TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

During my year in Western’s music department, I have been both deeply encouraged and deeply frustrated by the culture and opportunities for musicians, artists and dancers at WWU. I have had the chance to perform and learn with brilliant faculty and students. However, the College of Fine and Performing Arts’ current structure prevents it from truly serving its students and fostering their artistic potential. To begin, we need a culture and course offerings that reflect the diverse backgrounds of our students and world. To say that these departments neglect marginalized art and artists is an understatement. Currently, music, theatre and dance history courses are limited exclusively to classes on Western traditions, and in the music department especially, syllabi feature music by almost exclusively white male composers. Creating more opportunities for students to learn about art and artistic mediums more globally and inclusively is a goal of mine, and one that would help combat the deeply ingrained eurocentrism in our arts programs.

In addition, I would like to create more opportunities for student artists to produce and perform works within the community, both on campus and around Bellingham. I am hoping to establish a platform to connect student artists with other departments, clubs, and community groups, with the goal of increasing opportunities for students to collaborate and see their art, music, dance and theatre become an integral part of our collective lives.

With these challenges in mind, I am applying to work as an AS Student Senator for the College of Fine and Performing Arts. My goal is to hear and understand CFPA students’ needs, to work to meet them at the university level, and to create a representative, involved and dynamic culture in Western’s arts programs.

Sincerely,

Luke Arnold