

# THE WESTERN FRONT

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## WTA considers bus pass fare change

Two-stage plan in 2020 could see first change to WTA fares in 10 years

Melody Kazel  
THE WESTERN FRONT

For the first time in 10 years the Whatcom Transportation Authority is considering changing their fares, according to Councilwoman and WTA Board Member April Barker. The potential fare increases would be part of stage one of a two-stage plan, Barker said.

"The cash fares will remain the same," WTA Planning Director Tim Wilder said. "We're looking at increasing the cost of our passes."

With these potential changes, Wilder said the WTA wants to focus on making sure the fares remain reasonable.

"One thing we're concerned about is equity over the cost of the service," Wilder said.

WTA plans to implement small changes over time, according to Wilder. They want to ensure that any increase in price isn't so drastic that it makes it hard, or



Students load onto a WTA bus in front of the Viking Union. // Photo by Ian Koppe

even impossible, for low-income members of the community to ride the bus.

Joshua Osterhaus, a community member who used to be homeless, said

access is something he'd be concerned about if the price increases. Osterhaus said he relied on a bus pass to move around the city.

"When I was

homeless here in Bellingham, it was really important to have a really cheap bus pass that we can [use to] get around," Osterhaus said. "I mean, there's no

other way for homeless people to really move from place to place in this area."

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## AS Board of Directors to vote on revised election code

Reece Jennings  
THE WESTERN FRONT

The Associated Students Board of Directors will vote next week on finalizing the election code for the 2019-2020 AS Student Senate Elections.

Board members discussed approving the proposal for a revised election code in their meeting on Oct. 4. If approved, the updated code would be used for the 2019 AS Senate election.

Registration for the election opened to candidates on Sept. 25. Approving the revisions now would mean changing the election code that candidates must follow right before they can start campaigning.

Board members discussed the need for wording of the code's endorsement policies to be revised for clarity. In other words, they want to avoid any confusion about the rules AS employees have to follow for endorsing a candidate.

"We can't limit AS employees as individuals," said Grace Drechsel, Western's AS Vice President for Government Affairs.

Drechsel said this was an issue for the board last year when AS employees were not allowed to endorse a candidate's measures in their personal capacity.

Board members want to be sure the wording of the code is not limiting free speech. Senate Pro-Tempore Adah Barenburg shared Drechsel's concern.

see CODE, page 3

## Faculty senate to revise Code of Ethics

Kiaya Wilson  
THE WESTERN FRONT

After passing a motion to revise the Faculty Code of Ethics on June 3, 2019, faculty senate unanimously passed a motion to create a subcommittee that will work together to revise the language used in Section II on Monday, Oct. 7.

Faculty senate voted to create the subcommittee after learning the previous revision made to the Code of Ethics couldn't be actionable because it didn't include legally binding language.

"At [the June 3] meeting, there was concern raised about the language in the document, if it's in alignment with legal points," said Jeff Young, faculty senate president. "There were concerns

brought by various parties; by the assistant attorney general, by risk management, by faculty and by some students."

The June 3 revision, stated, "the faculty are to avoid and condemn racism.... In particular, faculty condemn verbal use of the n-word racial slur in learning environments."

While the faculty senate stood by this revision, Young said it could not become actionable. If a faculty member did not follow this section there wouldn't be consequences brought against them until it had the proper legal language.

"The term racism doesn't have a legal definition in it and the sentence, 'in particular, faculty condemn verbal use of the n-word racial slur in learning environments,'

also has not been legally defined because of freedom of speech," said Rich Brown, United Faculty of Western Washington University president.

Students who were present for the faculty senate meeting on Oct. 7, including five members of the AS board of directors, requested this revision be done quickly to prevent students from continuing to feel uncomfortable in their classes.

"I would like to emphasize how important this is for the safety of all students on campus," said Selome Zerai, AS vice president for activities. "I would like to ask the faculty senate to not draw this out any longer and possibly just have this revision within the next faculty senate meeting."

see ETHICS, page 4



A child chooses an apple to turn into cider with the help of Robert McKissick at the Fall Fruit Festival on Saturday, Oct. 5. // Photo by Claire Ott

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Joker is the villain we deserve



The sun sets over the waterfront as a skater cruises through Waypoint Park on Saturday, Oct. 5.

// Photo by Max Gleiberman

**HOW TO SUBTLY REJECT SOMEONE WHEN YOU DON'T LIKE CONFRONTATION**

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Illustration by Chloe Halbert

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# Bike theft on campus inspires precautions

Prevent bike theft by using a U-lock and cable to secure frame and wheels, experts say

**Wilson Turk**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

According to the crime report from the University Police, in the first two weeks of classes four bikes from Nash Hall have already been reported stolen to University Police. While bike theft is all too common, there are ways to prevent it and to recover bikes that are stolen.

Having a bike stolen can be devastating, especially for someone who uses a bike as a primary method of transportation. Craig Downing, a bike commuter, said getting his bike stolen felt, "like someone had stolen my legs. I felt completely incomplete."

Andrew Francis, owner and head bike mechanic at Café Velo, said the best way to prevent the theft of a bike is to use a U-lock to lock the frame and rear wheel to a permanent structure, with a cable lock securing the front wheel.

Francis also recommended people use theft-proof bolts for the seat post to ensure that someone cannot steal the seat.

"The brands Kryptonite and Abus are both good. The most expensive one is the safest," Francis said.

According to Kryptonite, locks can be registered and, if broken, sent back to Kryptonite. The company will pay the base cost of the stolen bicycle up to a certain amount determined by which lock was being used.

"We have seen evidence of bike theft on our bike parking area overnight when pieces get left behind," said Darcy Allen, student manager at the Viking Union information desk.

According to Allen, bike lockers are available for rent on the south side of Carver, and the university bookstore sells U-locks.

Bikes should be registered with either Project 529 or Bike Index, both of which are used by the Bellingham Police Department to contact the owner of a recovered bicycle and alert the community to keep a lookout for a stolen bike. These sites are free and use the serial number of the bike, found on the bottom of the bike frame, to identify and return the bike to its rightful owner.

