



# THE WESTERN FRONT

Society of Professional Journalists Award-Winning Newspaper

Volume 172, Issue 4

westernfrontonline.com | @TheFrontOnline

FRIDAY, JULY 10

## Tuition cuts begin in fall

**Tyler Hillis**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

The Washington State Legislature passed a \$32.8 billion operating budget on Monday, June 29, which includes a tuition decrease for students and pay increase for university employees.

Beginning this fall, students will see a 5 percent reduction in tuition, with an additional 15 percent reduction added on in fall 2016. With the approved budget, this is the first time in the state's history that tuition costs have reduced for resident undergraduate students with the approved budget, according to a recap of the budget in Western's Legislative Review.

"Resident undergraduate students and their families will benefit from tuition reductions con-

tained in the budget," said Linda Teater, director of Western's Budget Office, and Rich Van Den Hul, Western's vice president for business and financial affairs, in a press statement. "During the recession, tuition increases were dramatic as budgets were cut. We are extremely pleased to see that trend reversed, to the benefit of our students."

Recent Western graduate Katie May said reduced tuition is important and lower costs can help level the playing field in terms of access to higher education for students.

"It will create a lot less stress on students," May said. "I think everyone should get more of an equal opportunity for schooling if they work hard for it."

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## GUR Spotlight: Nomads of Eurasia

**Jesse Nichols**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

EUS 210: Nomads of Eurasia, a general university requirement (GUR) to fulfill part of the comparative, gender and multicultural studies requirement at Western, is currently being taught during fall quarter and is open to all students.

Nomadic cultures have lived across Europe and Asia since the beginning of human history, but many are underrepresented in history courses, said Edward Vajda, a Eurasian Studies professor at Western. Vajda

said Nomads of Eurasia is one of the only classes of its type in the country.

Pastoral nomadic cultures, mobile cultures that use animals for food, ranged from some of the largest historical empires – including the Mongols, the Huns and the Ottoman Turks – to small, isolated cultures, Vajda said.

Many of these nomadic cultures are underrepresented in history curricula, in part because of geographical isolation and common lack of written languages, Vajda said.

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## Welcome to Western



Old Main, built in 1895, is the original location of the Normal School. Today, it houses administrative offices and classrooms.// Photo by Alexandra Bartick

## President Shepard looks to year ahead

**Brandon Stone**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

Western Washington President Bruce Shepard announced on Thursday, June 11, his plans to retire after the upcoming 2015-2016 academic year. Shepard has been the university's president since 2008, and is institution's 13th president. The Western Front recently sat down with Shepard to talk about his time with the university and his future plans.

**Q: Why is now the time to move on?**

**A:** It's a variety of factors. One is that there's a lot of research that shows that seven to nine years is about the right time for a person to serve as a president. That view is held most strongly by those who've served 12-15 years. They realize as they look back that you start to get in the way.

When you come in, you really have new ideas, you can help, and then you get vested in those ideas. It's time for someone else to come in and take a critical look at them.

My wife and I want to go do other things. We aren't moving on to another job, but we'll both stay involved in higher ed.

**Q: Is there anything that you set out to do that you think you've really accomplished?**

**A:** Universities are complex organizations with lots of people, so a president doesn't accomplish anything on their own, and I would never claim anything is an accomplishment of mine.

I came in here and I met with all of the faculty and staff, and I said I'll meet with everybody who works with the university, a lot of student groups

as well. I heard what the university's agenda was and the first and foremost is they really want-

ed to open up decision making. All these things

**SHEPARD, page 6**



Western President Bruce Shepard // Photo courtesy of Matthew Anderson



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## EXPLORING NEW BEGINNINGS



A tour group visits the Viking Union, a place to meet friends, get lunch and study, on Monday, July 6. // Photo by Yaelle Kimmelman

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*The Western Front is published twice weekly in the fall, winter and spring quarters, and once a week in the summer. The Western Front is the official newspaper of Western Washington University and is published by the Student Publications Council. It is mainly supported by advertising. Opinions and stories in the newspaper have no connection to advertising. News content is determined by student editors. Staff reporters are involved in a course in the department of journalism, but any student enrolled at Western may offer stories to the editors.*

# Beat the freshman 15 with healthy living

Annie Espy  
THE WESTERN FRONT

From the dining halls to the Wade King Student Recreation Center, Western offers numerous ways to obtain and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Incoming students have access to a variety of resources to eat well and exercise both on and off campus.

Registered dietician Sarah Richey, who has worked on campus since 2012, provides free counseling to students and specializes in eating disorder prevention.

"A good diet is the one where you are the boss of it," Richey said. "You're listening to your

body and what your body is telling you."

Richey provides one-on-one or group nutrition counseling that can be scheduled by calling her office phone or emailing her directly. Richey also participates in workshops and classes for students to receive the information and help they desire about nutrition.

One of the classes is called NuFit, which is a once a week class at the rec center dedicated to providing students with a range of topics from the latest workout and diet craze to body image and size acceptance, Richey said.

Along with Richey, Erica Chapman, a personal trainer at

the rec center, said she believes that it is extremely healthy to have a regular fitness routine because it helps keep a healthy diet.

"It's a great way to relieve stress," Chapman said. "It helps you sleep better, it improves your mood, it makes you feel better, it gives you more energy and you can make a lot of friends that way, so it improves your entire quality of life."

Chapman is the lead personal trainer at the rec center as well as a kinesiology movement studies major, with a sports psychology minor. Her main goal as a personal trainer is to prepare students to be able to workout efficiently for the rest of their life, Chapman said.

Along with preparing students for lifelong fitness, Chapman also encourages incoming students to get involved with exercise resources both on and off campus.

These resources include the recreation center, intramurals, the rock wall and the Outdoor Center, which are all on campus, Chapman said.

Sierra Myers, a senior at Western and a personal trainer with Chapman, said one her favorite off campus resources is the Lakewood facility at Lake Whatcom where students can rent paddleboards and kayaks.

Along with Lakewood, Myers recommended hiking Oyster Dome and the numerous



Illustration by Nicole Swift

amounts of hikes near Mount Baker, as well as going for a run or a bike ride.

"My biggest thing is finding activities that you enjoy doing," Myers said. "If you don't enjoy doing something you're not going to want to do it and you're not going to find any motivation."

In addition to exercising, those who have meal plans in the dining halls have access to healthy food options.

