

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

*Meet*

**The  
Candidates**

SPRING ELECTION GUIDE

**May 2023**

# EXECUTIVE BOARD CANDIDATES

**OCE**  
Office of Civic Engagement

**ASWWU**



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## CANDIDATE FOR AS PRESIDENT



**Keara Ryan**  
she/her

**Major: Sociology**  
**Minor: Political**  
**Science and Holocaust**  
**and Genocide Studies**



### Candidate Statement:

After being appointed by Governor Inslee to serve as your Student Trustee I have built relationships with the WWU Board of Trustees, administrators, faculty, and staff that will be essential in making the change students want to see. As your next President, I will be an advocate for students as I work towards achieving these four things: 1 Community. Students are vital members of our campus community and must be central in university advancement work. Working with the Chief Diversity Officer will allow the AS to continue to play an active role in Western's access, diversity, equity and inclusion (ADEI) efforts. 2 Sustainability. Increase transparency in university sustainability practices through collaborative work with the VP for Sustainability. 3 Accountability. Guaranteeing student dollars spent within the AS are meeting student's needs. Ensuring student life continues to thrive at Western while preparing for future budget challenges. 4 Connect. Increase student access to AS elected officials. Prioritizing the role at-large students play in the success of committees that have been struggling university-wide.

### Co-curricular and Extracurricular Involvement

Appointed by Governor Jay Inslee as WWU Student Trustee, 2 years working in ASWWU Office of Civic Engagement, Climate Leadership Certificate Cohort 3, previous Planned Parenthood Generation Action Outreach Coordinator, and organizer of Winter 2022 menstrual cup distribution. Whatcom Peace & Justice Center Intern, 2022 Whatcom Democrats Campaign Intern, Summer 2022 Lydia Place Community Engagement Intern, and 2020-2021 Carroll College Student Senator

### Relevant Awards, Honors, and Accolades

Commitment to Justice Award from ASWWU Club Hub 2022, Robert F Lucas Outstanding Lieutenant Governor's Award International Key Club, Outstanding Pacific Northwest Key Club Lieutenant Governor, Distinguished Rotary Student Snoqualmie Valley



## CANDIDATE FOR AS SENATE PRESIDENT



**Gabe Wong**  
they

**Major: Energy**  
**Science and**  
**Technology, BS**



### Candidate Statement:

Hi, I'm Gabe! I'm running for the office of Senate President at the recommendation of my peers. Since being elected Senator At-Large last year, I've worked toward getting artwork from BIPOC artists into the libraries, establishing a more equitable pay structure in the AS, and strengthening student voices throughout university governance structures. I've led the AS in calling on Western to recognize our student worker union, WAWU, and I've advocated for student needs at the state level, especially the rights of workers, queer people, and people of color. As Senate President, I want to foster a Student Senate that's proactive, accessible, and useful to all students. I intend to engage students so that advocacy happens from the bottom-up: student power comes from collective action, not a title. I will fight for transparency and student input in university decision making. I will work to dismantle systems of oppression within the AS and the University, in the spirit of the HSOC, BSO, NASU, ESC, and Blue Group demands. I'll pay particular attention to systems of ableist oppression, especially as COVID-19 is increasingly and irresponsibly ignored. I'll continue working with Shred the Contract and demand that Western divest from unjust food systems.

### Co-curricular and Extracurricular Involvement

AS Student Senate, AS Finance Council, President's Sustainability Council, Shred the Contract, WAWU, occasional attendee of various ESC clubs, attendee of both 2023 Lobby Days



## CANDIDATE FOR AS VP FOR ACTIVITIES

Noah Schexnayder  
he/him



Major: Undeclared

### Candidate Statement:

Hey y'all, my name is Noah Schexnayder, and I'm running for AS Vice President for Activities. I served as the Vice President for Activities over the course of the last year, and during that period I strived to make our student government as representative as possible and to create a community that's welcoming to everyone. I advocated for more student involvement in our legislative process, and the administration of our campus facilities. One way that I did that was helping establish the Student Union Advisory Group, a joint committee of student and professional employees that managed the Viking Union Facilities and Budget. I was also personally involved with approving over 40 new clubs on campus, and granting over \$20,000 in club funding grants. I also was previously a member of the Edens-Higginson community's hall council, where I helped recognize community achievement, regularly attended Nation Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH) meetings, and planned events for students such as a field day, haunted house, a multi-community dance, and weekly movie nights. I'm happy to take the leadership skills I first grew there into my current job. Hopefully, I can continue to represent you all in the future. Thanks!

