

Support for Undocumented Immigrants

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. Along with supporting undocumented students, we see it important to encompass and support the entire undocumented community.

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, U-visa holders and T-visa holders.
- 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
- Create legislation that makes it illegal for ICE to collaborate with any State funded agency.
- Require the Department of Ecology to test the water in the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma.
- Close the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma by revoking its business license due to the severe health and safety violations that have occurred there, under the ownership of the GEO Group. Poor conditions and profit motivation at GEO Group facilities have led to hunger strikes and even many deaths.

Support for Survivors

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 the Council of Presidents and the Washington Student Association's recommendations on exempting higher education institutions from the Administrative Procedures Act and form an educational model for conduct proceedings.

Revenue

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

- Direct tax revenue from recreational cannabis to increased funding for higher education'. Cannabis has become a white-collar industry that has disproportionately affected Communities of Color. While the recreational cannabis industry is dominated by white business people, many thousands of People of Color across Washington are still suffering from racist and punitive drug laws. Directing the cannabis tax to higher education will help ameliorate some of these historic wrongs and help educate a new generation of racially diverse leaders across all post-secondary institutions in Washington State.
- Implement a progressive carbon tax that re-invests in Communities of Color: The climate crisis is the single biggest issue facing our generation. The most dire impacts of climate change affect marginalized communities first and worst. We recommend the legislature show the pioneering climate leadership we know they're capable of, and pass a progressive tax on carbon that both curbs carbon emissions, invests in the marginalized communities most impacted by climate change, and allows for a just transition for Washington's diverse workforce.
- Implement a progressive capital gains tax and increase the estate tax: Washington has, by many measures, the most regressive tax system and one of the lowest estate tax rates in America. We recommend that the income from inherited and invested wealth accumulated by Washington's wealthiest citizens be taxed at a fair rate so we can invest in public services like higher education which benefit all Washingtonians - not just the privileged few.
- Close the extracted fuel exemption loophole': Dirty, polluting industries are taking advantage of our tax system through this antiquated tax loophole. We recommend that the legislature fight climate change, modernize our tax code, and put the additional revenue towards funding for higher education.

Enhancing Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity

The ASWWU recognizes that Western's ability to meet the state's need for access to higher education for underrepresented students is dependent on the investment in programs, which ensure a culturally welcoming and supportive academic environment. This request addresses three broad areas—multicultural services, diverse educational experiences and partnerships. We advocate for services such as:

- Support a bill that will provide a tuition waiver for state residents who are members of Native American tribes SB 6131
- A tribal liaison to improve outreach and focus on relationships with tribal communities to increase Western's ability to recognize the unique needs of American Indian/Alaskan Native students and to partner future programs.
- Support a bill that will align eligibility for the college bound scholarship program with the State Need Grant to give those eligible a second opportunity to receive financial assistance in pursuing higher education.

Ethnic Studies through K-12

The ASWWU recognizes and strongly believes that Washington State public school system and its curriculum must represent the historically marginalized communities of the country. 45% of students in K-12 are students of color while 89% of K-12 teachers are white. Many underrepresented students do not see their histories and experiences reflected in the school system. Furthermore, there is research evidence that ALL students benefit from well-taught and well-designed Ethnic Studies classes.

- Implementing an Ethnic Studies curriculum within K-12 schooling.
- Pass H.B. 1294 to develop a model ethnic studies curriculum for grade 7 to 12.
- Create an ethnic studies advisory committee that must advise, assist, and make recommendations to the superintendent of public instruction regarding the development of the model ethnic studies curriculum
- Support school districts in successfully implementing Ethnic Studies standards