



October 11th, 2020

Dear Cougar Community,

Amidst the current uncertainty in our country with the constant change through COVID-19 protocols, the Washington State University Student Government Council, a coalition of leaders from our WSU Global, Everett, Tri-Cities, Vancouver, Health Sciences, and Pullman campuses, would like to address the recent announcement of the cancellation of the 2021 Spring Break. This proposal, voted on by the Faculty Senate, was one that did not include the input of the Student Government Council, as we had not been informed of this prior to the article released in The Daily Evergreen on October 9th, 2020. Due to this, we were unable to provide the necessary student perspective on such a decision that greatly affects student lives.

The Student Government Council's vision and mission statement demonstrate that we, as a student representative organization, value transparency, the enhancement of a well-rounded higher education experience, and serve as a resource for all student governments within the WSU system. Thus, we publicly denounce this decision, as we are aware that students are not only enduring the financial burdens of the current pandemic we are in, but are also facing difficulties with the transition to an online learning environment. The removal of a week long guaranteed break in the upcoming spring semester would add stress and create additional barriers that would affect not only the mental health of our students, but also increase obstacles that would affect academic performance.

While we are grateful for the consideration in this decision to keep students safe from COVID-19 as much as possible, we would also like to address the effects this would have on students across the WSU system.. Many of our students are also parents and will have the increased burden of finding child care for the additional week, to focus on their studies. Additionally, graduate students will have unnecessary limitations in conducting research that would take place during spring break, and TA students will lose a week long break necessary/essential for rest and class preparation. Furthermore, shortening the spring semester by one week negatively impacts student-veteran educational benefits.

The Student Government Council will be meeting with Provost and Executive Vice President Chilton and Vice President of Student Affairs Gonzales this upcoming Monday, October 12th. At this meeting, we will then voice our concerns and provide constructive feedback- we welcome any additional opportunities to provide student input prior to this meeting. Please feel free to email Chair Cruz Mendoza or Vice Chair Antonino with any thoughts, comments, or questions you may have.

Signed,

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