If a bike is stolen, the first step is filing an official report with the local police. The next step is to report it stolen where the bike is registered online. Allen said people can also post



Bikes locked on campus outside the Communication Facility on Tuesday, Oct. 8.  
// Photo by Zachary Jimenez

in Facebook groups dedicated to locating stolen bikes where community members actively help keep an eye out for missing bikes. Allen said she was able to help a resident find a missing bike after it had been posted in the Bellingham Stolen Bikes Facebook group. Many stolen bicycles appear

on online selling sites such as Craigslist and OfferUp. If you see a stolen bike online or in the hands of someone else on the street, the best thing you can do is immediately contact the police to report it.

While Bellingham does seem to have frequent bike thefts, Francis said they often

occur under similar circumstances.

"[Theft happens] when the bike is left outside or in plain sight for an extended period of time," Francis said. "The safest place for the bike to be is inside of an apartment or a house where it can't be seen from the street."

## WTA

continued from page 1

The WTA is looking into increasing fares, in part, because of their fare recovery ratio.

A fare recovery ratio is how much fares should contribute to the WTA's overall revenues. The ratio is set at 15%, but since the fares haven't changed since 2009, their rate is currently around 12%. This means that the amount of money rider's pay is not making up a big enough portion of the revenue. Wilder said the WTA needs to work on getting to that ideal ratio of 15% to continue providing the same level of service they are now.

"The cost of maintenance, all those factors, are increasing over time," Wilder said. "So in order to provide the same level of service we want, we have to make sure that the revenues are available. And of course, having fares, that's one portion of our revenues that allows us to pay for the service that we provide."

Another part of stage one of the WTA's plan is potentially

offering free ridership to youths in the community.

"We're looking at what it would take to offer youth, that is high school and under, free rides in our system," Wilder said.

According to City Councilman and WTA Board Member Michael Lilliquist, the WTA currently has a program where seventh graders attending schools in the area can sign up and get free bus passes for the entire year. Providing free ridership to youths 18 and under would be a way to expand the program.

Wilder explained that the WTA has a lot to look into first, including costs as well as the best way to track new youth riders since they have to report their ridership to the federal government each year.

Stage one of this plan will likely be more short-term, though none of that has been definitive, Barker said.

Barker said she was pushing for a short term plan so free youth ridership could happen sooner, instead of after a longer plan of study.

Stage two will likely be a more long-term study, according to Barker.

"Phase two starts next year. And what we hope to do in this second phase is really set goals for our fare policy," Wilder said.

Some of those goals will likely include looking more deeply into equity, specifically how to ensure that the WTA's policies and price adjustments are fair to people of all income levels.

According to Lilliquist, the potential fare increases and this plan overall comes back to one question: How can we afford the transit system that the public deserves?

In order to ensure the public can be involved with these proposed changes, Wilder said the WTA will hold a public meeting in mid-October, though the date and location have not been confirmed yet.

After that, there will be two public hearings, one in November and one in December, with the board of directors. Anyone is welcome to come to the meetings to learn about the potential changes or to share their opinion.

## CODE

continued from page 1

"I know the issue of current AS employees endorsing a candidate was an issue in the last election, and I am concerned about an AS employee working on a campaign against the candidate," Barenburg said.

Barenburg's main concern was approving the code changes during the election period.

"I'm worried about the timeline we have for this," Barenburg said. "Making changes to the election code would not be morally right."

Barenburg recommended that the board only pass the code with the corrected dates, and save more substantive changes for after the election.

The board is also concerned that making changes to the code at this point in the election period is in violation of election rules. According to the existing code, revisions may not be made after the opening of the

candidate filing period. AS President Lani Defiesta said she felt revising the code right now would not be the ethical decision.

Selome Zerai, AS Vice President for Activities, suggested using the past election code with revisions to correct the dates. Drechsel motioned to hold an electronic vote next Friday, Oct. 11, to approve using the existing code with date corrections.

"People are already filing without a code, but we need it ready for the campaigning," Drechsel said.

The motion was passed, and the board will vote on the AS Senate election code Oct. 11. If approved, the code will be available to candidates by the start of the campaign period.

The campaign period opens on Oct. 16 at 8 p.m., according to the elections timeline.

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# Western's history of handling racism on campus

## White nationalist stickers found on campus rekindle conversation

**Kiaya Wilson**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

After finding four stickers belonging to the white nationalist group Patriot Front on Sept. 30, University Police and the administration are working to prevent hateful comments on campus after repeated racist incidents in recent years.

"University officials are on heightened alert for these posters and stickers," said Paul Cocke, director of communications and marketing for Western, in an email. "[They] will be removed as soon as possible in accordance with university policy."

According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, Patriot Front has a statewide presence in Washington. The group has been seen in multiple parts of Whatcom County including Western's campus, Whatcom Community College and Ferndale.

"Patriot Front's activism typically consists of anonymously posting flyers, dropping banners off buildings or overpasses and performing miscellaneous acts of public service such as park cleanups," according to the

SPLC website. University Police have begun searching for who put the stickers up, University Police Sergeant Ron Carpenter said.

"We just want to know who they are, what they want and why they are here," Carpenter said. "At least talk to them about policy rules."

Western has a posting policy that addresses hanging up posters and stickers on campus. However, they do not have any policies prohibiting hate group materials to be put up.

According to the posting policy, "affixing signs, banners, posters or other displays to building exteriors is not permitted. Violations of these policies may result in removal of material and/or cleaning charges."

University Police described the stickers Patriot Front put up as being 8.5 inches by 11 inches flyers and a round sticker that said, "Keep America American."

However, in the most recent incident, University Police said they can't give harsh consequences to whoever put up the Patriot

Front stickers. "Even though they are listed as a neo-Nazi, white supremacist group we can't do anything because there was no threat of violence," Carpenter said. "It's part of free speech."