### Co-curricular and Extracurricular Involvement

AS Vice President for Activities 2022-2023, Edens-Higginson Hall Council Vice-President of Recognition 2021-2022, Western Academic Workers Union (WAWU) Member

## CANDIDATE FOR AS VP FOR GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Valerie Alaniz



Major: Energy  
Science and  
Technology

### Candidate Statement:

My name is Valerie, and I'm a millennial mother and military spouse. I'm in my final year at WWU where I'm completing my Energy Science and Technology degree. Having teenagers, myself, I'm aware of the current Gen Z issues and trends. Like many I believe in truth, justice, fairness, education, equitable access for all, and protecting our most vulnerable communities and the environment. I have a background in education and the energy field. I am interested in the energy infrastructure of today and how we transition towards clean reliable energy. Nowadays good leadership is lacking, and it's important to set the example on behalf of my generation to step up and offer the skills I have worked hard to attain. I have experience in policy design on the local school district level, and recently complete my Energy Policy Minor requirement. I also participated in Westerns Intersectional Lobby Day 2023, where I met with local legislators Clyde Shavers and Dave Paul's office to advocate for mental health funding for veterans, disabled, and handicapped individuals. If elected, I will ensure that there is non-biased transparency and communication and bi-partisan action.

### Co-curricular and Extracurricular Involvement

Oak Harbor School District Volunteer, District Parent Advisory Committee member for OHSD. WIEMN+

### Relevant Awards, Honors, and Accolades

Skagit Valley College Mathematics Departmental Award

## CANDIDATE FOR AS VP FOR GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

**Erin Godwin**  
they/them

**Major: Political Science**  
**Minor: Leadership Studies**



### **Candidate Statement:**

Hello! My name is Erin Godwin, and this is my second year at WWU. Last fall I was a member of the voter registration staff here at Western. You have probably seen me out on Red Square or at the voter hub on Election Day! I am running for AS VP of Governmental Affairs because I am passionate about politics and civic engagement. I believe that we must be active participants in democracy. Western's student body is very politically engaged and that is great! I want to ensure that every student is knowledgeable about relevant issues at the local, state and federal levels. I also want students to be aware of opportunities to get involved in governmental affairs. I will help plan the Lobby Day events in Olympia and Bellingham with the OCE. I am going to work hard to make sure that students who get involved feel empowered with the knowledge they need to make the differences they desire. We can use our collective power to represent our collective interests. We are in the fight for a better future together! Thank you so much for your consideration. Have a nice day:)

### **Co-curricular and Extracurricular Involvement**

The Political Science Association and The Young Democrats of Western

## CANDIDATE FOR AS VP FOR GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

**Qi Dan**

**Major: Political  
Science**



### **Candidate Statement:**

My name is Qi Dan, and I'm one of the student of Western, I qualified for the position because I used to be enlist at US Navy for 6 years in logistics department and I also joined Young Democrats of Western, I'm interested in running for the ASWWU Senate because I want to help other students, I plan to get more program that can help those students who still had problem in the WWU which might affect their study.

### **Co-curricular and Extracurricular Involvement**

Young Democrats of Western

### **Relevant Awards, Honors, and Accolades**

Armed forces service medal

## CANDIDATE FOR AS VP FOR DIVERSITY

**Morgan Whitt**  
she/hers

**Major: Environmental Studies, Eco-Social Justice**



### **Candidate Statement:**

My name is Morgan Whitt and I would love to be your new AS Diversity Executive! I am an out-of-state student from San Diego, California. Moving to Bellingham was a large culture shock. I felt out of place coming from an area where my ethnicity was celebrated and represented. Having a background with Budget and Planning for Latine Student Union, I feel like I can continue to improve and help with events through the ESC and MCC on campus. Every BIPOC voice and every BIPOC student matters and deserves to be adequately celebrated as well as represented.

### **Co-curricular and Extracurricular Involvement**

Intramural Basketball and Board Member for Latine Student Union and Volunteer for BIPOC Support Foundation of San Diego

## CANDIDATE FOR AS VP FOR DIVERSITY

**Leanne Eloise A Canonizado**  
she/her

**Major: Communication pre-major, Sociology minor**



### **Candidate Statement:**

I am new to this institution after transferring from a community college that didn't provide as many opportunities to help in making changes that benefit the student body. At the moment I am on the path to majoring in communication and minoring in sociology. Although my knowledge of diversity and inclusion is limited, I plan to use what I learn to benefit the lives of others - the intent to make positive changes and encourage safety and diversity is valuable in every community. As a person who comes from a minority group, with dual cultures affecting my daily life and how I have developed as a person, I believe that I can be a great asset and advocate for the position of ASVP for Diversity. In high school, I was able to interact with many people as an NJROTC leader, often time hearing what they were going through. I want to make the needs of students heard, so if I am elected, I plan to help in creating policies and environments that allow for the growth of diversity, as well as commit to figuring out ways to combat diversity and inclusion issues.

