

**Official Guidance to ASWWU Executive Board and Student Senate
RE: Resolutions**

PROPOSED: MAY 2020

RATIONALE: It has come to the attention of the Associated Students Communications Office that there is no guidance to the ASWWU Executive Board or Student Senate [herein mentioned “ASWWU leadership”] on the purpose, process, or formatting of ASWWU resolutions. Historically, this has resulted in poor communication to students on approved resolutions and this guidance, if adopted, will be provided to elected officials as a way to understand the scope of their respective body’s messaging.

VESTED AUTHORITY: By and through the AS Communications Director as chair of AS Communications Committee, a committee chartered by the AS Executive Board.

REQUEST: That the ASWWU Executive Board and Student Senate adopt the below-described process for the drafting and distribution of any resolutions or messaging.

BACKGROUND:

[The National Conference of State Legislatures](#) (NCSL) defines a resolution as “...a document that expresses the sentiment or intent...” of a governing body. Resolutions are also typically characterized as a value statement on behalf of a governing body.

In the context of ASWWU leadership, resolutions are often position statements of a governing branch. However, resolutions are exclusive from other motions and are strategically leveraged to bring greater awareness to a body’s opinion. In other words, a resolution does not need to be drafted or passed for every action that the body takes. Resolutions should be drafted within the scope of the member’s governing branch and done in consultation with the body’s chair to build a multi-faceted advocacy plan. Resolutions can be proposed from any member of the governing body and approved by the procedures outlined in the respective body’s rules of operation.

To determine when it is appropriate to draft a resolution, it is helpful to understand the stakeholders in the Associated Students of Western Washington University. The following chart breaks down the two governing bodies of the ASWWU and their respective constituents, which should give insight on the appropriate topics and purviews for which either body could draft a

resolution. In other words, it's helpful for either body to remember their constituents and therefore which messaging options are best for demonstrating advocacy.

ASWWU LEADERSHIP



The **ASWWU Student Senate**, as chartered in the 2019 academic year, derives its authority from Article III of the [ASWWU Constitution](#) and includes senators elected on behalf of students in their respective colleges. As noted in Article VI of the ASWWU constitution, it is the scope of the ASWWU Student Senate to formulate official opinions on behalf of the entire body whose purview includes representing students to the university's division of academic affairs (e.g. deans, college committees, faculty governance, etc.). **Therefore, resolutions drafted in the Student Senate should pertain to operations within WWU's division of academic affairs.**

The **ASWWU Executive Board**, as noted in Article III of the ASWWU Constitution is elected by the student body as a whole to represent the student body's interest to university governance structures relating broadly to student services and external governing bodies. Historically, this has been characterized as AS Vice Presidents interfacing with the appropriate university Vice Presidents whose divisions include the AS VP's scope. Whereas, the AS President oversees these interactions and represents the interest of students to external governing bodies. **Therefore, resolutions drafted in the Executive Board should pertain to operations within WWU's division of Enrollment and Student Services, University Relations and Marketing, University Advancement, Business and Financial Affairs, and to any external governing bodies.**

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:

Historically, the ASWWU was managed entirely by the ASWWU Executive Board of Directors, which oversaw the operations of the organization, as well as provided representation of Western

students to external governing bodies and university administration. With this structure, AS Vice Presidents (ASVPs) interfaced with their university vice presidential counterpart to whom they represented their constituents (i.e. the entire student body). However, it was identified that the AS VP for Academic Affairs position was too broad in its scope. The AS VP for Academic Affairs could not perform academic advocacy for all students and balance their extensive committee appointments. For that reason, the ASWWU created another governing body, the ASWWU Student Senate, which would focus on all matters relating to academic affairs. The AS Senate Pro Tempore would serve as chair and serve on the Executive Board, interfacing with the university's Provost and supporting the other Student Senators' work with their deans. However, eventually the Senate Pro Tempore would transition off the Executive Board and as a voting member of the Student Senate.

This new structure allowed student senators, as members of a given college, to develop a closer relationship with their deans and perform peer-advocacy for others in their college. The Student Senate also fulfilled an important need of providing representation on academic/curriculum committees by multiple students of diverse majors and programs.

For these reasons, Student Senators can only represent and speak on behalf of the individuals in their college. And as a body, the Student Senate represents student interest in the division of academic affairs. Whereas, the Executive Board reserves the right to represent student interest in all other university divisions, as well as to external governing bodies.

STAKEHOLDERS IN ASWWU MESSAGING

As outlined above, knowing each body's constituency is critically important as a reminder of who is able to speak on behalf of the entire ASWWU. **In short, neither body in their own capacity can speak on behalf of the entire ASWWU at once.** However, it should be noted that it is the role of the AS Communications Director, in their non-elected role and as spokesperson, to speak on behalf of the ASWWU or either governing body as appropriate (e.g. media relations, crisis communication, promotional events, etc.).

Instead, an opinion or resolution on behalf of the entire ASWWU must include consensus between both branches of ASWWU governance, as well as the ASWWU Offices who have their stake in the process through the AS Communications Office. The [AS Communications Office](#) supports the promotional marketing and public relations of the ASWWU.

Therefore, for resolutions to be drafted on behalf of the ASWWU they must be drafted as a joint-resolution (i.e. passed by both bodies) and then approved by the AS Communications Director. This, in turn, would represent all ASWWU stakeholders: students at-large who are represented by the Executive Board, students in their respective academic colleges or who are undeclared through the Student Senate, and ASWWU employees in their roles supporting the internal operations or programming efforts of the ASWWU through the AS Communications Director.