While eating at the dining hall, Richey said she recommends students try to get breakfast before going to class and snacking throughout the day. By doing this students will

not be as hungry late in the evening, and will be able to break the cycle of late night eating, Richey said.

With healthy food at students' fingertips and exercise resources available both on and off campus, students can find many opportunities to live a healthy lifestyle while at Western.

"My biggest piece of advice for freshman would be to be OK with getting uncomfortable for a week and try new things," Chapman said. "Just grab a friend, experience the uncomfortable together and just have fun with it and find something you really enjoy."

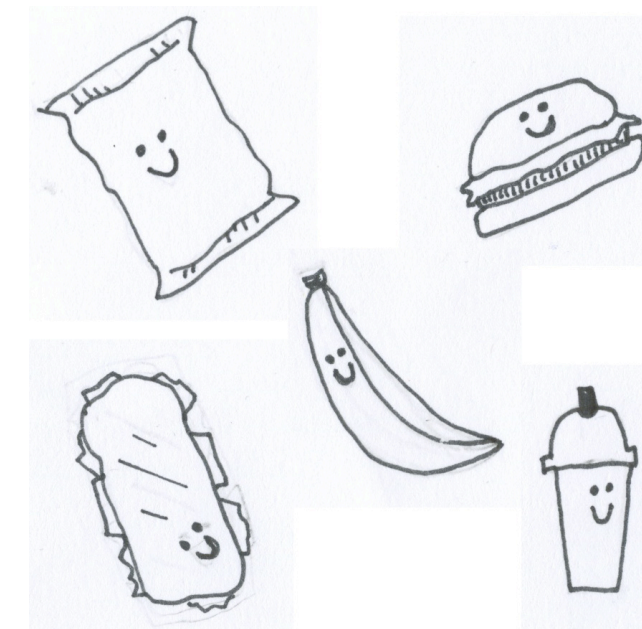


Illustration by Nicole Swift

# Events Calendar

## First week of classes

### Monday, Sept. 21

#### Prose Writing at its Best

**What:** Information session to learn about prose writing for all genres

**When:** 5:30-6:30 p.m.

**Where:** Village Books, 1200 11th Street, Bellingham

### Tuesday, Sept. 22

#### Viking Union Gallery Exhibitions

**What:** Showcases of student artwork with rotating exhibits

**When:** All day

**Where:** Viking Union Gallery, WWU

### Wednesday, Sept. 23

#### Welcoming Convocation

**What:** Faculty and staff welcome students back to Western

**When:** 7-8:30 p.m.

**Where:** Performing Arts Center, WWU

### Thursday, Sept. 24

#### WWU Women's Soccer vs. Saint Martin's

**What:** Western women take on Saint Martin's University

**When:** 7 p.m.

**Where:** Harrington Field, WWU

### Friday, Sept. 25

#### CWMEA Welcome

**What:** Welcome session from WWU music education group

**When:** 4:45-7:17 p.m.

**Where:** Performing Arts Center Choir Room, WWU

### Saturday, Sept. 26

#### Back at the Park

**What:** Showcase of historical photos of Bellingham parks

**When:** 12 p.m.

**Where:** Whatcom Museum Lightteacher Building, 250 Flora St., Bellingham

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# Discovering food, coffee and nature in Bellingham



**Left: Woods Coffee at Boulevard Park offers not only coffee but a view of Bellingham Bay. Center: Low tide at Locust Beach on Thursday, July 9. Right: 9 a.m. at Lake Padden is busy with both boaters and walkers.** // Photos by Yaelle Kimmelman

**Amelia Lathrop**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

Bellingham is a college town situated close to mountains and water, bordering Bellingham Bay and Mount Baker. With coffee shops, restaurants and outdoor places to explore, new students have many opportunities to find something to fit their specific interests.

Maddie Divelbiss, a senior at Western, said that any incoming Western students check out as many places around town as possible, and they should also start early.

"There's still a lot of things I want to see and I'm running out of time," she said.

Coffee shops around the city are popular places for Western students to sit and study. The Woods Coffee is a local coffee house out of Whatcom County with multiple locations around Bellingham, including at Boulevard Park, Barkley Village, Flatiron, Lakeway and Sehome Village.

Divelbiss said she occasionally goes to the Boulevard Park Woods Coffee location for the view.

"I like it there, [because] it's very scenic," she said. "You can grab a cup of coffee or some tea, and sit there and study and look out at the view."

With a valid Western student ID card, Woods offers free drip coffee to any student, Western alumni or employees on what they call "Western Wednesdays," at most Woods locations on Wednesdays.

Natalie Wetterauer, a Western student going into her senior year, also enjoys the Boulevard location of Woods Coffee.

"If I'm going to go have a cup of coffee I'll definitely go to Woods," she said.

In the fall when the weather begins to get colder, The Woods Coffee can be a place to warm up inside and still enjoy the Bellingham Bay view. The distance on foot from Western's campus to the Boulevard Park location is about 30 minutes, and by car or bus it is about 10 minutes. The park is located in the South Hill Neighborhood and borders the bay.

"I love to go to Boulevard Park," Wetterauer said. "It's relaxing if you want to just hangout and bring a blanket."

Other coffee shops, like The Union Coffee Shop, use locally roasted beans like Tony's coffee. A new location for The Union Coffee Shop recently opened downtown off of North State Street.

"They have an upstairs area that's really quiet and nice and hidden," Western student Victoria Boles said. "I love it."

Another Bellingham favorite that loves its beans is The Black Drop Coffee House located off of West Champion Street.

Zayd Humsy, a Western student, said The Black Drop Coffee House probably has the best coffee in Bellingham.

"The Black Drop is the place I go everyday for coffee," Humsy said. "There are a lot of good people working there and it has a great environment," Humsy said.

The Black Drop Coffee House hosts events such as board game nights; upcoming events for this fall will be coordinated near the end of summer.

In addition to an abundance of coffee shops, Bellingham is also home to many restaurants of varying cuisines.



**Left: The Black Drop Coffee House offers many unique coffee flavors including their speciality drink Just Like Heaven, a white chocolate lavender mocha. Right: Schweinhaus is one of the few locations downtown that offers ample outdoor seating.** // Photos by Alexandra Bartick

Divelbiss said the German restaurant Schweinhaus Biergarten on North State Street is a great place to hangout.

"It's probably one of my favorite places just to go and chill and get away from school," Divelbiss said.

