Purpose of Submittal:

AS President Keara Ryan will brief the Board of Trustees on recent activities of the Associated Students.
Dear Trustees,

Thank you for the opportunity to update you on the activities of the Associated Student Government for the final time in the 2023-2024 academic year. Serving as the Associated Students President has been a great honor. Before I begin my report, I want to recognize the invaluable service of all ASWWU Student Government members and the support from our advisors and student government assistants.

The Encampment

Over the past month, I have been deeply impressed by the resilience displayed by students, administration, staff, and faculty as our campus navigated several challenges, including a student workers’ strike and encampment. The focus of the encampment has been on the demands of the Divestment Apartheid Coalition, and I have never been more inspired by the support and care students provided to each other during this time. The ASWWU looks forward to appointing representatives to the Board of Trustees’ Advisory Committee on Socially Responsible Investing (ACSRI) and the University’s Committee on Ethical Contracts. While significant progress has been made by both students and administrators, I strongly believe that there is more work to be done to ensure students feel heard and valued on our campus.

Services & Activities Fee

Over the past quarter, I have had the pleasure of serving on the Services & Activities (S&A) Fee Committee. I understand there is currently an audit of this fee process and its constituent members, and these concerns and others have been provided to the internal audit team. On behalf of the Student Advisory Committee and Student Government, we request that the Board of Trustees reevaluate the S&A fee process and procedures.

The current S&A fee membership comprises students from areas that receive S&A fee funding. This process does not allow student members to consider the diverse needs of our student population because they are there to represent their specific areas. Additionally, student members face immense pressure from faculty and staff that act as their advisors (for department related activities, these advisors are often also their professors) whose salaries are paid for by S&A fees. Additionally, the current process only allows existing constituent areas to receive funding. This membership structure is outlined in the Board of Trustees Services and Activities Fee Guidelines.

Our practices differ from other S&A fee committees across the state and country. Discussions with other AS Presidents revealed that their S&A fee processes are longer, allow programs and activities not currently receiving funding to apply for funding, and comprised of at-large students appointed by the AS. ASWWU believes that aligning our process with those of peer and regional institutions will enhance our university’s ability to respond to student needs and address them effectively.
Looking Forward

I am excited to announce that the election results have been confirmed. While voter turnout remains a challenge, we have seen increased participation compared to last year even when the elections took place at the same time the encampment started. This effort would not have been possible without the ASWWU Office of Civic Engagement.

The ASWWU Constitutional amendment has passed, meaning almost all governing documents have been updated. This year has been focused on strengthening and realigning student government. I am eager to see the progress future students can make when they do not have to focus on updated operational structures.

Additionally, next year’s Executive Board and Senate have been confirmed. I am proud to announce that the 2024-2025 AS President will be Malachi Phillips, an accomplished student leader and President of both the Political Science Association and the International Affairs Association. Malachi’s goals for next year include advocating for basic needs, budget transparency, and fostering diversity and community at WWU.

Thank you for your continued support of the ASWWU Student Government.

Keara Ryan
President, ASWWU Student Government