

TO: President's Cabinet, Deans, Vice Chancellors for Research, Associate Deans for Research

FROM: Colleen Kerr, Vice President for External Affairs and Government Relations
Washington State University

Glynda Becker-Fenter, Assistant Vice President for Federal Engagement and
Advocacy and Executive Director WSUDC
Washington State University

RE: Federal Public Policy and Advocacy Engagement Process

DATE: June 23, 2020, *updated*

To further Washington State University's (WSU) efforts under the strategic plan and Drive to 25, *and* to promote transparency and accountability around WSU's federal policy and advocacy program, we are providing you with an overview of the Office of Federal Relations (OFR) and a framework of engagement for your reference with respect to working with OFR.

WSU's Office of Federal Relations is led by Glynda Becker-Fenter, based in Washington, D.C. and located in the Hall of the States Office Building, which is in walking distance of the U.S. Capitol. Glynda is supported by Cat Amortegui, Policy Coordinator for the Office of Federal Relations. Cat is based in Pullman and co-located with the Office of Research (OR).

OFR focuses its work primarily on (1) the federal delegation, including all ten congressional members and both senators, (2) the administration and federal agencies, and (3) strategically engaging with associations and coalitions to support our federal goals. OFR works both offensively to create opportunities, and defensively to protect programs and funding.

OFR's intent is to leverage WSU research expertise and educational goals with political opportunities-- in partnership with the priorities of Washington's congressional delegation-- to achieve the tenets of WSU's land-grant mission.

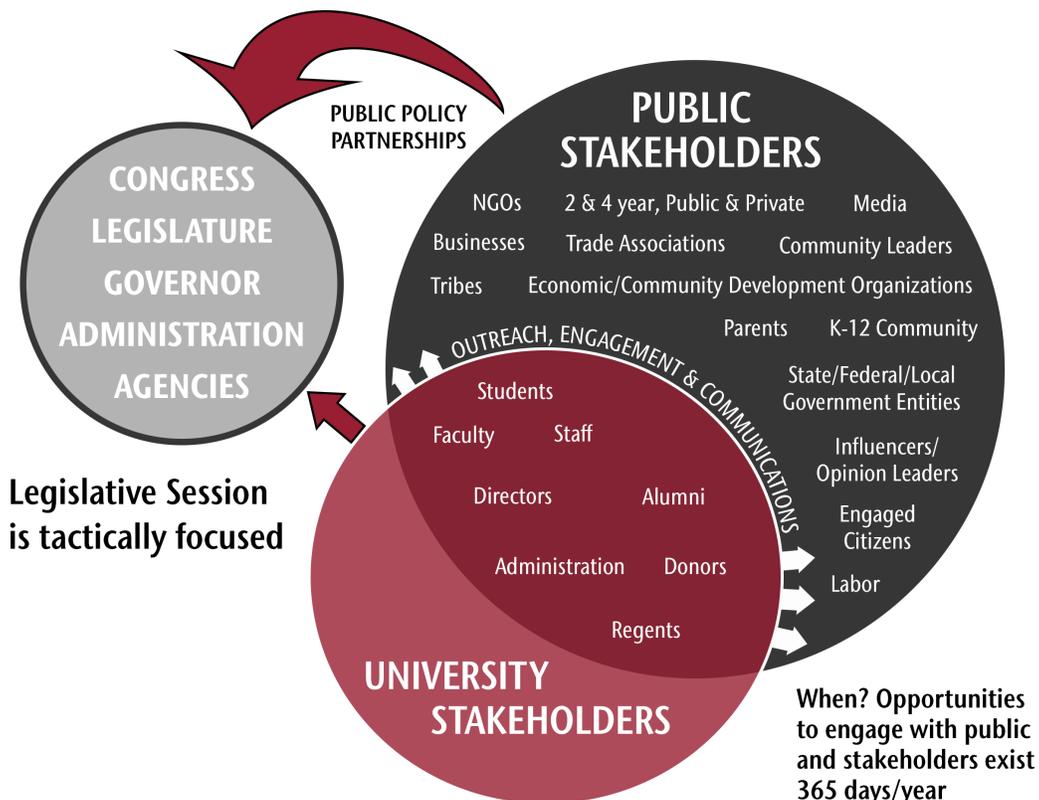
OFR's objectives in meeting this goal are:

- to significantly increase WSU's visibility, relationships, and influence with the federal government and affiliated stakeholders in support of the strategic plan and Drive to 25 goals around research expenditures and educational opportunity;
- to participate in shaping federal public policy in WSU's areas of expertise and those areas that are critical to our land-grant mission; and
- to represent and serve WSU faculty, staff and students in Washington D.C.