An outdoor restaurant, Schweinhaus has options of covered or uncovered picnic benches. It's German-themed menu features sausages, pretzels and German beer, and the Bellingham Transit Center is a short walk from it.

The food menu is moderately priced for the average college student. With a choice of five different sausages, plates range from \$6 to \$10, or a large soft pretzel for \$4.

Divelbiss said she tries to go to Schweinhaus once a week, usually on the weekend.

"I just like the atmosphere and being outside," she said. "There's always fun people there."

Pizza places are also common in Bellingham. Goat Mountain Pizza, located downtown off of West Holly Street, and FatPie Pizza in Fairhaven are both frequently visited by Bellingham residents.

"Goat Mountain Pizza is amazing," Humsy said. "I like the park outside City Hall. It is a

good place to get take-out food and sit and eat."

Wetterauer said her favorite place to get pizza is FatPie. "It's like no other pizza you've ever made or eaten," she said.

FatPie Pizza serves Chicago-style and Detroit-style pizza and has plenty of seating, including a large second-floor outdoor patio.

When the weather is warm in the summer and early fall months, Bellingham has plenty of parks and hikes for students to enjoy the outdoors.

"I like Lake Padden a lot," Divelbiss said. "It's a nice relaxing place to get away." "There's plenty of places to sit but there's also a nice path that you can walk around."

Lake Padden Park is located on Samish Way, with amenities that include softball fields, barbecue grills, picnic tables, access to trails and free parking.

"That's what I like about Bellingham, it's very outdoorsy," Divelbiss said.

A relatively unknown and secluded destination spot in town is Locust Beach, which is located off Locust Avenue. To get there, adventurers have to hike down a steep path and stairs, Boles said. "A lot of people go skim-boarding out there,"

Boles said. "There are hammocks hanging from tree to tree for people to hang out."

For new Bellingham residents who want to explore the hiking options, the area offers many ranges of hikes, from leisure walks to more strenuous and steep hikes.

"Any hikes on Chuckanut Drive are really nice," Wetterauer said. "Oyster Dome is a go-to. Whenever I have people visit I take them to Oyster Dome."

Getting outdoors and exploring can be a great way for incoming Western students to discover new things happening in Bellingham.

"I don't think anything is too far away," Boles said, adding that everything is mostly walkable or bus-able.

A bus pass is included automatically in the tuition of Western students taking six credits or more, and it provides transportation on all WTA bus routes. Bus routes on campus are available and provide service every 15 minutes. Activities downtown or in Fairhaven can be accessed by bus in under 20 minutes from campus.

Incoming Western students can also be on the lookout for local outdoor events that are hosted around town through summer and fall.

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# BUDGET: Carver Gym receives \$70M to renovate



**A renovated Carver Gymnasium will include new classrooms and offices.** // Artist rendering courtesy of Paul Cocks, director of the Office of Communications at Western.

**continued from page 1**

Due to tuition being lowered, funding to financial aid programs such as the State Need Grant and the College Bound Scholarship has been reduced.

The legislature also approved \$70 million for the renovation of Western's Carver Gymnasium in the 2015-17 capital budget passed on Tuesday, June 30.

The Carver Gym renovation project has been the top funding request by Western for the past three biennial budgets. The legislature approved of \$64 million of state funds and \$6 million from other sources for the project, and Western will carry out renovations on the building that will begin this

summer and is set to be completed by spring 2017.

"Western will take out \$6 million in debt and pay it back over a set term yet to be determined," said Paul Cocks, director of communications at Western. "Typically, the term can be 10-20 years."

During construction, commencement ceremonies will be held in the Performing Arts Center instead of Carver, and men's and women's basketball games will be played in Whatcom Community College's gym until construction is complete, Cocks said.

"The university has relocated occupants of the building, Carver is now closed," Cocks said.

The budgets took three

months longer to pass than the regular legislative session, which ended in April. An additional three special sessions were needed to come to an agreement. If a budget had not been decided, the state would have gone into a partial shut down, temporarily closing many state-run operations and laying off thousands of state workers until an agreement could be reached.

"There has been a remarkable level of support and appreciation for Western in the legislature and that is due in no small measure to the tremendous efforts by Western administrators, faculty, staff, students, unions and many friends and supporters," Teater and Van Den Hul said.

# SHEPARD: "I know the best times always involve people"

**continued from page 1**

emerged, so that then became the agenda. People would ask me, "what's your vision for the university?" And I'd say, "Well if I have one, it's really irrelevant. That doesn't really matter." The question is, what's a university's vision for itself?

When I got here, my biggest surprise was how little regard there was for higher education down in Olympia. In fact, higher ed was seen as part of

the problem, it was seen as elitist, removed, irrelevant to the people of the state of Washington. So we set out an agenda to really turn that around and it really has. About two years ago, the legislature started reinvesting in higher education.

**Q: Do you have a favorite memory of your time at Western?**

**A:** The times to reflect on that will come. What I'm focused on is a busy year ahead and I really haven't thought

about that. I know the best times always involve people, and in my case always involve students. You get in this line of work because you love being with students.

My wife and I use a lot of different opportunities to get students to our house to celebrate and enjoy their company. Those are the memories I enjoy most. Any student group who wins something significant on campus comes to the house for dinner.

**Q: How do you want to focus the university in your last year? Are there any other issues you want to tackle?**

**A:** I've asked a variety of groups to help me understand what needs to be our focus next year. I use the opening convocation talk as my chance to bring together the thinking of the campus and share it. Certainly, the search for the next president is going to be very important. I have nothing to do

with who that's going to be, but our trustees will go through a process asking not who should the next president be, but who should the next Western be? Over the next five years, what should the priorities be? That's a process of consulting, there's going to be a lot of discussions with faculty, staff, students and alumni about this.

See extended Q&A with President Shepard at [westernfrontonline.com](http://westernfrontonline.com)

# GUR: Popular class discusses multiperspective history of nomads

**continued from page 1**

"I tell the students in class that I'm filling in the white areas on the map," Vajda said. "The things that are usually left blank or the areas that usually are simply 'the other people living there.'"

Vajda said he hopes this class will give students an opportunity to see these cultures from a new perspective — one of the objectives of the comparative, gender and multicultural studies GUR requirement.

Ani Mesropian is a junior studying political science and Eurasian studies at Western, currently taking Nomads of Eurasia. Mesropian said this class gives her a better understanding of her field of study.

"I feel like I'm really getting to the origins of my area of study when I get to do this class," Mesropian said.

