

Vote - Anna K

The ASWWU believes that voting is a right and recognizes that many disenfranchised communities have more barriers that prevent them from voting. We believe the following recommendations will increase the amount of students and young people participating in elections which is essential for a fair democracy.

- Implementing the Washington Voting Rights Act to address the systemic exclusion of marginalized identities, especially people of color, from the political process.
- Extending the voter registration deadline to allow more time for young people to register to vote, as well as allowing in-person registration on election day.
- Allowing 16-year-olds and 17-year-olds to pre-register to vote at the Department of Licensing as part of the Motor Voter system.
- Requiring landlords to provide a voter registration form to a new residential tenant when the lease is signed.
- Automatic voter registration instituted at state funded departments, agencies and institutions.
- Increasing access for voters with disabilities by only requiring people who are unable to sign their ballots do a voter registration affidavit only once.
- Eliminating the poll tax by including prepaid postage on ballot return envelopes. This barrier, while it may seem small, is large not only in impact but in implication.

Tuition & Affordability - Natasha

The ASWWU is concerned about the increasing cost of college tuition. Rising costs of higher education can act as a deterrent to students to enroll in a university, and results in crushing student loans for many who do graduate. We acknowledge and appreciate that resident undergraduate tuition for 2013-14 and 2014-15 were frozen, and for 2015-16 and 2016-17 tuition was decreased. We request lawmakers develop long term tuition policies to be implemented for the security and longevity of affordable, accessible, and quality higher education in Washington State.

The ASWWU advocates for the following:

- Roll back of the 2.0 and 2.2% tuition increase over the 2017-2019 biennium. We would like to not only freeze tuition, but move to decrease tuition in the future.
- Full funded State Need Grant, in order to support individuals and communities who need these funds the most.

- A permanent decoupling of Services and Activities fees from tuition to maintain student autonomy and ensure funding for critical services. We acknowledge in the past two bienniums S&A fees were temporarily decoupled from tuition.
- Future discourse and proposals for free college education for WA students. Program can be modeled similarly as New York Excelsior Scholarship that provides free college tuition to families making less than \$125,000.

Revenue Agenda - Vanna

Decreasing tuition and fully funding financial aid are critical to the success of college and university students. The chronic lack of funding for higher ed disproportionately affects marginalized communities, including people of color, first generation students, low income students, and more. The ASWWU recommends implementing these progressive, reasonable sources of revenue. These measures will propel Washington State toward equity, both in tax policy and in higher education.

We strongly advocate for the following:

- Closing the extracted fuel exemption
- Instituting a progressive capital gains tax
- Closing some real estate excise tax exemptions
- Increasing the estate tax
- Closing the first time mortgage lenders tax loophole
- Taxing lottery winnings

Sex Ed - Emma S

We are encouraging strengthening and expanding the Healthy Youth Act (RCW 28A.300.475) and requiring HIV and healthy sex education in all public schools in Washington State.

- Sex education in America varies widely by state and even region, leaving teenagers without adequate sex education and information. In our K-12 school system, sexual education is not required. Washington law on sexual health education states that “the decision as to whether or not a program about sexual health education is to be introduced... is a matter for determination at the district level by the local school board.”
- Furthermore, schools that do teach students about sex provide heteronormative sexual education, excluding non heterosexual identities. Currently, most students lack the introduction and language for other identities. This is a problem because there is a multitude of sexual orientations and identities that individuals should be aware of entering their adult life. By failing to formally acknowledge different sexual orientations, students unsure of their own identities are disadvantaged in their own development.

- In addition, education that emphasizes consent, in all forms, is nonexistent in the K-12 school system. Teaching students consent at an early age is vital to forming healthy sexual relationships later on. Currently, language and anti-assault messaging is primarily targeted to women. In order to reduce sexual assault, education on consent needs to shift and include conversations to young men about sexual assault and harassment.
- “virginity” needs to be emphasized as a social construct.

Support for Undocumented Students - Vicky and Ana

The ASWWU recognizes that undocumented students are one of the most vulnerable groups of students and is concerned with the lack of resources available for undocumented students in higher education across the state of Washington. We believe

- Create a self sustaining, state sponsored loan program for undocumented students similar to California’s DREAMer Loan Program, partially funded by the state legislature and the universities
- Pass H.B. 1488 to expand in state financial aid to undocumented students, especially those without DACA. Many undocumented students use their DACA status to especially now that DACA was rescinded and 122 DACA recipients lose their DACA status every day, after March 5th that number will grow to 1,000.
- Lowering the residency requirement for in state financial aid from three years to one year to ensure as many undocumented students as possible have access to higher education
- Support undocumented students’ rights to work on campus regardless of DACA status

Civics Education - Zoe

The ASWWU recognizes that the K-12 system in Washington state prepares students not only for higher education, but also to be active participants in our state’s democracy and be civically engaged at the local, state and federal levels.

- Teaching students to consider social issues in relationship to the public good, to use democratic decision-making processes and to think critically about real issues.
- Encouraging teachers to engage students in multiple perspectives and multiple funds of knowledge.

Support for Survivors - Nick

The ASWWU is concerned about the vastly under-reported instances of sexual violence on our campus. We strongly believe that more students will be able to access support with increased funding at the state level, which will promote a healthier campus and community environment.

Additionally, this support will help students who are survivors of sexual or domestic violence complete their education with fewer roadblocks.

- Specialized personnel, resources, and trained staff members to improve the university's ability to respond to sexual violence and involved parties.
- The development and implementation of a mandatory training program for all university faculty, staff, and administration.
- Clarification of the reporting process as well as readily available information of support services for survivors of sexual and domestic violence at the university and in our community.
- Legislative interest toward the Washington Student Achievement Council in regards to assessing the effectiveness of current codes of conduct at Washington State universities that deal with sexual harassment and sexual assault in accordance with RCW 28B.110.030.
- Endorse COP/WSA's recommendations on exempting higher education institutions from the Administrative Procedures Act and form an educational model for conduct proceedings.

Student Unionization - Rosa

The ASWWU recognizes that student employees at Western and other institutions of higher education are often underpaid, overworked, underappreciated, and sometimes actively harmed in their work places.

- The ASWWU advocates for a law in Washington State to require public institutions of higher education to recognize student employee unions.