In November 2018, there were racial and homophobic slurs posted across campus by Shayne Merwin, a student at Western. Administration initially trespassed Merwin from residence and dining halls while an investigation was underway, according to a previous Western Front article.

Students held a sit-in requesting Merwin be expelled or trespassed from campus during the investigation. Merwin was not trespassed until the conclusion of the investigation, which also ended in his expulsion from the university, according to the article.

Students at the sit-in criticized the administration due to a lack of action against Merwin after the incident. After the sit-in, University President Sabah Randhawa promised to work against racism on campus.

Several students

*"I want Western to not push [students of color] aside and let other priorities go first. We matter too."*

**Derek Rajah**  
Fourth-year Western student

throughout the past four years have said they don't believe Western's administration is doing enough work against racism.

"I mean, to be honest, I haven't seen that much of a change," said Derek Rajah, a fourth-year student at Western. "We now have the MCC [Multicultural Center] which means [students of color are] more public, but other than that I'm not too sure. I want Western to not push [students of color] aside and let other priorities

go first. We matter too."

Three years prior to the Nash Hall vandalism incident, several students had made death threats against a former Associated Students president and other black students. Western administration canceled school the day the students made the threats. The former University President, Bruce Shepard, discussed plans he had made to work against racism.

Shepard released a lengthy email to students explaining the entirety of the situation and why campus was closed the day students made threats.

"Campus security has been beefed up ... we are establishing a 'rumor control' site ... [and] I have charged a group to share ideas about how, as a campus, we can recover, respond, learn, and grow through this experience," he said.

After Shepard released this statement, students criticized the administration for not doing enough to protect students, according to a Seattle Times article.

# Student voting could make the difference in local elections

**Ella Banken**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

Engaging in local elections is more accessible than ever, but students still aren't voting.

According to Whatcom County Chief Deputy Auditor Diana Bradick, the issue is not registering students to vote, it's getting them to vote.

There are large efforts made on Western's campus to register voters, Bradick said. Every September thousands of new voters are registered when school is back in session, but this doesn't guarantee voting.

In non-partisan local elections, it can be difficult to know who you want to vote for or find information about them, according to Todd Donovan, Whatcom County councilor and political science professor at Western.

"The ballot shows up, and you're like, 'I don't know who any of these people are,'" Donovan said.

The rate of student voting is so low that a small increase in turnout would affect local elections, Donovan said.

"It's kind of like the holy grail," Donovan said. "If you can mobilize [students] it could make a big difference, but nobody knows how to mobilize them."

In efforts to get students and Bellingham residents more acquainted with the candidates, Western is hosting candidate forums,

according to Phoebe DeMeerleer, local issues coordinator at Western's Representation and Engagement Programming (REP) office.

Candidates for the city race will be hosted on Oct. 29, and candidates for the county race will be hosted Oct. 30, DeMeerleer said.

The forum is open to the public and free to attend, DeMeerleer said. Audience members can submit questions for the candidates to be asked at the event.

According to DeMeerleer, attending these forums is one of the best ways to understand the ballot and be an informed voter.

"It's one of the easier ways to figure out what the candidates stand for, rather than hunting down the information yourself. You can be in one place and hear from all the different candidates," DeMeerleer said.

In local elections, candidates often have similar stances on issues, and it can be hard to distinguish them, Donovan said. He recommends looking beyond what candidates post on their campaign websites.

"If you really want to know who matches your priorities, look at who is supporting them and the money that is behind them," Donovan said.

"I think that says a lot."

Voter pamphlets are distributed by mail to registered voters prior to

the election, according to Bradrick. They contain information on every candidate and measure that is listed on the ballot.

The pamphlets should arrive a few days prior to receiving your ballot in the mail, Bradrick said.

Ballots must be postmarked by the day of the election, Nov. 5, or placed in a drop box by 8 p.m. Ballots do not require postage stamps.

To register before the election, students can visit the REP office, VU 435, anytime to get help registering, according to DeMeerleer. For those who have access to a computer, registration is available online.

Mail and online registration ends on Monday, Oct. 28, but voters can register in person at the Whatcom County auditor's office the day of the election, Bradrick said. This is a new option starting this year.

"At 7:30 p.m., the day of the election, you could go to the auditor's office, register to vote and then vote," DeMeerleer said.

For those who are under 18, but are planning ahead, pre-registration is now available in Washington state, according to DeMeerleer.

"Remind your friends to vote, remind your family, maybe sit down with your roommate," she said.

## ETHICS

*continued from page 1*

Faculty senators agreed this revision needs to be completed in a swift manner.

"I see it as imperative to our [community's] safety that we change it," Rae Lynn Schwartz-DuPre, a communication studies professor, said.

Young proposed the idea of creating a subcommittee, comprised of faculty and students, to work on making Section II have legally binding language. Initially, students at the meeting were not pleased with this idea.

"While we can agree that this should be clear and [have] legal definition, I think our concern is that creating a subcommittee takes a lot of time and a lot of space," Zerai said. "We don't necessarily believe that it will be done on time, and we think that working with legal terms and legal definitions could be done in one faculty senate meeting."

Zerai said some students had put together a draft they believed used the right terminology that could be used in the Code of Ethics.

"We wanted to form a committee to have both experts as well as have diverse representation from across campus, from faculty and students," Young said.

Young suggested a one-month timeline to have the committee meet and come up with a complete revision that included legally binding language. Committee member nominations should be sent to Young by Oct. 14. The tentative committee schedule

is to meet by Oct. 21, have a draft completed by Oct. 28 and bring a final draft back to the faculty senate on Nov. 4.

The committee will include three faculty members and three students that will vote on the language used in the revision of Section II, with the assistance of someone from the assistant attorney general's office and the United Faculty of Western Washington University.

"[I will be] available any time you want to contact me to talk," Brown said, addressing the students.

Students in the subcommittee will be compensated for their work, but it has not been decided how they will be compensated yet.

