund to maximize student representation and advocacy efforts. One way would be to run a referendum to change the fee structure to opt-out. This would make the fee so that all students would contribute \$2 per quarter, but they can choose to get a refund. This would substantially increase the Legislative Action Fund revenue in addition to making it more consistent such that annual revenue becomes more predictable. With an increased Legislative Action Fund budget, there are many opportunities and worthwhile investments which ASWWU could fund, including but not limited to, sustaining increased WSA membership dues to support an additional staff person such as a Legislative Director (who would focus predominately on training Legislative Liaisons, helping students draft legislation to be seen in the legislature, and providing consistent presence year round in Olympia to advocate for students), pursuing direct membership with the United States Student Association (increase federal legislative influence), funding more and larger lobby trips, more trainings and workshops on campus, 4 quarter organizing coordinator (who would focus on Vote campaign in summer and fall, and legislative campaigns during legislative session (winter and spring), and to help strengthen Western Votes).

Another improvement would be to make the Legislative Action Fund more accessible to all students. More revenue means more funding available to students and student groups who are looking to help increase student representation. The first step would be to utilize the AS Operational budget structure to provide a clear and accessible budget summary, budget proposals, and budget tracker available for all students. Developing a structured budget will allow for direction and purpose in the allocation of funds. For example, funds can be made available for students and student group to help support their legislative and advocacy efforts. It is also important to develop an accessible funding request model so that students can request funding.

Additional Information

- [Budget Proposal](#)
- [Funding Request Proposal](#)
- [LAC Website](#)