In order to teach the class, Vajda said he had to write much the course material for the class, creating detailed PowerPoint presentations and notes for students to access on Canvas.

Vajda had worked with a publisher to develop a textbook for the class, but he said the company cancelled the project once they discovered his class was the only class of its type in the country.

"They said 'No, we can't make a textbook for one class,'"

Vajda said. "I told them, 'If you saw how many students took the class, you might change your mind!'"

The fall 2015 class has capacity for 128 students. The class size has ranged from 13 students in summer 2015 to 292 students in fall 2013.

Vajda currently films his lectures and posts the videos online for students to study. He also uses the lecture videos for an online section currently offered during the summer, and he said he hopes to eventually offer online sections during other quarters as well.

Mesropian said the lecture videos are helpful if she misses a class or forgets something. Vajda also posts practice quizzes after each lecture, which Mesropian said help her study for exams. She said the exams can be difficult, but there are many resources available for students to study.

"I would say that Vajda's style is probably one of the most approachable styles for a student," Mesropian said.

Serge Samoylenko, a communication studies and Eurasian studies student at Western, is also currently taking Nomads of Eurasia and said Vajda's lectures help him prepare for exams.

"There are so many things I am able to retain because of Vajda's ability to just talk about



**Nomads of Eurasia professor Edward Vajda teaches students a new way to look at nomadic culture.** // Photo by Jesse Nichols

these things in a very interesting and engaging way," Samoylenko said.

Nomadic cultural history plays a major role in current events today, from conflicts in the Middle East to modern border disputes, Vajda said.

"The modern Middle East is different from Europe and East Asia because all of the main groups in the Middle East came from pastoral traditions, so they have different sensibility of what is good and evil,"

Vajda said. "I think that fundamental distinction is what is at the root of a lot of differences in diplomacy and politics in the modern world."

Nomadic cultures have also affected sedentary cultures, from Hun invasions influencing the collapse of the Roman Empire to nomadic trade routes causing major disease epidemics, Vajda said.

"Pastoral nomads are the root of big changes in the history of sedentary people," Vajda

said. "Yet they're always looked on as the villain, as the enemy, and you never see them as a society of their own."

Mesropian said that this class has taught her how much of an impact many nomadic Eurasian cultures have had on world history.

"So many roots came from there, and we don't credit them," Mesropian said.

Nomads of Eurasia is offered during fall quarter under the name EUS 210.

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# The art of glassblowing

Trisha Patterson  
THE WESTERN FRONT

Indie-alternative music drowns out the sound of electric fans blowing hot air in the warehouse studio of glass artist, Christopher Morrison. Morrison, a Bellingham local, has been working with glass for 30 years and has owned his studio for 20 years.

Morrison teaches classes at his studio during the regular school year and also during the summer. He has been teaching glassblowing classes for Western for five years now. On Aug. 8, he will open an art show at the Western Gallery. The gallery will exhibit the culmination of three years of work done by Morrison outside of his class schedule.

"There will be a threshold piece in the middle of the gallery and people will be able to walk through that," Morrison said. "There will be a full-length mirror so you can actually see yourself walk through it, so there's a component of self-reflection."

The artist's journey is a focal point in the gallery. Around the gallery will be a series of 15 pieces that are reminiscent of Joseph Campbell's "The Hero's Journey," which constitutes the basic plotline of storytelling.

The gallery will also have a collection of contemporary bowls and vessels, as well as a collection of glass umbrellas. "All of these pieces have in common, an elaborate color pattern that we call quilts, and that's what will tie everything together," Morrison said. These quilts also tie into the overarching theme of the fabric of the universe and the artist manipulating that fabric, Morrison said.

The creative process of blowing glass starts at the drawing board. Morrison's classes start with talking about students' passions for the craft and a

show-and-tell presentation of their art. Creative design, image work and communicating through drawing are all introduced prior to working with glass, Morrison said.

"We get the students drawing pages and pages of ideas, talk about how that relates to their passion and what they might want to do for their final project," Morrison said. "It's a very difficult thing to learn how to do."

Western graduate, Lindsey Allen, said glassblowing is an addictive adrenaline rush. "It's stressful, but it's a good stress. It's really accomplishing to get a piece in the oven," Allen said. A piece can go wrong in a lot of ways while transitioning from the oven to the cold shop and every step of the way presents a new challenge, Allen said.

Allen first learned about glassblowing when she visited Italy in the eighth-grade. "It opened up a whole new window for me," Allen said.

She started taking glassblowing classes when they were first made available to Western students about five years ago, and has stuck around since then. Allen now assists in teaching Morrison's classes. In the future, she wants to own her own studio and sell functional, contemporary pieces, Allen said.

Morrison attended Hartwick College in Oneonta, New York, and studied art. At Hartwick, Morrison started blowing glass, and later attended Pilchuck Glass School in Stanwood, Washington, where he finished his degree. After apprenticing in Tucson, Arizona, Morrison moved to Seattle, and started working for Dale Chihuly, one of the most renowned glass artists in the business. After working for Chihuly, Morrison started teaching classes, both in Seattle and more recently, at Western.



Chris Morrison displays student pieces in his studio, Morrison Glass Art. // Photo by Yaelle Kimmelman

Chihuly cofounded Pilchuck Glass School after working at the Venini glass factory in Venice, Italy, where he observed the team approach to blowing glass.

Glass blowing can be done either as a solo project or as a team collaboration. Morrison learned the team approach method from Chihuly and employs it in his studio, which his assistants said kept them coming back when they were students. "I really like working with teams and people," said Mike Jess, a Western graduate. "Especially when you have people that work really well together, things are more fluid and more fun." Jess helps facilitate classes and with production of glass art.

Blowing glass is a complicated and time-consuming art, it takes years to develop the experience necessary to create the complex work, Morrison said. He can only use about 60 percent of the work he creates, simply because the glass breaks or is damaged in the process of making

glass art. The time put in is worth it, however, because no one else has work quite like his, he said.

Morrison was a member of the advisory board for Western's College of Fine and Performing Arts. He has a 20-foot long piece hanging in Village Books in downtown Bellingham, a sculpture in the lobby of the Cascade Brain and Spine Center, and does commissions for fine art galleries and gift galleries.

Morrison said he is proud to be working with Western and says it's rare to find a local artist who collaborates so closely with Western.

In the future, Morrison said he hopes to collaborate more with the Western Gallery and continue to make intricately designed glass art.