Craig Dunn, professor of business and sustainability, ended the discussion by reading a statement written by an anonymous faculty member. The statement addressed that although banning the n-word from classrooms is a step in the right direction, there is still a lot of work to be done to fight the structural racism in the university's system.

"Banning words cannot dismantle structural systemic racism," Dunn read. "Racism will only be dismantled at large, when white people become critically aware of how their own, often well-intentioned behavior, reifies racism and how institutions do the same."

Faculty senate members agree they have a lot of work to do to combat racism in the institution, and this revision to Section II is just a small part of it.

# Music faculty appoints department chair

## Patrick Roulet, associate professor and percussion coordinator, takes on leadership role

**Ana Soltero**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

A familiar face has taken on a new lead with the department of music.

The music faculty appointed Patrick Roulet, who has a doctorate in musical arts, to the chair of the department of music. Roulet is also an associate professor and the percussion area coordinator, according to the Department of Music website. This school year will be his sixth consecutive year at Western. But Roulet said his time at Western goes back 25 years.

"I got the call from the music department chair here at Western, [saying] they need a percussion teacher for one day a week," Roulet said.

In a span of 10 years, Roulet said he went from being a percussion teacher to being a lecturer while freelancing with the Seattle Symphony and the Seattle Ballet Orchestra. In 2004, he left for Southern Utah University.

"I left Western, and I never wanted to leave, but it was part-time," Roulet said. "It was a non-tenure track position. So, I left for this tenure-track position."

Roulet attributes his interest in music to his father, who is a jazz drummer.

"I grew up watching him perform ... he had a regular Friday night gig at a pizza place," Roulet said. "So, when I was a little kid that's what I did on Friday nights: watch him play."

Despite the large period of time he spent teaching at SUU Roulet said he always had Bellingham in the back of his head.

"Western is where I feel like I really learned how to teach," he said. "I really connect with the community here, the students and faculty colleagues."

Heather Dalberg, administrative services manager for the department



Patrick Roulet plays the djembe in his office on Oct. 1. Roulet grew up watching his dad, a jazz drummer, perform. // Photo by Ana Soltero

of music, describes Roulet as hardworking with the best intentions in mind. He made it clear that he wants the department to move in a direction that will benefit students, she said.

The former chair of the music department, Christopher Bianco, led the recent growth of the department, Dalberg said.

"Patrick came along and he really wanted to take on the rest. It's been nothing but good for the department, him being hired," Dalberg said. "I'm glad that the faculty all agreed; he was the right guy at the right time."

Percussion instructor Kendra McLean said Roulet

*"If I could give advice to somebody, it's [to] just keep going. You may fail, and that is all part of the process, and I guess I've never been afraid to fail."*

**Patrick Roulet**  
Chair - Department of Music

always has the students' best interests in mind.

"Dr. Roulet is a wonderful leader, and we are very fortunate to have him as Music Department Chair," she said.

With Roulet's new position, changes within the department are inevitable. He said he wants to work on trying to create a sense of community within the department, and encourage sustainability, diversity and identity expression.

Roulet said he is working on building a team to

make the department more sustainable because, as of right now, they do a lot of printing and copying. He is also looking into how they should recruit students of color and first-generation students to become music teachers.

While clearing out his previous office, Roulet mentioned that he found a file with about 30 rejection letters from teaching jobs he had applied to.

"If I could give advice to somebody, it's [to] just keep going," Roulet said. "You may fail, and that is all part of the process, and I guess I've never been afraid to fail."

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# Musician Andy Millard strikes a chord with local music lovers

*Western student enjoys leaving lyrics a mystery for listeners*

**Alina Simone**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

Under the warm glowing lights of Makeworth Market, third-year Western student Andy Millard starts to sing. His rustic Americana sound stopped conversation as customers tuned into his melancholy song.

Sipping their coffees and beers, the audience laughed and chatted with Millard between sets. The open shop peppered with leafy green plants created a welcoming environment for people to interact with the artists and enjoy music together.

Millard partnered with several other musicians and another vocalist for his live show on Sept. 20.

"I think I will always be working with other artists," said Millard. "I just want to make the project the best that it can be."

Bass player Shiloe Petros and drummer Alexander Jon joined Millard at the show along with vocalist Alison Stevens. As an entry in Makeworth Market's live music series, Millard and his band filled the coffee shop at 6 p.m. and kept the audience engaged well into the night.

This appearance was Millard's second event at Makeworth Market but only his fifth live performance in Bellingham. Over the summer, Millard played at The Firefly Lounge, a microfestival called Burning Anne and a couple house shows. While he is new to the local music scene,

Millard said he is happy the music scene in Bellingham is supportive.

