

Western Washington University

Legislative Affairs Council

March 10th, 2021

MS Teams

Board Members: **Present:** Nicole Ballard (VP for Governmental Affairs), Jude Ahmed (Director of Legislative Affairs), Natale Szabo (Local Liaison), Daniela Rodriguez (ESC Representative), Breaker Chittenden (Student At-Large), and Jennifer Leveque (Student At-Large).

Secretary: Sierra Templeton

Advisor: Casey Hayden (Assistant Director for Student Activities)

Guest(s): None

Motions:

LAC-21-W-9 To approve the Bilingual Educator Cohorts Proposal. **Passed.**

I. Call to Order

Nicole Ballard, VP of Governmental Affairs, called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

II. Additions and Changes to the Agenda

1. Ahmed asked to add the item Lobbying Proposals as an Information Item.

III. Approval of Minutes

None

IV. Action Items

A. Bilingual Educator Cohorts Proposal- Ahmed

1. Ahmed stated that she was just in a meeting with the Western lobbyist concerning this program which would put bilingual teachers in schools with a higher percentage of students whose first language is not English. Ahmed stated that supporting the bill would mean waiting until the House and Senate have produced their budgets and negotiate as the budget is edited. Western Washington University has one of the highest output of educators in Washington State and serves a largely undocumented community.
2. Ahmed stated that the operating budget would be \$350,000 yearly to support two cohorts who would each support up to twenty-five students.

3. Chittenden asked where the cohorts would be established, and if there is support in the legislature for this ask.
4. Ahmed responded that it is not concrete but possibly Tuckwilla, Renton, Highline, or Federal Way. She added that she is not sure if there is support.

MOTION LAC-21-W-9 by Chittenden

To approve the Bilingual Educator Cohorts Proposal.

Second: Szabo Action: Passed

V. Information Items

A. Lobbying Proposals- Ahmed

-HB 1044

1. Ahmed stated that this bill would expand prison to postsecondary access. It was considered by the writers of the Western Intersectional Lobby Day Agenda but was ultimately not included as it would give money to the Department of Corrections (DOC). Ahmed stated that there was quite a bit of support from stakeholders and organizations with Black and BIPOC leaders. Ahmed added that it has a section dedicated to educational pathways for incarcerated people with disabilities.
2. Ahmed stated that the DOC asked for 1.5 million dollars for a biennium that would go towards IT security, internet service, and for maintaining roles and associates.

-HB 1088 and SB 5259

1. Ahmed stated that both bills hold University Police Departments to the same standards of State Law Enforcement Agencies: reporting and investigating impeachment disclosures and use of force by officers. The Western University Police asked for \$10,000 for this ask which is an outlier and probably will not be given.

-HB 1472

1. Ahmed stated that this bill would add a graduate student representative to a Washington Student Achievement Council, the state agency that handles statewide planning, guidance, and improvement of education. Ahmed stated that undergraduate student tuition cannot be raised more than two percent per year but there is nothing stopping tuition raises for graduate students.

-SB 5237

1. Ahmed stated that this bill would expand accessible and affordable childcare to four-year institutions.

-SB 5321

1. Ahmed stated that this bill would automatically enroll Washington low-income youth in the College Bound Scholarship program as there is a race disparity in the percentage of kids who sign up as there is not enough information given about it.

-HB 1236

1. Ahmed stated that this bill would address a series of issues concerning responding to housing crises. The eviction moratorium will be lifted at the end of the month and it is currently legal for landlords to kick tenants out in twenty days without reasoning.

-SB 5160

1. Ahmed stated that this bill would give legal representation to tenants facing eviction and would ensure that landlords and tenants can access state rental assistance programs. It would give tenants support without having to enter the court system.

-SB 5194

1. Ahmed stated that this bill would support equity in community colleges and lower the residency requirement from three years to one year for students who apply to grants in Washington state. There is an amendment in the works that would address out-of-state student's residency qualifications as well.

VI. Discussion Items

A. Administrative Lobby Day

1. Ballard stated that she met with Eric Alexander this morning and decided that she did not have the capacity to work on this lobby day right now. Ballard stated that if this event were to occur and was not the best, it may hinder lobbying with administrators in the future.

B. Funding for Ethnic Studies

1. Ballard stated that she met with the lobbyist for Western and the Washington state budget looks better than was assumed so there may be funding left over for an Ethnic Studies Institute. Ahmed and herself drafted up a statement asking for 1.6 million dollars for this purpose.

VII. Reports

Natale Szabo, Local Issues Coordinator stated that the Local Lobby Day survey was posted and will continue to be advertised.

Jude Ahmed, Director of Legislative Affairs, stated that she will have a mid-session legislative update soon on what bills need more student support and what bills may need more work between sessions. Ahmed stated that about 80% of bills that Western has lobbied for have passed through something; student work is paying off.

Nathalie Wagler, Organizing and Outreach Coordinator, was not present to report.

Nicole Ballard, AS VP for Governmental Affairs, stated that the AS VP for Governmental Affairs non-partisan Instagram is up and running.

VIII. Other Business

A. None

Nicole Ballard, AS VP of Governmental Affairs, adjourned this meeting at 4:58 p.m.

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