

**Western Washington University Associated Students  
Legislative Affairs Council  
Thursday, October 8, 2015 VU 567**

**Present:** Patrick Eckroth (ASVP for Governmental Affairs), Josie Ellison (AS Legislative Liaison), McKenzie Dent (AS Local Liaison), Nora Selander (Western Votes!), Luciane De Almeida, Danny Edgel, Bridget Doyle Williams.

**Absent:** Seth Ceely

**Advisor:** Lisa Rosenberg

**Secretary:** Bryce Hammer

**MOTIONS**

**LAC-15-F-1** Break for five minutes then come back to the table.

**LAC-15-F-2** Motion to adjourn meeting.

**Patrick Eckroth, Chair of Legislative Affairs Council, called the meeting to order at 4:03**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. ACTION ITEMS**

**A.** Motion to break and then come back to the conversation after a few minutes.

*MOTION LAC- 15-F-1 by Ellison*

Second: Edgel Vote: 6-0-0 (De Almeida had stepped out) Action:  
Passed, break for five minutes.

**B.** Motion to adjourn.

*MOTION LAC-15-F-2 by Ellison*

Second: Dent Vote: 7-0-0 Action: Passed, meeting adjourned.

**III. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**A.** Inclusive Language—Josie Ellison

Josie presented on the importance of inclusive language and how the committee can take steps to respect that. He talked about respecting people's preferred gender pronouns, refraining from using ableist language, and briefly covered microaggressions.

**B.** Secretary Friendly Techniques—Bryce Hammer

Bryce went over techniques that the committee members can use to make minute taking easier such as speaking clearly, stating their name before they present, and keeping their phones off the table when they're on vibrate.

**C. LAC Charge and Charter Discussion—Patrick Eckroth**

Patrick presented the new Legislative Action Fund Charge and Charter. Slight changes were made to how the Legislative Action Fund works, some of the language has been changed to be more inclusive, and a representative from the Ethnic Student Center was added to the committee. Luciane De Almeida asked for clarification on what an administrative agenda would be. Patrick responded that it's something that Western does with the Washington Student Association. An administrative agenda would be some sort of advocacy or change that we'd like to enact that doesn't deal with the legislative agenda. Luciane also asked if the Legislative Liaison title had changed because there had been some discussion about it. Josie Ellison, the Legislative Liaison, responded that it's a nuanced situation. The title is recognizable on all of the college campuses in Washington because it's a standardized position and everyone in the WSA, as well as governmental agencies, knows what it means. We might keep both. Legislative Advocacy Coordinator might be used on campus and Legislative Liaison would be kept for dealing with people off campus.

**D. LAC Rules of Operation—Patrick Eckroth**

The LAC Rules of Operations explains the LAC process, how the committee works, how voting works, what procedures are supposed to be used, who does the reports etc. Some changes need to be made so the committee members should look over it and suggest changes they think need to be implemented. Lisa Rosenberg reminded everyone that there is a Vice Chair position available in case anyone was interested in running for it. Danny Edgel mentioned that in the membership on the Charge and Charter there is a position for the ESC representative but not in the Rules of Operation. Nora said that the Rules of Operation doesn't list all of the voting members that the C&C does. Patrick responded that would be a few of the things that the committee has to change about the Rules of Operation but that it shouldn't be a problem because the Charge and Charter supersedes everything in the RoO. Luciane wanted to know if accommodations could be made for people with disabilities when it comes to the section of the RoO that says committee members will be suspended if they miss more than two meetings in a quarter. Patrick said yes, because that's one of the things that we want to be understanding about so that needs to be changed. Josie also mentioned that the suspension rule is really only there so that the committee doesn't have to worry about the vote for quorum.

**E. AS WWU 2014 and 2015 Legislative Agenda—Patrick Eckroth**

Patrick presented the AS WWU Legislative Agendas from the past two years. Usually there is some overlap between each year's agenda. One of the things that can be taken off of this year's agenda is the Carver Gym renovation because it's happening. Danny asked how the funding of tuition cuts works. Is it long term or short term? Josie answered that it was a temporary takeover of tuition setting but there have been talks about making it a permanent thing but it didn't really go through because most of the policy stuff was dropped. But dedicated revenue is definitely still something we're pushing for. Patrick then segued into the 2015 Legislative Agenda. The agenda included new and dedicated revenue, increased