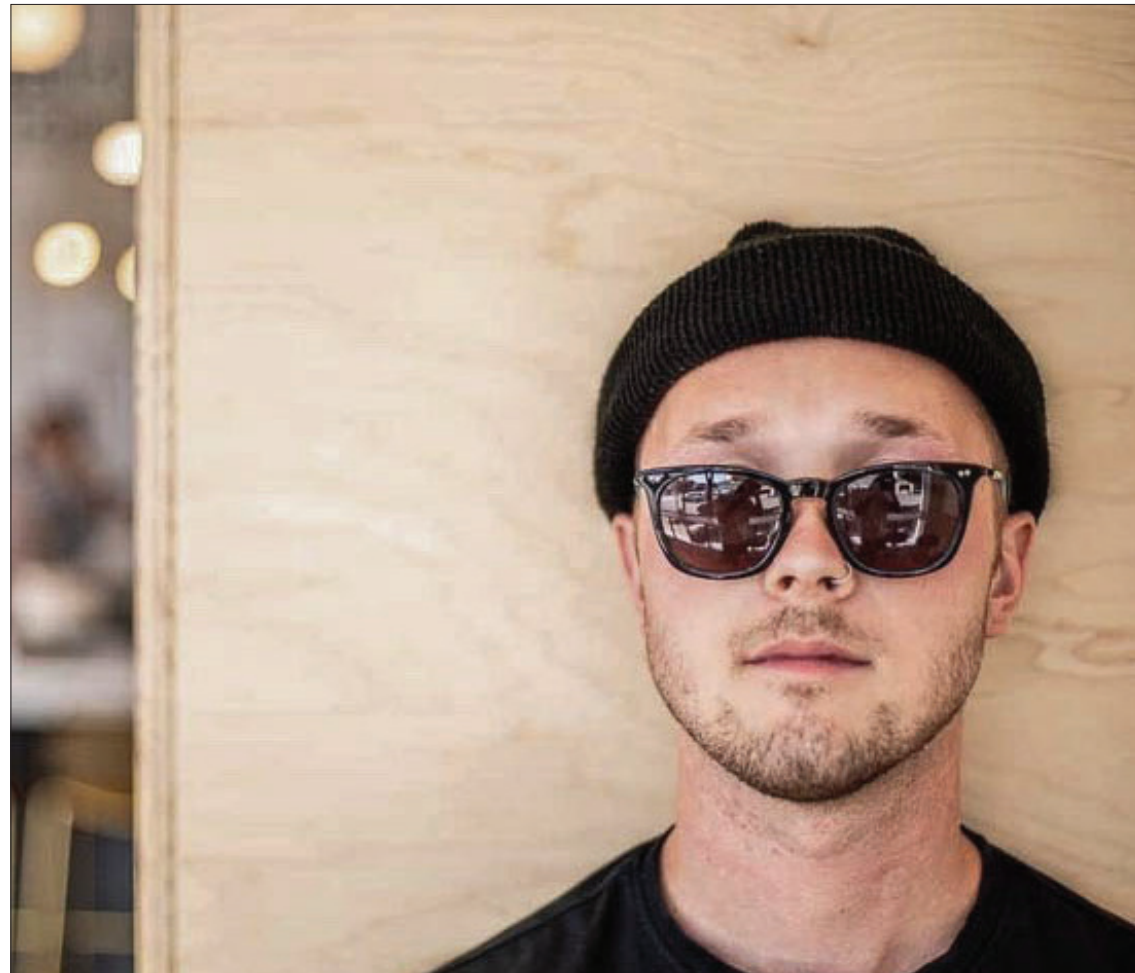
Just over a year ago, Millard moved to Bellingham from Wenatchee in order to finish his bachelor's in recreation at Western, he said.

When he is not in his recreation classes, Millard can be found brewing coffee at Camber, skiing, climbing, surfing and creating music. Bellingham was the perfect college town for Millard between the great coffee, the outdoor recreational activities and the brilliant music scene budding in downtown Bellingham, he said.

Millard has been singing since before he can remember and started playing guitar not long after, but he only started writing music as a senior in high school. Since then, it has turned into a full sprint into his passion for creating music. The 21-year-old artist has released one EP and four singles since 2018 and is almost ready to announce the release date of his next EP.

Millard said his music style is hard to describe. His sound evades description as he continuously tries out new styles and new ways to improve his music. Some describe his sound as indie alternative, while others would say it has more of an Americana vibe to it.

"I would say his music is a clash between rock, singer/songwriter and contemporary rock as well," Riggs Mischke said, after hearing Millard play



Millard's favorite song of his out at the moment is, "Pick up the Pieces."  
// Photo courtesy of Joel Barger

live at Makeworth Market. "His live performance definitely has an atmosphere."

He often writes songs that seem so outside of himself, but as time passes, he is able to look back and see how the metaphors in his songs connected directly to what he was going through at the time.

In every song about his own life, Millard said he hopes the audience can find a connection somewhere to latch onto.

"I like to connect people with stories and pungent lyrics," Millard said in reference to his favorite song that is out at the moment, "Pick Up the Pieces."

Millard's lyrics are authentic and vulnerable as he invites people into his story. He prefers to not give resolution to his songs to reflect so many people's lived experiences. Allowing songs to remain melancholy without adding in a positive ending allows him to preserve authenticity in his songs, said Millard.

"Andy is a brilliant lyricist," said Petros, the band's bassist. "He loves to write about moments from his past and explain what his songs mean to whoever asks, because he wants people to know the heart behind them."

While Millard is a solo artist, he often has the opportunity to collaborate with other musicians.

"I have never thought of it as a competition," Millard said. "It is really fun to connect with other artists and have a mutual understanding and respect for each other and the things that we're passionate about."

At his most recent live event and a few others in the past, Millard has teamed up with bassist Petros and drummer Jon to bring a new layer to his music. Partnering up with

different writers, musicians and vocalists from time to time allows Millard to explore new avenues for his music, while still allowing himself to remain free to create and not be boxed into a strict style.

"I've thought about studying music, but music is in this spot for me where it's almost a mystery," Millard said, adjusting the sleeves on his knit blue sweater. "I don't want to get to a point where it becomes a mathematical equation, because I think that the mystery is what makes writing music so intriguing and so fun."

In the future, Millard said he would love to continue growing in his music by collaborating with other artists and experimenting with unique instruments. Strings, the saxophone or even the bagpipes may be just around the corner for Millard and his audience.

The next big step for Millard is the release of his next EP in a couple months. The EP will be called "Pick Up the Pieces" and will include six songs. Two of Millard's singles currently available for streaming, "Invalidity" and "Pain," from the new EP. Once Millard is done mixing and mastering the final pieces of a few songs, his new project will be ready to be received by the public.

Millard's music can be found on Instagram and Spotify under "Andy Millard."



Top: Sean McWay, perennials production manager for Cloud Mountain Farm, samples a pear for a Fall Fruit Festival attendee on Saturday, Oct. 5.

