



## **Associated Students Western Washington University Federal Legislative Agenda 2009**

### **Legislative Mission:**

*Our mission, as the representative body for the Associated Students of Western Washington University, is to advocate measures that enhance student accessibility to higher education, protect the institutional integrity that fosters personal growth and prepares students to make a positive contribution in our society.*

### **Financial Aid**

*With regards to Financial Aid, the Associated Students of Western Washington University:*

- Support any increase in financial aid including, but not limited to, an increase in the maximum Pell Grant, and an increase in FAFSA funds.
- Support legislation that simplifies the FAFSA.
- Oppose any limit on the number of Pell Grant recipients.
- Oppose any attempts to withhold financial aid from students for extraneous reasons including, but not limited to, an individual's moral, political and/or religious beliefs, selective service status, use of drugs, or illegal file sharing.
- Support legislation that increases the accessibility of financial aid to middle income families.
- Oppose any effort to include financial aid, including scholarships, as taxable income.
- Support increases in federal funding for grants and programs that increase accessibility to higher education including, but not limited to, TRIO programs and grants such as CCAMPIS and GEAR-UP.

### **Student Loans**

*With regards to Student Loans, the Associated Students of Western Washington University:*

- Support any lowering of interest rates on student loans.
- Support increased access for college graduates to loan forgiveness programs.
- Support legislation that increases transparency in regards to interest rates.

### **Independence**

*With regards to Independence, the Associated Students of Western Washington University:*

- Support a definition of independent student status that would not include age.
- Oppose a waiting period for independence until after a student's parent or guardian stops claiming the student on their Federal tax return.
- Support a definition of independence that does not require the student to maintain a minimum level of income.

## **Student Privacy**

*With regards to Student Privacy, the Associated Students of Western Washington University:*

- Oppose any legislation that weakens the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), including, but not limited to, disclosure of coursework, grades or financial information without consent.

## **Diversity**

*With regards to Diversity, the Associated Students of Western Washington University:*

- Support ethnic, cultural, socio-economic, sexual orientation, gender identity, disabled status, and racial diversity as essential and necessary aspects of an effective learning environment.
- Support legislation that improves the standard by which the collection, sharing, and interpretation of hate crime data takes place.

## **Environment**

*With regards to the Environment, the Associated Students of Western Washington University:*

- Support legislation that would mitigate global climate change.
- Support legislation and increased funding to improve public transportation systems.
- Support legislation that would subsidize and encourage the development of green, renewable energy sources.

