

Legislative Affairs Council Budget Policy

In order to be responsible stewards of student funds apportioned to the Legislative Affairs Fund through voluntary student donations, the following policy has been adopted. The policy is meant to ensure that funds are used appropriately and can be accessed and distributed in an efficient manner to serve the students of Western Washington University in the best way possible.

The purpose of the Legislative Affairs Fund is to ensure that students are represented in the legislative process, and are able to effectively advocate for affordable, accessible, and quality higher education. This budget pays primarily for the Associated Students lobbying efforts which are coordinated by the VP for Governmental Affairs.

Non-Discretionary

Items falling into the non-discretionary budget will automatically be approved for expenditure without a vote of the Legislative Affairs Council. These expenditures will be authorized autonomously by the Vice President for Governmental Affairs. Items labeled as non-discretionary will get priority funding over discretionary items. In order to be considered a non-discretionary expenditure, a line item expense must be approved by the Legislative Affairs Council as a recurring expense (i.e. membership dues to intercollegiate organizations like WSA and USSA, personnel costs) that will stay on the list each year. Due to the variable nature of many costs the Legislative Affairs Council incurs, an NTE level may be set for each non-discretionary item at the time it is adopted by the Legislative Affairs Council. Non-discretionary items are not subject to a sunset clause and may be removed from the non-discretionary budget only by a 2/3 vote of the Legislative Affairs Council. All non-discretionary allocations are subject to approval of the Board of Directors.

Discretionary

Any funds remaining following the allocation of funds to cover non-discretionary expenditures will be available for expenditures as approved by the Legislative Affairs Council. These expenditures are to be allocated only following the presentation of a funding request to the Legislative Affairs Council under the established info-action schedule when possible, allowing for reflection and evaluation before final approval is granted. Any discretionary funding request involving limited attendance must follow the LAC Guidelines for Funding Conference Attendance.

Reserves

As with any variable income funding structure, a reserve fund is necessary to provide stability and ensure continuity for the Legislative Action Fund. Should revenues ever be insufficient to cover non-discretionary allocations, the Vice President for Governmental Affairs may use funds held in reserves to make up the difference. If reserve funds are needed to cover non-discretionary allocations, the Vice President for Governmental Affairs is to notify the Legislative Affairs Council at their next regularly scheduled meeting. 5% of any funds donated to the Legislative Action Fund are to be held in reserves until the reserve level reaches 125% of the previous year's non-discretionary expenditure. Should reserves fall below this level, 5% of any future funds donated to the Legislative Affairs Council are to be automatically moved to reserves until the balance reaches 125% of the previous year's non-discretionary expenditures. These reserve requirements may be changed only by a 2/3 vote of the LAC and approval of the Board of Directors.

This policy is to take effect the quarter following the successful implementation of opt-out fee structure for the Legislative Affairs Fund