



**Associated Students of
Western Washington University
Legislative Affairs Council Meeting Minutes
October 24, 2023, 5:30pm, VU567 and Microsoft Teams**

Time Meeting Started: 5:33

Attendees:

Council Members present for meeting: Erin Godwin, VP for Governmental Affairs – Chair ; Aspen Cates-Doglio, AS Civics Involvement Coordinator; Kira Davis, AS Voter Recruitment and Engagement Coordinator; Gabby Laipeniaks, AS Local Issues Coordinator; Lily Van Mullem, LGBTQ+ Western Student Staff Representative; Lynna Hall, Disability Outreach Center Student Staff Representative; Lauren Johnson, AS Senator; Kenia Soriano Hernandez, Blue Resource Center Student Staff Representative; Cole Farhat, Ethnic Student Center Student Staff Representative

Council Members Absent: Stella Seth, AS Director of Legislative Affairs; Morgan Whitt, VP for Diversity

Guests present for meeting: Binta Kolly, At Large Student (not seated); Andrew Kudrna, At Large Student (not seated); Zinta Lucans, Sustainability Engagement Institute Student Staff Representative (not seated), Cole Burk, Sustainability Engagement Institute Student Staff Representative (not seated)

Staff & Assistants present: Sophia Gubbels, Student Government Assistant; Casey Hayden, Office of Civic Engagement Advisor

Motions:

None for this meeting

I. CONSENT ITEMS

a. Approval Of Minutes

- i No minutes to approve at this time.

II. INFORMATION ITEMS

a. Introductions- 15 minutes

- i Introducing agenda and people

b. Chair Presentation- 30 minutes

- i Erin Godwin, VP of Governmental Affairs presents their Powerpoint
 - 1 Godwin says that the council must complete their work to figure out what will be said and asked for of Washington state legislators on Lobby Day
 - 2 Godwin outlines the members of the Legislative Affairs Council (LAC)
 - a They explain the AS Executive Board and how it works with the AS Senate. They then define their own role as the AS VP of Government Affairs. Godwin defines the Office of Civic Engagement (OCE) responsibilities, roles, and members.
 - b Godwin introduces Stella Seth, who is not present, as the OCE Director of Legislative Affairs. Godwin explains how Seth is the point of contact between the LAC and Washington state affairs in Olympia, WA.

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- c Godwin presents the updated Charge and Charter of the LAC which has recently been approved at the 10/19/23 Executive Board meeting. Godwin states that the main purpose of the LAC is civic engagement. Godwin says that their goal is to increase Western Washington University (WWU) student’s participation in civic engagement. Godwin shows the council many forms of improving student participation such as visiting clubs and classes, posting on LAC member’s respective department’s social media, and mass emails to the student body of WWU; Godwin emphasizes that the LAC should talk to their friends to increase participation.
- 3 Connecting with Elected Officials
 - a Godwin states that elected officials and candidates might be able to visit at WWU
- 4 Managing the Legislative Action Fund (LAF)
 - a Godwin explains that the legislative action fee paid by the WWU student body is \$1 per quarter for each individual student. This fee is used by the LAC and there is currently (on 10/24/23) \$90,000 in the LAF.
- 5 Legislative Agenda Setting for Lobby Day
 - a Godwin states that legislative agenda setting will be completed by a collaboration of the LAC over the next 3 months. Legislative agenda setting will be worked on every time the LAC meets and will include drafting policy.
 - i Timeline is as follows:
 - 1 First draft written by mid-December.
 - 2 The legislative agenda is to be finalized by the end of January.
 - 3 Western Intersectional Lobby Day will be on February 18-19, 2024.
- 6 Overview of Legislative Successes of 2022-23 LAC
 - a Budget requests asked by the LAC of the Washington State government in Olympia, WA
 - i Successfully requested and received \$53,750,000 for the Student Development and Success Center to be built for WWU near academic west.
 - ii Successfully requested and received \$10,000,000 to update WWU’s heating system because the current (10/24/23) heating system makes up a significant portion of WWU carbon emissions.
 - b Bills successfully proposed by WWU LAC and passed by the Washington State government.
 - i SB 5078
 - ii SB 5238
 - iii HB 1522

c. Discussion- 10 minutes

- i Godwin requests that the council read and go over the legislative agenda review.
- ii Godwin asks if there are questions.
 - 1 Cole Burk asks how the subcommittee meetings will be formed and how they will meet up. Godwin replies that the subcommittee procedures will be worked out in the upcoming meetings. Gowin adds that joining subcommittees will be optional.
 - 2 Lauren Johnson, AS Senator, asks where the council should find WA house and legislature documents.
 - a Godwin directs the council to app.leg.wa.gov. Godwin states that this website will be an incredibly important resource for the council's preparation for Lobby Day. Godwin says that the Legislative session in Olympia, WA begins in January and will last for 60 days.
 - i Godwin shows the council how to use app.leg.wa.gov to look up a bill number.
 - 3 Gabby Laipenieks (AS Local Issues Coordinator) asks Godwin if Microsoft Teams access to the LAC meetings will always be available to the council along with being able to attend in-person. Godwin replies that the meetings will be hybrid access so that council members can attend online or in-person, but that only this meeting (10/24/23) will be recorded because it involves a lot of important information for the council.
- iii Godwin says that the room in use for the meeting, VU 567, will not be reserved going forward. They ask the council for suggestions for meeting location. Council decides to hold future meetings at the Interdisciplinary Science Building going forward.
- iv Godwin says that the time put in by council members outside of meetings and preparing for meetings is self-determined.
- v Godwin tells council members that they should discuss legislative policy for their respective fields with their department heads.
- vi Godwin explains Lobby Days
 - 1 Council members are not required to attend Lobby Days in Olympia. Lobby Days are for students to go to Olympia and discuss legislation with senators, legislators, or legislator's assistants.
- vii Godwin asks the council to consider how intersectionality relates to politics and policy

d. Good of the Order - 5 minutes

- i OCE candidate forum occurring 10/26/23 at 7pm. RSVP on Western Involvement Network (WIN)
- ii 11/2/23 is the date of the candidate forum for mayor of Bellingham. RSVPing on WIN allows a person the chance to ask a question of the mayor candidates.

III. OTHER BUSINESS

- a. Next Meeting: October 31st, 2023, 5:30pm, Location: Interdisciplinary Science Building 242

Time Meeting ended: 6:28