To meet those objectives, we focus on six specific areas of work:

1. Development of a federal legislative agenda with each newly elected Congress
2. Advocacy and engagement around reauthorization of federal programs that affect WSU research and students
3. Programmatic requests: annual support for funding federal programs that support WSU research and students
4. Targeted agency engagement: working with faculty and staff to develop "agency white papers" specific to supporting federally funded research at WSU
5. Coalition-based advocacy: initiatives for large-scale federal requests and/or creation of new programs
6. Strategically supporting WSU faculty, students and staff by facilitating visits to Washington, D.C. and advising on federal engagement opportunities
7. Reacting to congressional efforts or administration initiatives that require defending WSU students, research and legislative priorities

Your participation is critically important to WSU's federal advocacy efforts!



1. DEVELOPMENT OF FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

WSU's federal legislative agenda supports funding, collaboration and partnerships that deliver research and education opportunities to WSU in support of our mission. It is developed biannually after the election of a new Congress. *This is the primary communication document for WSU with the federal government. Development of the WSU federal legislative agenda is done in collaboration with the Provost, the Office of Research, and the Budget Office with final approval by the President.*

The biennial WSU federal legislative agenda is premised on efforts that will:

- drive long-term economic growth for the Pacific Northwest by collaborating with research sponsors and providing a return on investment from our federal partners;
- support existing and new industries and workforce needs;
- engage in solving the state of Washington's public policy, societal challenges;
- serve the changing face of Washington's student body.

As the primary organizing document for WSU with the federal government, the federal legislative agenda addresses both issues (1) for which we are advocating and, when appropriate, (2) those to which we are reacting. In general, the agenda will include our position on reauthorizations bills, some targeted agency requests, and coalition-based advocacy projects under WSU's research and education priorities. These are outlined below.

2. REAUTHORIZATION LEGISLATION

Two of Congress's primary responsibilities are to create new and to modify or update current federal programs through the authorization or reauthorization process. These programs are then funded through the annual appropriations and budget process. Many authorization bills have specific dates on which the various programs important to WSU expire. This process provides opportunities to both support the reauthorization and to potentially amend or create new programs within the reauthorization legislation.

Examples of these legislatively authorized programs include, but are not limited to:

<u>Program</u>	<u>Agency</u>
The Farm Bill	USDA
Higher Education Act Reauthorization	Department of Education
Federal Aviation Administration	Transportation
Federal Drug Administration	Health and Human Services

For each biennial Congress, OFR reviews bills up for reauthorization, exploring opportunities for WSU engagement. Regarding reauthorization legislation which has a significant impact on WSU, an internal process is undertaken which involves convening impacted stakeholders such as vice presidents, chancellors, deans, and key faculty jointly working with OFR, the Office of the Provost, the Office of Research and colleges to provide policy input and strategy development. For example, the WSU 2018 Farm Bill process was convened jointly with CAHNRS, OR, and the Washington State Department of Agriculture with a coordinated advocacy and stakeholder engagement strategy.

OFR also identifies items within those authorization bills that highlight WSU's areas of expertise to determine funding opportunities, and to support the congressional delegation. For example, in the area of rural broadband, OFR worked closely with experts within CAHNRS and Extension to engage with the delegation and federal agencies including USDA Rural Development and the Department of Commerce National Telecommunications Information Administration to expand access to the internet. This is now an ongoing initiative that touches multiple areas of the university statewide.

3. TARGETED AGENCY WHITEPAPERS

In concert with the traditional federal appropriations calendar, OFR works with OR on a targeted agency whitepaper process to collect information on potential projects which may have the opportunity to secure federal funding. Through this process, faculty develop whitepapers providing an overview of their research or concept, focused on specific agencies and programs within the federal government. The goal is to find a successful path to secure funding by identifying opportunities to shape policy, obtain funding with the support of the delegation or find external partners that may strengthen the opportunity.

These whitepapers are reviewed by both OFR and OR offices and by external reviewers, consultants retained by the Office of External Affairs and Government Relations (EAGR). The whitepapers are used to engage with programmatic staff within strategically targeted federal agencies. These papers may also be used to build a case to support federal funding with committee staff, members of the Washington congressional delegation or potential external partners. Whitepapers that are not appropriate for current programmatic funding are matched with other federal opportunities (if available) or authoring faculty are offered advice on alternate sources of funding. Importantly, these whitepapers provide EAGR, OR, and other offices such as the Foundation and University Marketing and Communications with an ongoing catalog of the range of expertise of WSU faculty.

Please see the OFR calendar for the targeted agency whitepaper timeline.