support for survivors of sexual assault, voter access, Carver renovations, and student success. A lot of our agenda overlaps with the WSA's agenda. Nora asked how the agenda is going to be endorsed and how we go about getting more people in on it and how that would look. Danny said that in that regard, there is a letter that is signed by the entire board and if we wanted to do something along those lines we could get individual club endorsements and faculty and staff, maybe even individual students. Josie said that there is also a main legislative agenda that we create and then there are several supplemental ones. Last year there were three separate legislative agendas and he doesn't want that this year because the items that end up on the supplemental agendas are things that the entire school should care about and we shouldn't send the message that we care less about them. So the legislative agenda is going to change a lot, especially the way it looks. Nora asked if we're planning on changing the way that students are assigned to lobbying. Josie said that he is going to be very intentional about that this year so that the students are connected to a cause that they care about.

- F. WSA 2015 and 2016 Legislative Agendas—Josie Ellison and Patrick Eckroth
- Josie started off with an explanation of what the WSA is and how it fits into Western Votes and the USSA. Western used to be a member of the USSA through their membership with the WSA. Recently, Western became direct members of the USSA. So we're still members of the WSA but we are now direct members of the USSA. The WSA creates policy around the higher education institutions in Washington. Normally, Western and our students are heavily involved with setting the agenda for WSA. Patrick then went on to talk about the WSA 2015 Legislative Agenda. We just finished lobbying on this one and a few things have carried over to the draft agenda for this year, like voter accessibility and college affordability. The WSA's agenda is normally not very specific so that the legislature can figure it out. Danny asked what AS LAC brings to the general assembly as far as proposals. Patrick said that within the next few weeks committee members should brainstorm ideas that they'd like on the agenda because we have to submit it to the WSA by October 24<sup>th</sup>. There is a process to getting items put on the WSA agenda that the committee will go through later. Josie mentioned that Western also tends to be well represented in the WSA and a most of our proposals go through. Patrick then went on to talk about the 2016 WSA Draft Agenda. Bridget asked what EBT and TANF stand for and Patrick said they were Electronic Benefits Transfer and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. Josie said that EBT is a card that you can use food stamps with and on most college campuses it is impossible to use them. Patrick then reiterated that the council should think about potential proposals they'd like to bring to the WSA.

- G. Legislative Affairs Issue Choosing Strategy Chart—Josie Ellison
- Josie went through the Issue Choosing documents line by line. A problem is what you're dealing with as a whole (ex: transphobia on campus). An issue would be one part of that that you'd like to work on (ex: demanding gender neutral bathrooms on campus). Authors and sponsors and endorsements means getting more students to support your cause. The more people care the easier it

will be to effect change. Proposed Action Agenda Item Title is really important, don't forget that step. Describe the issue fully and the problem that you're working within, fill out the strategy chart. You have to explain if it's winnable, how it can get done, how it directly impacts student's lives, will it do so immediately? If you have any questions then go to Josie. A target is always a single person, typically the chairs of committees for the House or the Senate. You need to have someone that can help you get what you want. Lay out the time frame for it, which relates to whether or not something is winnable. When they ask if it this issue has a lobbying angle they mean can we organize around this and get people interested in it. Give background to the problem because if it's added to the agenda then the people working on it need context. Engage the media around you, figure out how the campaign is going to run on campus. Josie then went on to explain how to choose an issue. The first step is building a coalition for the cause. It must be something that is important for the organization, worthwhile, winnable, have a clear target, easy to understand, and widely and deeply felt. There is a chart that explains energy levels on campus throughout the year so for example, it would be hard to excite people about something in May because there is a low energy on campus. Additionally, there are some coalitions within the organization that legally cannot work together so you have to be careful about who you're contacting. When choosing an issue make sure that it is in line with your values and with Western's, as well as being an accurate representation of what Western wants. Josie then explained the chart that goes with the issue choosing process. Long term goals means that you want to eradicate the problem completely. Short term and intermediate goals are meant to deal with specific issues. Organizational considerations means listing the resources that the organization you're working with can bring to the table, other groups are slightly less important but should still be mentioned. You also need to list the specific ways that your organization plans on effecting positive change. The "If It Succeeds" section is more for the WSA scale because it will help you organize a campaign on campus. Constituents are whoever is directly benefiting from the change. Anyone who isn't directly affected by it but is working with you is an ally. Opponents can be either direct or indirect. Indirect opponents come up a lot in funding for higher education because there aren't a lot of people who think higher education doesn't deserve funding but there are people who think the money could be better spent elsewhere. When talking about a target the primary is the person that you need to help you (ex: Jeff Morris, the rep for the 40<sup>th</sup> district, which has just over 3,000 Western students, a chair of a budget committee). Secondary is who has power over your target (ex: Speaker of the House). We, the students, are a secondary power because we have power over our representatives due to our number. Tactics are what we, the students, can use to show our power to the target or to reach more students.

