

## Enter your full name

Pierce Bock

## Enter your pronouns

He/they

**Candidate Statement:** (A candidate statement should address what you would like the appointment committee to know about you, why you are qualified for the position, why you are interested in serving as an ASWWU Senator, and what you plan to accomplish if appointed.)

(reply must be no more than 500 words)

I will fight for students as an ASWWU Senator. To me, this is not about building my resume or getting a fancy letter of recommendation from a university administrator. Rather, it is about authentically representing my peers and relentlessly advocating for their needs. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed a unique set of challenges students face, ranging from unsafe working conditions, financial difficulties, housing insecurity, and inequities within academia. I am not immune to these difficulties and have faced many of them myself. My Western experience is different from that of many others but allows me to understand student complexities from a different perspective. I am a transfer student, which forced me early on to familiarize myself with a new campus community and academic standards I am actively involved in many spaces at the University. I currently serve on the AS Transportation Advisory Committee and am a member of the water polo team. Being new to water polo and swimming, I am challenged every time I step in the pool. Being an active participant in the community around me is a priority of mine. I am a board member on Bellingham's Community Development Board. My time spent on Bellingham's community development board has challenged me to think holistically about complex issues, including housing discrimination, zoning laws, and affordable housing models. As a board member, I am tasked with making recommendations to the City Council on distribution of general fund dollars and which community projects should be prioritized. I have paid careful consideration to equity and how this can be done in a manner that serves vulnerable and low-income student populations who live in Bellingham. I also value political campaigns, because electing leaders committed to their communities is critical for implementing the change we need. I played a central role on the Colleen Echohawk for Seattle Mayor campaign, working with a talented team to connect with residents across the City of Seattle. We knocked on over 11,000 doors to hear from constituents about the matters that most impact them. This was achieved through effective communication and innovative solutions to problems. My time on the campaign taught me how to solve problems and think critically, as well as how to support collaborative decision-making processes to elect the first Indigenous woman as a big city mayor. I intend to prioritize ethics and accountability in my role as senator. I am familiar with the AS Charter as well as AS and WWU policies and am committed to upholding them. I have taken the time to learn about the University's governance and organization structures. This quarter I am applying to the Urban Planning and Sustainable Development major. I strive to work in Urban planning because I am curious about how city designs can optimize happiness for those who live and work in the built environment. When faced with a tough decision, I always ask myself, are we reinventing the wheel?

What does it mean to you to have a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion? Explain how you would address students' concerns and advocate for all students in your constituency (e.g. college, grad school, or at-large), especially underrepresented or historically marginalized students? (reply must be no more than 500 words)

I am committed to bringing change through the ASWWU Legislative Agenda this spring. When interacting with Washington state legislators and other state officials, I am compelled to support student-identified and community-driven projects to steer our lobbying efforts. All students deserve help throughout their academic careers. Our university must do more to foster safe, welcoming, and accessible settings for all students. To achieve these objectives, we must seek to prioritize diversity in key issue areas. I would be honored to represent Western Washington students in the state senate on matters that affect them. I am also looking forward to working as a constituent spokesperson and communicating with the Senate Pro-Tempore. As a student, I want to support the rights of CENVS students. This can be accomplished by collaborating with our program, the state, and the broader community to ensure that students are funded and resourced. I will work with the Legislature to solve the numerous obstacles that impede students from finishing their education and attaining their goals. Much of the work I have done has been centered around advocating for affordable student housing. I am currently working to create the first ever student-led community land trust, which would create permanently affordable housing for students where they can gain equity through a rent-to-own model. One of my top priorities at Western is to ensure that all students who are following their educational ambitions have access to safe, permanent housing. To do so, we need to make the homeless student assistance pilot program a permanent program that will serve and aid students who are homeless. Students are better suited to seek and complete their education when they have access to their fundamental requirements, such as washing facilities, food, technology, and housing. I will elevate the voices of underrepresented and historically marginalized students. By forming close relations with BIPOC students, the Ethnic Student Center (ESC), LGBTQ+ clubs, and more, I will help bring their unique stories and specific concerns to the attention of the Senate. As an Asian-American, the ESC is a place that helps me feel comfortable at Western. I see the importance of being part of a community that respects and celebrates unique differences. By cultivating strong relationships with community leaders and constituents, I hope to provide underrepresented students more access to these communities. I am dedicated to promoting Western's diverse students so that they can achieve success in college, graduate school, and their future careers.

In this role, you would be working with students, faculty, staff administrators, and fellow senators. How will you go about forming positive working relationships with these different groups? (reply must be no more than 500 words)

My work with others has taught me the importance of communication. Communication is key to any successful team, successful communication looks like everyone's voices being heard, active listening, active support, and thoughtful debate. Whether in the classroom or with coworkers I excel in orchestrating group discussions by listening to everyone in the room. Active communication will enable me to make well-informed decisions that would serve Western stakeholders. In addition, I would meet with the Senate Pro-Tempore and the University Dean to discuss CENVS student issues and needs, which is critical for an efficient dialogue between the constituency and the Senate. I would discuss current concerns with colleague Senators in a constructive manner during Senate meetings. Conflict management is critical, particularly in a political environment. It is important to find common ground and realize that folks share many of the same goals. Oftentimes, it is about how to get there and the methodology to do so. We are all working our hardest to best represent students. Therefore, I want to use the skills I learned in the restaurant industry to effectively manage conflicts. Conflicts, such as service or quality errors are very common. Being upfront, honest, and having open communication are best practices to mitigate conflict. It is important to also understand that it is okay to ask for help and admit when things are not going well. I am always willing to do this. Many conflicts directly result from miscommunication that could best be solved through open conversations. To modify any job descriptions, I will engage with the Assistant Director for Student Responsibility and Governance, and the Personnel Director. I will engage with CENVS faculty members to ensure that their perspectives are heard and to provide opportunities for them to promote student organizations. I will build and maintain effective and open communication with students, staff, and administration to form productive working relationships. I will give my time and dedication towards helping students, professors, administrators, and Senators by reaching out to them on a regular basis for check-ins. I will, for example, meet with student interest groups and program departments, actively listen to their thoughts, and participate in their conversations. In addition, I plan to facilitate a dialogue between these organizations and how ASWWU Senate is dealing with issues that affect them or the entire student population and staff. Maintaining an active discourse through constituent office hours and email will help me achieve this high level of communication. Amicable collaboration is necessary for teamwork, therefore I will show respect for others and attempt to establish mutual understanding if disagreements arise. I will seek to increase the productivity of Senate meetings by applying organizational and time management abilities. Finally, if offered the opportunity to represent my peers as ASWWU Student Senator, I am inspired to form strong interpersonal connections with Senators, constituents, faculty, and staff administrators to make Western a more equitable University.