*"It's stressful, but it's a good stress. It's really accomplishing to get a piece in the oven."*

*Western alumna Lindsey Allen*



Andy Lawrence, left, and Mike Jess, right, assist as Chris Morrison tapers the glass into the proper shape. // Photo by Yaelle Kimmelman



Center: Chris Morrison finishes a piece by torching the glass with an assistant. Right: Chris Morrison blows a new piece of glass at his studio on Friday, July 3. // Photos by Yaelle Kimmelman

# Overcoming a New Set of Challenges

Students who are the first in their family to attend college are more likely to struggle to find their footing as freshman

**Abigail Ramos**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

For many, college is a riveting world. It's the start of a whole new beginning without any adult supervision. You meet new people, take interesting classes and experience moments you would have never expected. But for first-generation students, the college experience can be full of different challenges.

First-generation students are those who are the first to attend college in their family, and with this they become the first in their family to experience the ups and downs, joys and struggles of college.

At Western, the first-generation students in the incoming class of 2012 had a second-year retention rate of 79 percent, compared to 84 percent for non first-generation students, according to Western's New Freshmen Student Retention and Graduation by First-Generation Status report. This number dropped even more in third-year retention rates with first-generation students at 67 percent compared to 76 percent for non first-generation students.

First-generation students are more likely to drop out of their institutions than any other student on college campuses, according to a College Board study on first-generation students. While many campuses offer advising for all students, finding a connection on campus as a first-generation student is essential, said Eric Alexander, assistant dean of student engagement and director of the Viking Union at Western.

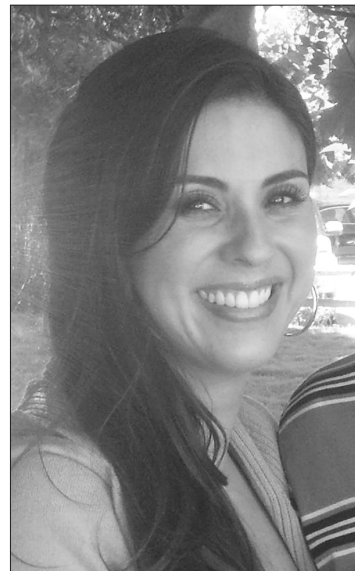
"Quickly and regularly find a connection on campus with somebody who can help you in determining your path," he said. "As a first-gen student, I didn't know all the options, I

didn't know all the possibilities and so being more intentional for me about going out and finding all the possibilities and discovering all the possibilities would have been better."

Alexander, originally from Wyoming but an undergraduate from the University of Washington, was the first to graduate from college in his family.

"Even though I'm a first-generation student my parents had always impressed on me that I was going to college, so there was always an expectation about that," he said. "It was [just] a matter of where I was going."

For many first-generation students, the matter of getting to college is a learning experience that parents aren't always well informed on. For Elly Mata, a 2014 Western Fairhav-



**Veronica Velez** // Photo courtesy of Veronica Velez

en graduate and recent University of Washington master's graduate, the challenge was figuring out how to get to college with her family's inexperience with higher education.

"They wanted me to go to college, they just didn't know

what the process was," Mata said. "But they were in full support."

Mata's main resource for the quest to higher education was a college readiness program her high school provided called Proven Achievement Lifelong Advantage (AVID). Programs like GEAR UP, TRIO and AVID prepare students from low-income communities for college by providing workshops on financial aid, college visits and the overall experience of applying to college.

With Mata's high school advisor coming from the same racial background as her, she was able to find a connection with someone who had gone through the same struggle she had, Mata said.

"My advisor was the key person to actually holding my hand through the process," Mata said. "Having her, having somebody that came from the same background helped tremendously."

Finding a mentor on college campuses can help students navigate through the process of college and can impact their career journeys as well. For Veronica Velez, an assistant professor and director of the education and social justice minor at Western, her undergrad mentor advised her on decisions for her major at a time when she was failing classes.

"I almost got kicked out of my institution until I found a mentor and I found a mentor of color who helped me navigate through that," Velez said. "Had it not been for her, who knows where I would have been."

Velez comes from a family of immigrants, with her mother from Mexico and her father from Panama. While her father had an idea of how the process of community college worked, they both didn't understand the path to getting to a four-



**Elly Mata** // Photo courtesy of Elly Mata

year university. Because of this, Velez found herself getting the information she needed off of TV ads.

Velez graduated from Stanford University and later received her master's and doctorate from University of California Los Angeles.

During her time at Western, Mata found that the Ethnic Student Center and Center for Education, Equity and Diversity were her safe havens for the struggles of being a person of color and a first-generation student, she said.

"For first-gen students of color, go to the ESC or CEED just because those spaces are for them," Mata said. "They were created for us."

Having professors and advisors that come from similar racial background, income

backgrounds and general experiences are key for first-generation students to excel on college campuses, Mata said.

"It's critical; the universities need to make no mistake to have people who look like these students and come from similar background," Mata said.

First-generation students are not the only students that battle with the difficulties of higher education. Finding and building a community in which students feel best supported can help ease the journey to graduation.

Student Outreach Services located in Old Main, the Ethnic Student Center in the Viking Union and various other programs on campus are dedicated to serve underrepresented students for their first year and in continuing years.

# Letter to my freshman self

Dear freshman Kieran,

It is hard to believe that freshman year was over three years ago. I remember the first day and everything. We were so excited that we got into a graphic design class; after all, it was the whole reason you came to Western. Long story short, design never worked out the way we wanted it to. It will be an extremely rough time receiving that rejection letter from the department after you worked so hard on your application, and for a while you will not feel great. Hell, you will even fail a class for the first time ever. But in light of all this, it will be the greatest thing that will have ever happened to you.

This gives you much more room to experiment with classes, and you'll even take a business class which you have always wanted. Eventually you will take a news writing class to fulfill a GUR. The professor that teaches this class will end up being the best professor you have ever had and in turn will hugely influence you to pursue journalism. More specifically, public relations.

Our first year was a huge turning point. You start to lose weight, become more outgoing and make lasting friendships with people you never would have expected. You are not that kid from high school anymore. You are also going to work harder than you ever have before for school and it is going to be completely worth it.

My only advice for you is to spend as much time as you can experiencing things with people. That show on Netflix is not going anywhere. Go to events, play frisbee and talk to that quiet girl behind you in psychology 101, as she ends up becoming one of your best friends.