#### **H. Legislative Affairs Council Budget Policy—Patrick Eckroth**

Patrick gave an introduction to the LAC Budget and the policies that regulate it. The policy was recently reconstructed and most of the changes were on the back of the document. Nora asked what the policy does not allow us to do. Patrick

said that we cannot pay students to lobby but we can pay for them to go to Olympia and give them the opportunity to lobby. We can pay for their travel and their access.

**I. Summer Expense Report—Patrick Eckroth**

Last year's LAC approved somewhere around \$2000 to be used for summer expenses. Since July 1<sup>st</sup> of 2015 \$9715 has been spent in this fiscal year. Danny asked if that was money that would come out of this year's fund. Patrick said yes, some of last year's money paid for the USSA Congress, as did some of this year's money. Some rolled over into reserves and there was also a transfer from Operation Enhancement funds and together those contributed to the summer expenses. Nora asked about travel expenses and Lisa responded that the state will sometimes reimburse the school which is 56 cents to the mile but the school has to pay for the rest. Some things, like the AS WWU Board of Directors retreat still need to be added to the list, though Patrick has to check which fund that comes out of.

**J. Conference Attendance and Application—Patrick Eckroth**

This is Western's second full year of using this process which is how we select people to attend conferences, how trips should be planned, how to best spend student dollars, etc. The application has changed some in the last year and we will go more in depth with this when we start selecting candidates. Josie said that she thought that out of the six requirements listed on the criteria to attend the conference the sixth point had been taken off. Nora said that it was moved into a different section on the application. Patrick said that the entire policy has changed a bit so we'll get an opportunity to work out the kinks throughout the year. The application is done online through OrgSync and has been updated since the document they were looking at was created.

**K. United States Student Association—Josie Ellison**

Josie explained that the USSA is like the WSA but at the national level. It has three types of membership. The first is a school can be a member of the USSA by being a member of their statewide student associate (ex: WSA). The second option is to be a member of the USSA through your own campus. The third is also through your own campus but its designed as a charter campus membership for schools that don't have a funding model. Western has the second type of membership. The USSA is located in Washington DC but they have field offices all over the country. Western's local staff is based out of California and we have a national field organizer based in DC. There are two conferences that the USSA holds every year. Congress is the one in the summer where they elect the President and the Vice President and where they decided what they want to work on this year, what campaigns they want to work on both internally and externally, and what legislative goals they want to work on this year. The USSA Board of Directors meets about five times per year and has about 30 members on it that represent caucuses of all kinds (ex: regional representatives, queer women, students of color, queer students of color, students with disabilities, students of African descent, etc.), the Board also have three coalition partners (Women, Students of Color, and Queer Students).

**L. Timeline for Legislative Agenda—Patrick Eckroth**

The deadline for agenda proposals is coming up quickly, they need to be in by the next meeting. Josie said that he was working on a proposal for more funding for academic advising and counseling on campus. McKenzie and Nora offered to help with that and mentioned student grounds on campus that would be of use.

**IV. REPORTS**

- A. VP for Governmental Affairs:** The President Search Advisory Committee is accepting applications and will be off the ground soon. The WSA Board meeting that was supposed to happen on October 10<sup>th</sup> was cancelled and they will be having a general assembly on October 14<sup>th</sup>.
- B. Legislative Liaison:** Not a ton is happening for this position right now, it's mostly getting ready for winter. We just finished voter registration on campus and
- C. Local Liaison:** Looking into the county charter amendments and public hearings. She's looking into creating a voter guide for students, she's working on advise to give students about living off campus like neighborly advise, how to deal with landlord/tenant situations, etc. Last week she was officially voted into the mayor's neighborhood advisory council.
- D. Western Votes!:** The first meeting of the year was a bit of a scramble to plan so not a lot of people turned up but she has high hopes for the next one. Voter registration just finished, Western got about 3,000 new registered voters which was the goal for the year. Ballot printing is happening in November as is educating students about the drop boxes on campus, and phone banking for Get Out the Vote. Western Votes could also endorse things that are being sent to WSA.

***The Meeting was adjourned at 5:47pm.***