Bottom: Apples picked from Cloud Mountain Farm's array of apple trees to be used for making cider.  
// Photos by Claire Ott

## CLOUD MOUNTAIN FARM APPLE FESTIVAL



Robert McKissick, the Fall Fruit Festival's self-proclaimed 'ciderman,' helps a child manually crush an apple into cider on Saturday, Oct. 5. // Photo by Claire Ott

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Andy Millard performing live on July 26. // Photo courtesy of Joel Barger

# Student artist turned business owner

In his last quarter at Western, Gabe Virgen continues to make functional art for business



Gabe Virgen sits in the studio and inspects mugs that didn't make the final cut in a recent batch on Sept. 28. // Photo by MacKenzie Dexter

**MacKenzie Dexter**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

The ceramics studio in Western's Art Annex is home to scattered pottery wheels, tools, dust and Gabe Virgen, a fourth-year Western student and artist. Virgen sits on a clay covered stool next to an assortment of handmade mugs to discuss his work and small business that spread into the Bellingham community.

Virgen, who studies studio art with a concentration in ceramics, is entering his last quarter at Western.

"It's more than just a craft or a hobby," Virgen said. "Ceramics is a fine art, and I want my work to introduce people to the possibilities of this medium."

After six years of creating pottery, he decided last May to create his own business. Virgen made an online shop for Rain Ceramics followed by an Instagram account. He decided on the name Rain Ceramics because he wanted to mirror the simplicity of his work and reflect the Washington environment.

Virgen applied his love for clay to create Rain Ceramics. He runs this business online and at a few Bellingham shops.

Local businesses like jewelry shop All Peoples Shackles Exchanged (APSE) sought out Virgen's work after seeing his online shop and social media accounts.

"Intention is one of the first things we look for," Hayley Boyd, co-owner of APSE, said. "Handmade goods can tell a story and Rain's stuff is very intentional and really well-made. Those two things are going to inherently add to somebody's home or lifestyle."

From there, Virgen reached

out to another local boutique, Brazen, and they decided to carry his work.

"As artists that have sold in small businesses around town, we know how important it is to have a space where your handmade goods are thoughtfully represented," Allison Potts, co-owner of Brazen said. "Especially for many [Western] students who are just starting their small businesses, and we are excited to give them that opportunity."

Virgen said he makes everything in Western's ceramics studio with the clay he buys from a Seattle shop, and he makes the glazes from scratch. While he describes his work as uniform, he uses glaze to give them a handmade touch so they do not look manufactured.

"I create a single batch of white, and from that white I add base glaze [in] very precise measurements," Virgen said. "I never measure the amount of colorants I add so that each batch of wares is unique and shows the touch of the hand."

Outside of school and ceramics, he also works at a restaurant, Virgen said.

"My weeks can get very busy and my planner can be packed with things that have to get done," Virgen said. "I just try to remind myself to take things one task at a time, and if I ever find myself with not enough time, I've learned to accept that I'm not perfect. I'm still young, and I'll do better next time."

According to Virgen, ceramics is a lot of trial and error. Making a small batch can take up to a week to complete, and even after the process of throwing, firing and glazing, he may reject pieces.

"You have to be okay with tossing things. You can't keep everything," Virgen said.

As he becomes more particular about his pieces, Virgen said his own biggest critic is himself. It is important to make sure that the pieces are sanded properly, have minimal bubbles in the glaze and the piece is functional. It is easy for artists to get attached to their work, especially when the work is personal.

"I am creating based on my own inspirations and attractions," Virgen said. "I know I've nailed a design when I can set it in any environment and it still shows a subtle appreciation of the space."

Virgen describes his work as functional. He only uses glaze on parts of his pieces where it is necessary, such as a handle or inside of a bowl. The pieces also have minimal color and each new glaze is mixed with random measurements of color to get a

unique batch.

"Right now, functional means anything that serves its purpose while not distracting," Virgen said. "I want my work to create a lucid appreciation of the space they take up within a home."

After graduation, he plans to move back to Olympia and continue his work where he has studio space.

"I don't want to expand my workforce beyond myself, meaning no matter the demand I will always be the only potter who makes my designs," Virgen said.

While it may be unrealistic to make a comfortable living selling his work, Virgen continues to do this work out of enjoyment and passion. Virgen said that it can be easy for artists to get caught up with the money aspect of art, but he puts most of his funds right

back into his business.

"I never intended to get rich or even have extra money coming in from my ceramics," Virgen said. "I just wanted to get my passion out there, in the hands of people, and that continues to drive me."

Virgen hopes to one day open a cafe where he can display his art.

"A creative space where I can integrate my functional ware and where they're used," Virgen said. "After all, Rain is a functional ceramics studio."

After that, he plans to apply for graduate school outside of Washington to get his master of fine arts in ceramics.

"My work is a departure of what people think of when they imagine ceramic wares," Virgen said. "I want people to reimagine what ceramics is."



Bellingham shop, All Peoples Shackles Exchanged (APSE), displays an assortment of Rain Ceramics on Sept. 30. // Photo by MacKenzie Dexter

# Joker is the villain we deserve

It's time to stop avoiding mental illness

**Emily Erskine**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

It has taken society decades to come to the somewhat conclusion that depression and anxiety are real struggles people face. But what about other mental illnesses?

In Todd Philip's latest film "Joker," played exquisitely by Joaquin Phoenix, we enter into the world of Arthur Fleck, a character suffering from compulsions, hallucinations and other pathologies unnamed but easily inferred.

The buzz surrounding this film alludes to the notion that upon seeing this kind of specific violence, people suffering with similar tendencies may be more inclined to act out in dangerous ways.

I disagree.

In a time of wealth disparity, stigmas surrounding mental health and increasing social isolation, "Joker," is the exact narrative our country needed to see.

I appreciate movies that showcase the human experience in a real and uncomfortable way, and in the moments that people finally reach their breaking point, and what led them to get there. Fleck, the product of a flawed and maybe even failed system, is left to navigate life without any sort of guidance or support. Funding for his counseling sessions are cut, his mother is ill and his cerebral injuries leave him a social outcast in a world that walks over anyone that is different.

Painted over a dark, 1970's New York-esque city, filled with trash, moonlight and shadows, "Joker" pays homage to a Scorsese-like vision that is reminiscent of "Taxi Driver." In this version of the city, we get to

see people in their darkest realities. Phoenix delivers a chilling performance, that at one point made me say to myself, "This is good. This is really good." I don't think that anyone else could capture that sort of dark discomfort this film has to offer. We are left alone to watch him distort his body, emit shrill and lingering laughter against his control and fantasize about a different life.

