

To whom it may concern

On Tuesday January 14th, Western Washington University was open at 8am with no class cancelations despite the clear presence of snow and ice on and around campus. Snow paths were cleared, but a majority of campus did not have clear paths until at least 11 am, and paths around the south campus dorms took even longer to be cleared. This follows a pattern of inaction in response to inclement weather by WWU administration in years past, despite numerous efforts by student disability advocates to improve the circumstances.

Having campus open without clear and safe paths was a reckless and discriminatory choice to make. While WWU has a policy that students with disabilities are entitled to excused absences during inclement weather, this policy puts all of the onus on disabled students to bargain with their professors in order to have their absences excused, and the administration does not actively enforce this [policy](#). This also means that students who are not registered as disabled with the school have no guarantee that they will not be penalized for staying home and away from potentially very dangerous conditions.

Professors at WWU receive no training what so ever on disability, working with disabled students, or what their legal obligations are when it comes to legally mandated accommodations. Without this training no student can expect that their rights as disabled individuals will be respected, and with very little trust in our Equal Opportunities Office when it comes to disability there is currently no path for students to raise issues of discrimination. This frequently forces students to divulge their private medical information to their professors in order to receive their proper accommodations.

We as disabled students and allies demand that Western agree to not open until all campus buildings have a clear and accessible path and entrance. We ask that WWU put significant effort towards informing students of their right to remain home during inclement weather for their own safety. This effort should include more accurate and less vague information in the emails sent out, and something added to the text notifications students receive. Western also must create and implement some form of real training for professors so that not all of the responsibility will fall on students to inform professors of their legal obligations.