### **Co-curricular and Extracurricular Involvement**

FASA - Filipino American Student Association, Religious propagation, Religious community outreach programs, NJROTC volunteer events

### **Relevant Awards, Honors, and Accolades**

2019 Outstanding cadet of the year, The Military Order of the World Wars Medal recipient, 2021-2022 Honor roll. O'Dell Leadership and Service recipient

## CANDIDATE FOR AS VP FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Liam Pratt  
he/him/his

Major:  
Environmental  
Studies – Policy



### Candidate Statement:

In its current state, Western Washington University is well on its way to becoming a model university for other schools pursuing sustainable initiatives. That said, it still has a long way to go before we can truly call ourselves a green campus. As a co-founder and the president of the Students for Climate Action club, I have extensive knowledge of environmental justice initiatives and have years of experience in organizing for these causes. I hope to combine this action-driven mindset with the bureaucratic system of student government, in which I have become well versed as a student senator, to investigate our school's environmental practices and put us on the track toward a more sustainable Western.

### Co-curricular and Extracurricular Involvement

Bellingham Fridays for Future Organizer, Co-founder and Lead Organizer of the Students for Climate Action Club, a regular participant with 350 Seattle, Youth Salmon Protectors, Save our Salmon, and Snake River Savers (I like salmon). Additionally, I am a research assistant with the university's Border Policy Research Institute.

### Relevant Awards, Honors, and Accolades

WOHESC Scholarship, NROTC Scholarship, Stephen Decatur Award, Dean's List (SUNY Maritime College).

## CANDIDATE FOR AS VP FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Matthew Benedict  
he/they

Major: Energy  
Policy and  
Management



### Candidate Statement:

I am Matthew Benedict, a current Junior at Western studying Energy Policy. I am passionate about improving Western's involvement in improving economic stewardship in greater Bellingham. I will seek to form relationships with local organizations and government so that students have opportunities to make meaningful impacts and gain valuable experience in the field of sustainability.

### Co-curricular and Extracurricular Involvement

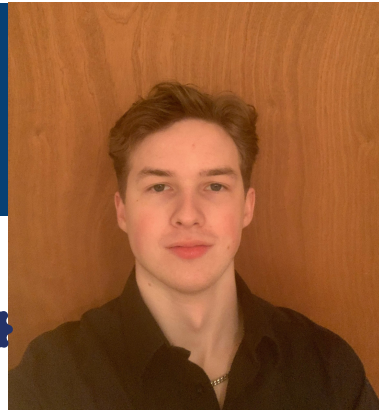
Active member of the Students for Renewable Energy Club and an ally to Blue Group. Arranger and performer in Western's music program.

### Relevant Awards, Honors, and Accolades

Eagle Scout Rank - Scouts BSA, WMEA State Champion

## CANDIDATE FOR AS VP FOR STUDENT SERVICES

**Chance Chittim**  
he/him



**Major: Accounting,  
BA**

### Candidate Statement:

I am Chance Chittim, my pronouns are he/him, and I am running for ASVP of Student Services. I am qualified for this job because for this past school year I have been heavily involved in the activities, wellbeing, and general dialogue of the student body through my position as RHA VP of Public Relations. This can be seen through the various events I have hosted such as the fall glow dance, the PACURH (Pacific Affiliate of College and University Residence Halls) meeting I attended in the fall in Saint Martins University, and my frequent visits to the RPB meetings that residential halls host. I am interested in this position because I want a greater of involvement in the WWU community, and through my involvement I hope to achieve greater levels of accessibility for those on campus, and a higher degree of safety on the campus metro area.

### Co-curricular and Extracurricular Involvement

North Star Council. A drug free lifestyle organization.  
Resident Hall Association - VP of Public Relations

## CANDIDATE FOR AS VP FOR STUDENT SERVICES

**Sophie Snyder**  
she/her



**Major: Political  
Science**

### Candidate Statement:

HEY BESTIES! I am so grateful to have the opportunity to run for this position again. In my time as AS VP of Student Services, I have advocated for open access to plan b for all students, increased accessibility in transportation for students with disabilities, and lower student fees. As Events Coordinator for Girl Gains I engage and empower students through organizing fun events, like yoga classes and hot girl walks. Mental health and wellness is a topic I care about deeply, and I know students do as well. My top priorities are accessibility, equity, and engagement. The AS VP for Student Services should be someone who LISTENS to students and is prepared to work hard for what students REALLY WANT. I want students to feel like THEY MATTER and that someone is in their corner. I want to get those frustrations out of @newwwuvoices dms and turn them into REAL SOLUTIONS for western students. Most importantly, if elected I promise to slay and serve the people of Western.

### Co-curricular and Extracurricular Involvement

AS Executive Board (VP for Student Services), Girl Gains Executive Board (Events Coordinator), Teaching Assistant (PLSC 291)