There is no escaping the creepy mundaneness of this portrayal, and you cannot look away no matter how hard you try.

Art like this leaves me feeling like the world is a scary and messed up place that I have little to no control of, but the common thread that pulls us all together is that everyone is suffering.

I see the value in not glorifying the guy that wants to be seen, and does so by killing, but I also



Illustration by Zhorik Roseburg

see people in their darkest realities.

Phoenix delivers a chilling performance, that at one point made me say to myself, "This is good. This is really good." I don't think that anyone else could capture that sort of dark discomfort this film has to offer. We are left alone to watch him distort his body, emit shrill and lingering laughter against his control and fantasize about a different life.

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Art like this leaves me feeling like the world is a scary and messed up place that I have little to no control of, but the common thread that pulls us all together is that everyone is suffering.

I see the value in not glorifying the guy that wants to be seen, and does so by killing, but I also

see the merit of looking deeper into the genesis of one of pop cultures most infamous villains.

Yes, I do think most of us will leave this movie feeling conflicted about the joker, but I don't think it is a mistake to show humans at their grittiest and grimmest. I even think it can help lead to social change.

At worst, this movie is a great source of entertainment and visual stimulation, at best I think this movie acts as a mirror to a society that is lacking a lot of humanity these days.

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Is the way mental illness is portrayed in film and TV productive?



**Sofie Halverson**  
Sociology

"I think that if it is portrayed accurately without dramatization it's productive. But I think that once it gets overdramatized and there is kind of controversy around it, I feel like it can get blown out of proportion way too much. But I do think that, if it is made with the intention to educate people or portray something accurately, I do think it's productive."



**Liam Benson**  
Music Education

"On the one hand, it is very, very important that people are open to discussing mental illness and its effects and certain things like that. And yes, it absolutely needs to be portrayed correctly, in order for this to happen. But I think a lot of the time, people can still feel really uncomfortable about talking about mental illness. Ultimately, it is something that we should talk about. So, if done right, then absolutely yes."



**Nick Higgins**  
Kinesiology

"I think that there's several ways that it can be done. It can be done correctly, in sort of, raising awareness for it. But I also think that in some ways it can be making fun of it. I can't give exactly a yes or no on that one, but it depends on particularly what they do with it."



**Lena Albarran**  
Music Education

"I don't think it's very productive how they do it. I'm not against them portraying mental illness, because it's important for mental illness to be acknowledged and to be shown that a lot of people do have it. But how they make it very dramatic and like, 'Oh, my ex broke up with me, I have severe depression now,' that's really not how it goes."

Compiled by Elizabeth Hall

Disagree with this point of view? So do these critics.

**Ann Hornaday**  
THE WASHINGTON POST

"Drawing on such notorious historical figures, Phoenix creates a character who epitomizes the self-pity, entitlement and rage that have infected a small but disproportionately vocal (and psychotically violent) cohort of American society. He doesn't start out as a miscreant — it takes him being victimized by a wanton mugging to set him on that path — but by the time "Joker" reaches its anarchic, blood-spattered climax, he's become the avatar of a populist movement of like-minded losers, who instead of wielding torches and pitchforks don green fright wigs and red noses."

**Rajeev Masand**  
NEWS18

"Joker, which tells the origin story of one of the most unhinged comic book villains ever, left me feeling conflicted. Joaquin Phoenix is brilliant and the film is undeniably fascinating, but the violence is unsettling and leans dangerously close to being irresponsible."

Joker is solid in both its craft and storytelling. But the film made me ponder what message it may be sending out — that violence is an accepted solution for these hopeless, cynical times...? I'm not sure that's very responsible. But I'll leave you to decide what you draw from it."

**Tasha Robinson**  
THE VERGE

"As usual in a case where people leap to extremes, the truth is somewhere in the middle. Joker may make some people who feel marginalized feel more seen and more powerful, and they may act out in response. There are some ugly, self-serving messages in the movie, which is incongruously bent on creating sympathy for Batman's worst enemy and one of DC Comics' most notoriously callous mass murderers and atrocity architects. But love it or hate it, the film does spin up a tempting fantasy of persecution and relief, of embracing nihilism as a means of complete escape from a terrible world."

## Casto connects, sets eyes on Canadian tour

*Golfer Ethan Casto's road to the top of his game and post-collegiate career*

**Conor Wilson**  
THE WESTERN FRONT



"After [Ethan Casto] won the [WWU] Invite, me and him practiced three or four hours after the final round," teammate Luke Kuna said. "He was right back out there, he just wants to get better." // Photo courtesy of Western Athletics

After three rounds, 54 holes and 206 strokes on the Bellingham Golf and Country Club course, Western senior Ethan Casto was tied for the lead at 10 under par, at the WWU Invitational, set to take on Simon Fraser University's Isaac Lee in a playoff hole to determine the tournament's champion.

For Casto, facing a playoff hole on the verge of a tournament victory is not an anomaly, as longtime friend and teammate Luke Kuna recalls. The playoff reminded Kuna of their junior high school season together where Casto ended the Washington State 4A Championship Tournament in a three-way tie for first place, before ultimately falling on a third hole playoff.

Despite this, Kuna said Casto kept a signature calm and light demeanor at WWU invite, even joking to him about the similarities between the two instances prior to teeing off for his playoff hole.

"[Ethan] told me, 'You're not allowed to watch me during playoffs because every time you do, I don't win,'" Kuna said. "He knows when to be serious and when to be funny — he keeps it light hearted."

Casto's light hearted, yet serious demeanor prevailed for him as he sunk a par on 16 to close out the two-hole playoff and become the first Viking to win the WWU Invitational since 2012.

Since his victory at Western's invite, Casto was named the Great Northwest Athletic Conference golfer of the week for a second week in a row, after a second-place finish at the Saint Martin's University invite in the first week of the season.

