

# ASUWB Legislative Priorities 2020-2021

The Associated Students of the University of Washington Bothell (ASUWB) urges the State Legislature to:

## **Increase Student Financial Aid Programs**

The investment in higher education that the legislature made in 2019 by creating the Washington College Grant is critical to student success and retention in 2020. The current racial, economic, and health crisis is affecting students as tuition will inevitably increase and unemployment rates persist. **We ask for the legislature to protect the Washington College Grant by maintaining its current investments and expand to increase access to financial aid programs for all students, particularly undocumented students who have not received any financial support.**

The ASUWB advocates for:

- Protecting the Washington College Grant
- Expansion of the Undocumented Student Loan Program (Bill??)
- Expanding existing financial aid programs to include funding for housing and healthcare for international students
- Creating a statewide Native American Tuition Assistance Program

## **Increase Virtual Learning Accessibility**

Universities across the state have seen an abrupt transition to online learning that has highlighted accessibility issues among students in marginalized communities. **We urge the state legislature to alleviate these accessibility issues by mandating that all online class lectures be recorded and uploaded with captions, increase funding for online teaching programs and tools that will aid teachers in their instruction, and ensure access to safe spaces, technology, and internet access to better engage in virtual learning environments.**

The ASUWB advocates for:

- Funding for access to safe environments for virtual learning

- Statewide funding for colleges and universities to ensure equal access to technology and internet access for all students, captioning and dual-language interpretation software
- Establish online teaching programs and tools for teachers to improve online instruction

### **Improve Student Health and Wellbeing**

Student health and wellbeing has been severely affected by the current public health crisis. Not only do students need healthcare, but we also need comprehensive mental health support. **We urge the state legislature to pass an opt-out, all-inclusive student health plan that includes reproductive care and supports long-term health solutions for students for comprehensive treatment. We also ask for comprehensive mental health support, including increasing funding for universities to hire trained counselors to support every kind of student. Lastly, we urge the legislature to support survivors of sexual assault by maintaining pre-August 2020 Title IX regulations, increasing funding to accessible sexual assault programs for survivors, and sexual assault prevention and awareness.**

The ASUWB advocates for:

- Passing an opt-out inclusive student health plan that includes reproductive care (HB 1009)
- Expanding Washington state's student health insurance to include undocumented students and international students
- Expanding existing mental health services to include undocumented and international students
- Increasing funding to hire full-time trained counselors to support all students with experience informed care
- Mandating equitable access to mental health diagnostic services through campus
- Maintaining pre-August 2020 Title IX Regulations
- Increasing funding to existing sexual assault programs for survivors and sexual assault prevention and awareness

### **Provide Support for Food and Housing Insecurity**

The cost of living in the greater Seattle area and surrounding regions is rising, affecting low-income students who are struggling to maintain access to basic food and housing needs, pay tuition, and successfully complete their higher education. COVID-19 has only exacerbated the lack of access to basic necessities for low-income students. **We ask that the legislature introduce policies that provide affordable housing and**

**food options, especially to students who experience homelessness. For students who require housing, we seek to expand financial aid programs to include funding for housing as part of their aid.**

The ASUWB advocates for:

- Establishing a fund for statewide university food pantries to be implemented and supported
- Allocate funding for an emergency housing fee assistance program at all Washington colleges and universities
- Expand financial assistance programs to include housing assistance for undocumented and international students

### **Ensure Campus Safety and Equity**

The surge of commitments over the summer by universities to ensure campus safety and equity provides an opportunity for the legislature to urge that campuses prioritize marginalized students. **We support policies that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), including hiring and retaining diverse staff and faculty, supporting critical race theory curriculum, mandating DEI and de-escalation training for staff, students, and faculty, and funding intersectional safe spaces for students. We also support restructuring the role of campus police by reallocating resources into programs that promote student wellbeing like mental health support and food and housing security.**

The ASUWB advocates for:

- Mandating DEI and de-escalation training with a strong anti-racist component for staff, students, and faculty and with components for feedback from students and tools to measure for effectiveness
- Increasing funding to expand safe intersectional spaces for students
- Establishing programs to begin reallocation of police resources into services that provide mental health support and housing security
- Protecting critical race theory and American Ethnic studies programs at statewide universities
- Increasing access to and hiring BIPOC educators

**The ASUWB supports increased state investments in:**

- ◆ Financial support for undocumented students
- ◆ Financial support for graduate and professional students
- ◆ Support for students with disabilities
- ◆ Support for student childcare
- ◆ Climate solutions and sustainability on campus