I don't want to spoil too much for you, but the future's very bright. Each year being better than the last. All it took was a little hard work and perseverance. Graduation is now just under a year away for you and don't worry, you're going to make it just fine.

Sincerely,  
Kieran Boyle



Dear freshman Jesse,

First of all, congratulations on making it this far. I'm really excited for all the good times and great experiences to come. The road ahead is going to be bumpy, but you'll look back on it with a smile - trust me.

You won't have it all figured out by the end of fall quarter, and that's okay. In all honesty, you probably will never have it all figured out, which is OK too!

Learn to smile and say, "I don't know yet," every time someone asks you what you're studying (it will happen a lot). Or better yet, come up with some witty comebacks. Most importantly, don't let the unknown bring you down.

Explore the classes that are out there and don't be afraid to try something new. Don't neglect the sciences, but don't neglect the arts either. Make note of what you like and what you don't like.

You'll find your field in due time, and you'll know it when you find it. Maybe you'll realize it when your friends get annoyed with how much you talk about a class or when you notice how excited you are for the next day's lecture. It might be something you wouldn't expect, like organic chemistry, news writing or calculus, but you'll feel engaged, productive, enthused and hungry for more.

Run with that feeling. Passion doesn't always come easy, so take that passion and work as hard as you possibly can to keep it alive. A strong ambition will take you far.

Opportunities are out there, so learn how to find them. Everyone is human - professors, colleagues and prospective employers - so learn how to talk to them. Some of your best opportunities will come from reaching out to people. An email, a phone call or a simple handshake can go a long way.

Work hard, stay curious and listen to the people you trust and do the things you love. Most importantly, keep doing what feels right for you.

Good luck,  
Jesse Nichols



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FRONTLINE

Opinions of the Editorial Board

A Letter to the Newbies

Being a freshman at college is like being the new kid at school, except there are more than 2,000 of you and you're all in the same boat. College will be intimidating at first, a new place, new people, new responsibilities, but don't fear, The Western Front is here to help you get involved during what should be the best years of your lives.

While some of you may want to attempt to recreate your favorite college movie here, remember it's important to actually go to your classes. If you miss class you're literally throwing your money away, something I'm sure many of your parents wouldn't be too happy about. General University Requirements, or GURs, as excruciating as they may be, are something that we all must deal with, so make sure you go to those classes. Who knows, you may even discover something that you become really passionate about.

Western is a unique school in that we don't have a Greek fraternity system setup on campus, but this doesn't mean we don't have plenty of organizations you can get involved with. Western's Associated Students has over 200 student clubs registered that can cater to anyone's needs. Clubs range from academic and departmental to the widely known Humans vs. Zombies. A word of advice: when you're walking to class and see a large group of people armed with Nerf guns chasing another group of people, don't get caught in the crossfire because Humans vs. Zombies is no joke.

College is a place where there are no stupid questions. If you're curious about something, but are surrounded by tons of new people, don't be scared to speak up. Because more likely than not, others are wondering the same exact thing. Also, your professors are the ultimate resource

and have the answers to all your questions, so go to office hours if they're available.

The best advice we can give you is to not be afraid to take chances and be yourself. College should be a positive time in everyone's life, but your overall experience here depends on you completely. You will have your ups and your downs, but in the end college will be an experience that you will remember for the rest of your lives. So why not have fun with it?

"Stay far from timid, only make moves when your heart's in it, and live the phrase sky's the limit."

-The Notorious B.I.G., 1998

The editorial board is composed of Miles Barnes, Stephanie Villiers and Alexandra Bartick

Front Funnies



Illustration by Nicole Swift

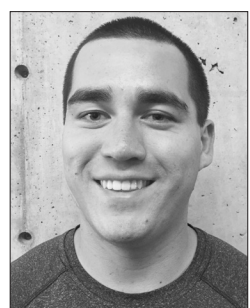
Viking Voices

What's the best advice you can give to incoming students?



Avery Ervin-Anderson junior, studio art

"Actually go to all your classes because you miss a lot if you don't. Don't be afraid to ask for help."



Kenika Peach junior, recreation

"Make the most of the time you can because your college experience will go by quicker than you think."



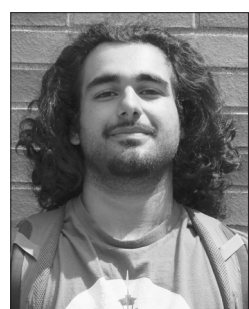
Kevin Schwartz senior, accounting

"You don't want to take it too seriously, because it's just finding who you are and where you want to go."



Hannah Hasbun senior, Japanese

"Do more with your hobbies than just keep them to yourself. Join clubs and do stuff with the community around."



Aasim Khan junior, geophysics

"Just say yes to everything; that's what I did. I met a lot of great people and had a great time. No regrets."



Miranda Aiken junior, environmental science

"Never be afraid to ask questions or talk to advisors or anyone that's here to help you."

Compiled by Honey Dubes and Daisey James

Submission Policy

The Western Front publishes submitted opinion items on a space-available basis.

Submit letters to the editor and guest columns, along with your name, title (such as "Western sophomore") and major to westernfront.opinion@gmail.com. Anonymous letters or those containing hate speech will not be published.

The Western Front reserves the right to edit for length, spelling, style and grammar.

Word count limits  
Letters to the editor: 400 words  
Guest columns: 400 words

Disc golf alive and well in Bellingham

Whatcom County currently has two active courses and two clubs hoping to revitalize the sport

Sarah Climaco THE WESTERN FRONT

Upon arrival, sounds of discs flying through the air and chains clanking in the distance can be heard throughout Cornwall Park, located on Meridian Street. As the summer afternoons start to cool down, the park comes alive with disc golfers.

Couples, friends and families from around town come to this course to toss a disc at a chained target, with players of all experience levels gathering together for the love of the game.

The goal of disc golf is to throw a disc from different distances and around obstacles to make it into a basket-target. Players use rules similar to the game of golf and take turns until they make it into the basket.

CORNWALL PARK

Cornwall Park is one of the few disc golf courses left in Whatcom County and it has become the most active. Though there have been a few disc golf courses throughout the area, most are now closed.

Some players are attracted to Cornwall because of its easy-to-access location in Bellingham. At this course, players also have the challenge of playing through and around trees.

"I like the challenge of the

trees," Bob Johnson of Ferndale said.

The park houses a nine-hole course, along with numerous other amenities. Johnson said he considers this park very user friendly.