However, not all resolutions need to be drafted on behalf of the entire ASWWU just as not all issues need resolutions. It is the role of Student Senators and AS Vice Presidents to have strong relationships with their university counterpart (i.e. Deans/Provost for Senators and University Vice Presidents for AS Vice Presidents). For these reasons, it is encouraged that Senators and AS Vice Presidents work with their university counterparts first to represent the concerns of their constituents and gain more context on specific issues. This also ensures, if a resolution is drafted, it is factually accurate and represents any nuance that frequently exists with specific issues.

Remember: **Proposing a resolution for adoption, whether it is meant to be a joint-resolution or not, still exists within the canon of official ASWWU messaging.** Therefore, resolutions are expected to be thoroughly researched, factually accurate, and written in the spirit of productivity. The ASWWU is committed to maintaining students' trust in our ability to represent their concerns in the spirit of productivity. For these reasons, the below-detailed process exists to ensure collaboration.

PROCESS:

1. Once a Senator or Vice President identifies an issue for which they would like to draft a resolution, or has a resolution they would like to sponsor from another organization, they are expected to **bring the text of that resolution to the Chair for review** of the messaging and to confirm that a resolution is the most appropriate approach. At this time, the sponsor will notify the Chair if it is their intention to have the resolution be a joint-resolution or on behalf of the reviewing body. The chair will also decide whether it is appropriate for the other governing body to review the issue, or if the issue itself is outside of the body's scope. The Chair will serve as an intermediary to ensure the information is routed appropriately.
2. If it is determined by the Chair that a resolution is the most appropriate option for messaging, the sponsor will **ensure the text of the resolution is provided to the AS Communications Director** to begin drafting the official document for release (if passed). The sponsor will also provide to the AS Communications Director the intended review process of

the resolution, so the AS Communications Director is able to prepare the messaging and respond to any media inquiries appropriately. **All resolutions are to be drafted on the body's official letterhead and in accordance with formatting standards outlined in the ASWWU Branding Guide.**

3. The sponsor is responsible for **ensuring the text of the resolution is made available to the AS Executive Board Program Coordinator** for posting to the public as with any other meeting materials.
4. Once the item is recognized, it is subject to the same rules as any other agenda item and as dictated by either body's rules of operation. Therefore, **it is subject to being amended via legal motions made by any member.**
5. Upon receipt of amendments, and after passed, **it is the responsibility of the resolution sponsor and chair to communicate the updated text (with amendments applied) to the AS Communications Director.** The AS Communications Director will then update the document, store it alongside other official ASWWU messaging, affix the chair's signature to the document, and forward a final copy to the AS Executive Board Program Coordinator and Chair. *The chairs of each body (AS Senate Pro Tempore and AS President for the Student Senate and Executive Board, respectively) serve as the primary spokesperson for that body, and as such, any resolutions that are adopted by either body include the attestation of either position.*

It is the exclusive responsibility of the Chair to forward the document to the requested recipients. The AS Executive Board Program Coordinator will make the resolution available on the body's webpage and the AS Communications Director will publicize appropriately.

TIPS:

- Find a resolution template attached to this document to draft yours in the appropriate formatting standards.
- Any campus offices named in your resolution should be labeled as their official recognized name (e.g. **DO:** University Residences; **DON'T:** Housing and Dining)
- Any university officials are to be referred to in their official capacity (e.g. **DO:** President XX, Vice President of Enrollment and Student Services YY; **DON'T:** XX, YY)
- Any individuals to whom the resolution should be forwarded are to be included in the "cc:" section at the bottom of the document
- All ASWWU bodies should be referred to by their official title (e.g. Associated Students of Western Washington University (ASWWU) Student Senate, ASWWU Executive Board)

- The first time you list the entire name of an organization, feel free to indicate an abbreviation in parentheses
- Citations for information are hyperlinked on the document and numbered, including matching source numbers in lost form at the end of the document
- Contact the AS Communications Director for any questions and to discuss how ASWWU messaging can support the core of your resolution

FINAL REMARKS:

Our goal is to advocate for and represent the interests of WWU students, ensuring our process is streamlined for timely advocacy and clearly outlined in this document. However, we also recognize that there are many ways to perform advocacy, and as an elected official, you have a level of understanding around university structure that many students do not. As such, please know all ASWWU stakeholders are in this journey of student representation together.

GLOSSARY:

<u>Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>
Academic advocacy	Representation of students in matters relating to academic program structure, faculty, course syllabi, or department/college-level concerns
Associated Students of Western Washington University (ASWWU)	The officially recognized student organization at Western Washington University, providing services, activities, and representation to all WWU students
(Chair)person	The leader of a governing body, spokesperson, and individual who facilitates meetings
Consensus	Agreement/Voted approval
Constituents	The students who elected each position holder
Stakeholders	Individuals who hold stake in an organization, group, or project

////SAMPLE RESOLUTION////

**A Resolution of the
Associated Students of Western Washington University [Student Senate/Executive Board]**

“[Resolution Title]”

WHEREAS, [statement 1]; and

WHEREAS, [statement 2]; and

WHEREAS, [statement 3].

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ASSOCIATED STUDENTS OF WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY [STUDENT SENATE/EXECUTIVE BOARD]

THAT, [request 1]; and

THAT, [request 2]; and

THAT, [request 3].

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Associated Students of Western Washington University Student Senate at their [regular/special] meeting on [Month Date, Year].

[Signature]

[Name of respective body's chair]

[Title]

cc: [Individuals listed to whom resolutions should be forwarded]