4. COALITION-BASED ADVOCACY PROJECTS

EAGR operates "public relations style" government relations programs across both the Offices of Federal and State Relations. For OFR, this is largely coalition-based advocacy that supports specific initiatives developed to advance WSU research strengths. By using a campaign-style structure, EAGR identifies strategic partners that include internal WSU constituents and external industry and stakeholder partners, both in-state and out-of-state. Such coordinated advocacy also includes public relations and strategic communications strategies to support the goals of WSU's land-grant mission. This includes anything from "boots on the ground" door to door advocacy, both in-state and on Capitol Hill, to support or defend our work; using strategically placed media to jointly communicate the benefits of our work; and engaging with other coalitions and organizations for joint or third party efforts to highlight our work.

In pursuing these kinds of programs, OFR, together with the colleges, has created new coalitions and utilized organizations in which we are members-- such as The Science Coalition, the Energy Security Coalition, or the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) --to drive a policy goal through the political process. Further,

within the past year, WSU also became a member of the Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO) to better leverage coalition efforts in the bio sciences, including health, food, and energy.

Examples of successful coalition advocacy include op-eds highlighting the importance of federal funding to support research, letters to the editor, participation in roundtable discussions, social media, and advertisements highlighting our work in the federal arena. This tactic expands support for WSU and solidifies existing partnerships with our stakeholders. It is a critical tactic in meeting the goals around the strategic plan and Drive to 25.

To determine those projects appropriate for coalition-based advocacy, EAGR and OFR will assess them to determine if they fall within the context of (1) areas of research excellence, (2) breadth, depth, and geographic reach of in-state stakeholders and partners, and (3) “political” opportunity. When these elements are in place, EAGR will initiate a process with the appropriate office to further define the initiative. We work with external consultants to support these projects.

Examples of this type of advocacy include the establishment and ongoing success of ASCENT as well as the creation of the Northwest Antimicrobial Resistance Coalition –both successful in creating new funding programs with federal partners, shaping federal policy based on WSU expertise and creating the opportunity for WSU leadership, faculty and staff to be seen as thought leaders in their fields.

5. PROGRAMMATIC REQUESTS

WSU annually submits information to members of Washington’s congressional delegation in support of funding for programs in which we (1) compete for federal dollars or (2) can impact federal funding through the annual appropriations process. This includes both research funding opportunities and programs that support our students. To support our goal of collaborative engagement with our stakeholders, there are many instances in which we share our requests with key in-state partners such as the Washington Global Health Alliance, the Council of Presidents, or the Washington State Farm Bureau, and with appropriate national associations, such as APLU.

Please see the OFR programmatic requests calendar for the FY 2020 timeline.

6. WSU FEDERAL ENGAGEMENT IN THE WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA

Whether it’s WSU students, leadership, faculty or staff from any one of the university’s six campuses, the OFR is *the* office coordinating strategic engagement with Capitol Hill, federal agencies, the White House, and D.C. area stakeholders.

OFR engages with student groups and faculty from Pullman, Spokane, Vancouver, Tri-Cities and Everett to provide them with opportunities within the policy, political and alumni experience when visiting the D.C. area. Examples of such opportunities include meetings with the congressional delegation, representatives of Republican and Democratic political organizations, and with White House and committee staff. Strategically engaging students with various D.C. stakeholders has led to many WSU students participating in internships and employment opportunities in the nation’s capital.

OFR also works with leadership, faculty and staff to engage with congressional, administration and stakeholder groups in Washington, D.C. When chancellors, deans, or members of University Council come to D.C., OFR works with them to ensure their time is well spent strategically engaging our stakeholders in Washington, D.C., based on their agenda and the agenda of federal policy partners.

7. DEFENDING WSU STUDENT, RESEARCH AND LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

OFR spends political capital and time supporting and defending WSU's students, research and legislative priorities as policies counter to the goals of our institution are put forward through congressional or administrative action. Issues regularly come up which require an immediate change of focus from advancing WSU's federal priorities to protecting the interest of WSU's student and research priorities. Responding to adverse proposed policies always takes priority over advocacy and engagement activities. As with other OFR activities, this work may be singular to WSU, it may be specific to Washington universities, and/or it may be a larger nationally-focused issue. As OFR engages, the latter two areas regularly entail building some type of coalition of interests to defend and support our priorities.

By working quickly with WSU administrative, academic, and student leadership and coordinating with external stakeholders such as associations, universities and industry partners, OFR can continue to successfully impact proposed policies that may have an adverse impact on WSU students and/or federally funded research.

If you have any questions, please reach out directly to Glynda at glynda.becker@wsu.edu, 202-434-4866.