VANDERYACHT PARK

The other known course in Whatcom County is VanderYacht Park in Ferndale, just north of Bellingham. This course is set up alongside the Nooksack River, and has many open spaces. The target-baskets are far more spread out, with minimal obstacles in the way.

VanderYacht Park is located less than 15 minutes north of Bellingham off of the Portal Way exit. Wide open fields, barbecues and a pond and river are some of the features found at this park, and it generally has less disc golfers than Cornwall.

WHERE TO GET GEAR

Many disc golf stores throughout Bellingham carry beginner sets of discs. A set or two can likely be found at Yeager's Sporting Goods, off of Northwest Avenue. However, when players on the course are asked about their favorite place to get gear, most refer to Cosmic Comics, which is located off of Cornwall, near Bellingham High School.



Brian McDowell throws a disc with a couple of friends, while playing a game at Cornwall Park on Wednesday, July 8. // Photo by Sarah Climaco

Cosmic Comics, located at 1905 Cornwall Ave., provides a wide variety of discs, from putters, to mid range discs to drivers.

Brothers Alex Allan, 21, and Blake Allan, 23, said they both enjoy shopping for their discs at Cosmic Comics. "That's pretty much where

we go every time," Alex Allan said.

HOW TO START PLAYING

Most people like to play the sport with a few friends or in large groups, depending on experience levels and preference. These are common ways for aspiring disc golfers to become active within the game.

Two disc golf clubs are also nearby to help get avid disc golf players and fans involved: Meridian Disc Golf is, "a new company focusing on promoting the sport of disc golf and keep it growing strong and healthy in our community. With this as our commitment, we are connecting players through running events, leagues, tournaments and promoting & developing new disc golf courses in Bellingham Washington & Whatcom County," according to their website.

The Whatcom Disc Golf Club, is an organization dedicated to the "expansion of the sport," according to their Facebook page. They are pushing for awareness throughout the community and hope to reopen Mossyrock Park and renovate other two active parks.



Disc golfs displayed at Cosmic Comics, located off of Cornwall Avenue. Cosmic Comics is one of the few shops in town that is dedicated selling discs. // Photo by Sarah Climaco

## From the sidelines

Opinions from *The Western Front* staff on all things sports

# WF



**Colin Floyd**  
Sports Editor

Soccer, both the women's and men's teams are fun to watch and now that Harrington Field is completed, the atmosphere as most games is awesome as huge crowds turn out for every game.

The league has got to change its rules regarding this sort of thing. While this is a great story for Clippers players and fans, Mark Cuban, the Mav's organization and the fans in Dallas especially must feel like they've been punched in the gut. It also makes me like DeAndre a little less because of his unwillingness to stay true to his word.

The American League seemingly wins every year and this one should be no different. I may be biased because of Nelson Cruz and Felix's inclusion, but they should both contribute heavily. I predict the AL to win in a blowout 8-2.

### Predictions for the MLB All-Star Game?

## Outdoor center now offers more trips

**Dominic Yoxtheimer**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

The Associated Students Outdoor Center will now be providing Weekend WOOT!, Western Outdoor Orientation Trips, for freshmen during the 2015 winter quarter.

The Outdoor Center created the Weekend WOOT! to accommodate for the over-popularity of the traditional WOOT!.

"They are super popular," said Spencer Pickell, AS Outdoor equipments shop coordinator. "Registration usually gets filled up within a day of it being open."

The WOOT! is a six day program exclusive to first year students and is designed around skill and team building.

WOOT! is held during the three weeks prior to the start of fall quarter, Aug 30-Sept 5 and Sept 13

### RENTAL PRICES

	Weekday	Weekend (Fri-Mon)
Touring Bike	\$5	\$10
Sleeping Bag	\$6	\$13.50
Tent	\$7.5	\$16.75
Mt. Bike	\$13.04	\$29.35
Skis	\$15	\$25
Canoe	\$20	\$40
Sea Kayak	\$20	\$45

- 19.

"There is like no experience required and they go backpacking and kayaking," Pickell said. "It is a good way for people to boost confidence in themselves. Outdoor activity can be slightly intimidating to inexperienced people who come in here."

Weekend WOOT! is similar but shorter.

"They made it because there is a really high de-



**Cam Caplinger**  
Sports Reporter

Basketball. Our hoops teams for the Men and Women are heavily talented and coached well. I hope that watching the game at Whatcom Community College next season will have the same fantastic atmosphere that Carver has.

No. I have never seen a situation where one of a team's star players decides to leave, and then his old team literally flies out to his house before he signs to convince him to stay. It also created an "emoji" battle. The Clippers become a title contender again, and the Mavs might not make the playoffs now.

It should be entertaining as always. What I like about the MLB ASG as opposed to other sports is that the fans will see competitive battles between the best pitchers and hitters in the game because of the playoff implications. I predict that the NL will win by a final score of 6-4.



**Kenji Guttorp**  
Sports Reporter

A WWU basketball game. I haven't been to many games but the team has been really good as of late and that makes the games fun to watch. The crowd is always into the game and it makes Carver Gym the place to be.

I've never seen something like this, but it seems to happen fairly frequently in college sports to a lesser degree. The Mav's are dead in the water now unless they can work some magic before the trade deadline. They went all in to get Jordan; letting Tyson Chandler go hurts more now than ever.

All-star games tend to be dominated by pitching, and I have to go with my man Felix. The American League squad is going to get the W. We have dominant pitchers and the AL has won 9 of the last 12 ASG's. I see that trend continuing and I am looking for Nelly Cruz to go deep.



**Daisey James**  
Sports Reporter

That's a tough choice between men's basketball and hockey. Both are really exciting to watch and fun to attend, so I can't choose just one.

The situation is pretty absurd, really. Jordan has not handled this well at all, and it doesn't bode well for his future with any team other than the Clippers. While a verbal agreement isn't binding or formal, he should have been responsible and reasonable and at least answered the Maverick's calls.

The American League will win based on the fact that the Royals have such strong representation and those guys are used to playing with each other. Also, the AL has been strong in the All-Star Game consistently over the last 15 years, so I suspect they'll win again this time around.



**Justin Janczakowski, left, helps Zach Pike-Urlacher attach a derailleur to his bike at the Outdoor Center. The center offers many services for bikes. // Photo by Dominic Yoxtheimer**

them what to do and then set it back to normal so that we are not actually doing the final piece of work. That way we can't be held liable."

