

Western Washington University

Legislative Affairs Council

October 30th, 2020

MS Teams

Board Members: *Present:* Nicole Ballard (VP for Governmental Affairs), Nathalie Wagler (Voter Recruitment and Engagement Coordinator), Mariam Wolters (Outreach and Representation), Jude Ahmed (Director of Legislative Affairs), Ebon Oluchi (ESP Director), Daniela Rodriguez (ESC Representative), and Kaeli McKinley (Student At-Large).

Secretary: Sierra Templeton

Guest(s): None

Motions:

LAC-20-F- None

I. Call to Order

Nicole Ballard, VP of Governmental Affairs, called the meeting to order at 4:37 p.m.

II. Additions and Changes to the Agenda

None

III. Approval of Minutes

None

IV. Discussion Items

Introductions

1. Ballard stated that her goal for the year is to make the committee as accessible as possible.
2. Ahmed stated that her goal for the year is to connect to the student body in the online environment.
3. Wagler stated that her goal for the year is to collect student feedback.
4. Wolters stated that her goal for the year is to see how she can connect with students to try and continue the current engagement in social justice.
5. Rodriguez stated that her goal for the year is to spread information to the ESC and learn how the LAC applies to Western students.
6. McKinley stated that her goal for the year is to learn more about student civic engagement in college government.

A. What is LAC and How Does It Fit into the AS?- Ballard

1. Ballard stated that the student representation within the LAC is the most important role. The yearly LAC student fee is a dollar per student, but because of COVID-19, there LAC decided not to charge students for Spring or Summer quarter 2020. Usually this fee adds up to \$45,000 a year, largely covering the WSA funds. Anyone with an affiliation to WWU can request funds for any purpose to encourage student engagement.
2. Ballard stated that there is regularly 16 to 18 members, with a 8 to 9 person quorum. Without meeting quorum, LAC is not able to pass any items and may have to cancel meetings.
3. Ballard stated that the three lobbying days that the LAC creates an agenda for are: Western Lobby Day, Western Intersectional Lobby Day (WILD), and local lobby day.
4. Ballard stated that in addition to setting the lobbying agenda for events, the LAC helps with voter registration, calling legislators, support for the Office of Student Engagement programs, supporting political events on campus, and encouraging city and council meeting attendance.
5. Ballard stated that to create the lobby day agenda, the LAC will create a survey of items students may be interested in lobbying for, build the agenda out of their priorities, draft the agenda, hold listening sessions/forums for student input, and finally, sending the agenda through the AS Executive Board and the Student Senate.
6. Ballard stated that the items that the Director of Legislative Affairs (Ahmed) lobbies for must first be agenda proposals, that come through the committee or herself to either be approved, denied, or tabled. Anyone can bring an agenda proposal.
7. Ahmed noted that legislators are still unsure as to how the session will proceed, either online or in-person, and this will affect how lobby day is structured.

B. How to Do a Proposal Overview- Ballard

C. WSA Training- Ahmed

1. Ahmed stated that her position is called the Director of Legislative Affairs (DOLA), or sometimes the Legislative Liaison. Her job is to lobby on behalf of the Associated Students of Western Washington University.
2. Ahmed stated that she also lobbies on behalf of all students in Washington through the Washington Student Assembly, which is a non-partisan program dedicated to student engagement. They have a program that brings student lobbyists together to work on items to lobby on as a whole.
3. Ahmed stated that the WSA has in the past helped pass the DREAM act, tuition reductions, funding for student engagement hubs, and the Washington College Grant. Likely, higher-education funds will be targeted this year because of a smaller budget due to COVID-19.
4. Ahmed stated that out of the nine new agenda items the WSA is taking on this year, Western proposed five of them.

D. How a Bill Becomes a Law- Ahmed

1. Ahmed stated that Washington State has both a Senate and a House of Representatives, each with different committees covering different topics. First the

bill is drafted, then introduced, then introduced to a committee, then committee amendments and mark-ups are made, then the bill goes to the rules committee, a second reading, and a third reading, and if passed, the steps repeat again but in the other house. It is helpful to have a companion bill, so they are able to go through both houses at the same time. If the bill is approved by both houses, they agree on amendments, the governor signs the bill, and it becomes a law.

2. Ahmed stated that the legislature works in two-year cycles, one long session, and one short session. This year is a long session which means there is more funding available potentially, and bills that die this year can be carried on to the 2022 session, starting up in the process from wherever it died.

E. Survey Formation- Ballard

1. Ballard stated that the survey is sent out to all students, explaining what the LAC does, and asking students to pick their top three legislative priorities. The survey will be posted on Western social media pages to look for more ideas as well. In the previous year the LAC bought a couple gift cards so students that every student who took the survey would be entered to win, as an incentivized to complete the survey. Ballard stated that this year, because of COVID-19, it may be helpful to use grocery store, or basic needs gift cards.
2. Ballard stated that the plan is to get the survey out by Tuesday of the following week (November 3rd, 2020). The survey is meant to be broad as to be accessible to students.
3. Wolters asked whether previous year's agendas were accessible online, Ballard responded that they are, under the AS Committee website under LAC minutes and agendas. Just because an item may not get passed through this year, or the following year, doesn't mean it can't be advocated for as to bring attention to the item.
4. Ahmed suggested the idea of giftcard incentives for the listening sessions as well.
5. Oluchi added her concern about legislation surrounding sexism, and revisiting equity in Western's funding to address racism and sexism.

V. Reports

None

VI. Other Business

A. None

Nicole Ballard, AS VP of Governmental Affairs, adjourned this meeting at 5:51 p.m.