"[The Outdoor Center] is so much cheaper than any other bike shop that you could go to but the quality is also there," said Zach Pike-Urlacher, a Fairhaven Senior. "The equipment you have access here is just, a lot."

The Western Outdoor Center has rental equipment from bikes to tents and other outdoor recreation equipment.

"The most resourceful is the bicycle rentals," said bike mechanic, Justin Janczakowski. "You can rent a touring bike for \$5 a day, which is especially for freshmen great because if you're trying to get groceries or something it's quicker than taking the bus and gets you outside."

## Meet Western's men's basketball team

Eight players are vying for five starting positions on this year's basketball squad



**Mac Johnson // Photo courtesy of Paul Madison**

**Cam Caplinger**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

The 2015-16 Western men's basketball team is set and ready to make another run to the national championships through its senior leadership and mixed new talent.

Last year, the Vikings started the 2014-15 season with a 13-10 record while looking from the outside into a potential playoff run. They then rallied together to win eight games in the row to end the regular season and won the first two games of the Great Northwest Athletic Conference to reach the conference championship. During that streak it won its games by an average of 19 points per game, head coach Tony Dominguez said.

More challenges are ahead this year, however, the most notable being the renovation of Sam Carver Gymnasium, Dominguez said.

"There are a lot of obstacles," Dominguez said. "We'll be playing off-site and basically not be able to practice there either. Because of that, we are also playing most of our schedule on the road. So there's going to be a lot of challenges but we have the team to overcome that with senior leadership and talent."

Ricardo Maxwell, a senior guard, started 23 of the 25 games he played in last season, missing eight games of the season with a knee injury. Regardless,

he still was a second team GNAC All-Star, averaging 15 points and 3.9 assists per game on 51.8 percent shooting, with a 31 point outing versus number one seed Western Oregon in the GNAC semifinals.

"I had a chip on my shoulder when we played there because I felt like our team should have been up there in the top," Maxwell said. "That game I just zoned out and had one of those nights."

After being a team captain last season, he is taking it upon himself to lead by example, Maxwell said.

Mac Johnson, a center and another senior, played in every game for the Vikings last season and ranked fourth in the conference in field goal percentage, fifth in rebounds and tied for sixth in blocks. After overcoming a collapsed lung at Gonzaga Prep High School, the junior-college transfer thinks that team chemistry will be important in next year's run.

"Last year I think we had trouble looking at the big picture as a whole and I think all of our guys are pretty bought in now," Johnson said. "I see us doing really well [this season]. I think the big thing for us is starting the season on a high note and keeping it there rather than battling from behind."

Junior Jeffrey Parker, forward, enters this season with 819 career points on 43.3 percent three-point shooting accuracy. After leading last year's squad in

points per game with 15.6, Parker said the team has high expectations for next season.

"We finished strong last season and we're looking to really improve," Parker said. "We just have a lot of guys that can come in, play hard and give us a lot of beneficial elements to the game."

Some of those guys include senior guard Kyle Impero, senior forward Colby Mitchell, senior center Blake Bowen, sophomore guard Brett Kingma and freshman guard Trey Dreschel.

Impero played in all 31 games as a junior last season, averaging 7.6 points per game.



**Jeffrey Parker // Photo courtesy of Paul Madison**

"He really came on and did a phenomenal job at the end of the season last year," Dominguez said.

Mitchell redshirted last season, but played in all 28 games as a junior in the 2013-14 season for the Vikings.

"He sat out but he started the year before and we finished 29th in the country," Dominguez said.

Bowen played in 24 games last season, averaging 2.7 points and 2.0 rebounds a game.

"Bowen is a 6-foot-9 player that could start and he'll be a senior that was a really good sub off the bench," Dominguez said.

Kingma missed all of last season with a knee injury but is a Division I transfer from Washington State University. Kingma previously played for the Oregon Ducks as a freshman in 2011-12, while averaging 3.1 points a game.

Dreschel also redshirted last season but was the 2014 Viking Slam Dunk champion as a freshman. Dreschel last played for

Cedar Park Christian High School in Bothell, Washington, where he was the Nisqually League Player of the Year.

"Dreschel is a red-shirt freshman with an outstanding 6-foot-5 [frame]," Dominguez said. "[He's a] very athletic player who can play all positions."

All and all, this year looks to be a fun, but very challenging year, Dominguez said. But the team seems ready and able to deal with the adversity.

"It will definitely be challenging, but basketball is basketball," Dominguez said. "I think our guys are mentally tough and prepared."

Even as the team works around the renovation of their home court, the players believe that they have what it takes to accomplish their goals.

"It should be a great season," Maxwell said. "I feel like we have a great chance and honestly, I feel like we're going to win the whole thing."



**Ricardo Maxwell // Photo courtesy of Paul Madison**



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Carly T., WWU Student, Class of 2015

"I love Painless Properties because all of the utilities are covered in the rent, so there is no hassle at all. Also, the internet is quite fast and the rooms are spacious. The landlords are very nice and understanding and I've never had any problems with the maintenance staff they are fast efficient and caring."

Joshua F., WWU Student, Class of 2015



"I really enjoy living in Taylor Heights; its super close to campus and the bus stop and the community is full of college students like me. The rooms are a vast improvement over the dorms I lived in last year both space wise and convenience wise. Nothing quite like having your own kitchen. Included utilities are quite nice and having wireless internet is really useful. I would recommend living here to anyone looking for a close commute to campus."

Rachel R., WWU Student, Class of 2015

"I decided to live in Viking Gardens because I got a job up here before school started. The rent is very cheap (way cheaper than the dorms!) not to mention this place is pretty much on campus because it is so close. The biggest thing I love about this place is how helpful they are. I've called them asking questions or for maintenance and they respond back right away. Me gusto Painless Properties."

Shin P., WWU Student, Class of 2016

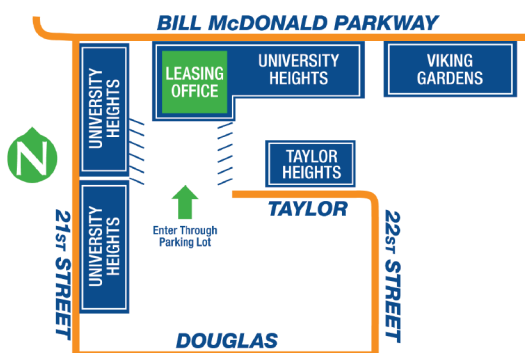


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