Even with his accolades from the first two weeks beginning to pile up, Casto has continued to promote his easy-going yet serious persona — doing what he loves and having fun doing it.

The Snohomish native first discovered his passion for golf about a decade ago when one of his friends brought him to the golf course as an elementary school student, he said.

"One of my baseball player buddies, when I was in the fifth or sixth grade, brought me to the golf course and I really liked it," Casto said. "I started going with my dad like every day after that."

Casto went on to be a star player for Snohomish High School, where he met current Western teammate Kuna.

The two were introduced on a Snohomish golf course after Kuna moved to the city for his freshman year of high school. Kuna recalls other

golfers telling him about Casto.

"They were like, you got to play with this guy Ethan, he's really into golf," Kuna said. "He was a really hard worker and it was pretty apparent he loved the game."

Despite an impressive high school résumé, Casto said Western coach Luke Bennett was the only one to offer him the opportunity to play in college.

"His free flowing, rhythmic swing is what caught my eye," Bennett said in an email. "You could tell he had tons of talent and just needed an opportunity to grow and develop."

Since Casto stepped onto campus, Western's golf team has won two GNAC championships, as well as a second-place finish in Casto's sophomore year, when he took home the individual GNAC title.

However, Casto said he does not believe his GNAC championship was the point in his college career when everything clicked.

"[GNAC] was a good confidence boost, but I think it really came [together] in Arizona last year," Casto said. "I won there also and that was the lowest three rounds of golf I've ever shot. I think I was 15 under par, and there was a huge field."

Casto took the victory at the Mustang Intercollegiate in Goodyear, Arizona last year by two strokes. He cred-

its this win with teaching him a lot in its aftermath. Casto said after playing poorly following this tournament, he began changing his golf clubs, something that he's not planning on repeating this year.

"I just really like golf clubs, and I change a lot, which probably isn't the best idea looking back on it," Casto said. "This year I am not going to change anything. I'm going to try and keep everything the same."

Assistant coach Willy Scholten — who was a junior on the team when Casto first arrived — also mentioned how consistency has been the key to Casto's early success.

"Ethan likes golf, probably more than anybody I know. I mean the guy has so many golf clubs, he loves buying golf clubs, and tinkering with golf clubs, and tinkering with his golf swing," Scholten said. "I think maybe early on he spent a little extra time tinkering, and now he's a little more just focused on playing and winning, and he knows that he can win these tournaments."

In addition to his success, Casto is the only senior, and he is captain of the team. Scholten said Casto's leadership skills influence the team.

"We've got 12 guys on the roster which is the most amount of guys since I can remember, so it's important to have a guy who can really lead," Scholten said. "[Ethan's] going to be a lot

*"[GNAC] was a good confidence boost, but I think it really came [together] in Arizona last year."*

**Ethan Casto**  
Captain of the men's golf team

runner, Casto feels its presence, but is hoping to continue enjoying his time playing, and staying positive.

"There's always added pressure if you start playing well," Casto said. "I think you just have to look past it and start having fun — just keep doing what you're doing."

As Kuna notes Casto's mental attitude and work ethic really speaks to his success.

"After he won the [WWU] Invite, me and him practiced three or four hours after the final round," Kuna said. "He was right back out there, he just wants to get better."

Scholten, who was not there to witness the practice, was not at all surprised by this behavior.

"If it was light for 24 hours Ethan would play all day," Scholten said. "The thing with Ethan is, I wouldn't say he mentally thought 'I need to go practice,' he just wants to go to practice. He wants to get better. He wants to go play golf. For him it's not work, he loves the game."

His love for golf will continue well after his time at Western, as he plans to continue pursuing the game he's spent most of his life playing.

"My goal is to turn pro and maybe try and qualify for the Canadian tour, I haven't really decided," Casto said. "It's a big process — another beginning once this ends."

With the pressure he's facing as a potential GNAC front

## Clutch goal leads Vikings to secure tie

*Senior Nick Morgan forces overtime against Saint Martin's University*

**Jordan Shepherd**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

One second left on the clock, down by one point and on the verge of a loss is the kind of pressure Western men's soccer team faced when senior defender Nick Morgan scored a goal to force overtime. The game ended in a 1-1 draw against Saint Martin's University on Saturday, Oct. 5, at Robert S. Harrington Field.

Overtime saw a few chances by both teams to score but ultimately ended in a 1-1 tie, giving both Great Northwest Athletic Conference teams a point for conference play. With this tie, the men's soccer team now goes to 4-3-1 overall and 1-0-1 in conference play, sitting second in the standings with four points.

After being down 1-0 from a goal at 51 minutes by the Saints, the Vikings were able to pull it together at the 89:59 minute mark. From a quick long ball into the penalty box by junior midfielder Drew Farnsworth, Morgan headed the ball into the goal to tie the game before the announcer, counting down, could reach one.

"I have no words for it and can't believe it ... great determination and that's what



Western defender Camron Miller (18) and Western defender Theo Steinmetz (12) battle for the ball against a Saint Martin's player on Saturday, Oct. 5. // Photo by Zachary Jimenez

this team is kind of built on," head coach Greg Brisbon said. "I thought we played well in spurts and did great against their top forward. The GNAC is going to be a good conference this year, and I don't think any one team is going to dominate it all."

This marks the second time

this season that the Vikings have scored a game-tying goal in the final minutes to force overtime. Junior Camron Miller scored a last-minute goal against No. 3 Azusa Pacific to tie the game on Sept. 26.

The tie against the Saints marks the Vikings first in-conference home game since beat-

ing Seattle Pacific University Thursday, Oct. 3, at Interbay Stadium in Seattle.

Morgan's buzzerbeater stands as his second career goal for Western, and his first since his freshman year.

"We were just throwing body's forward just hoping we would get a chance, and I took

the time and saw the ball was looping in, and I just thought I could flick it in the goal, and it came off perfect," Morgan said. "I blacked out at that point and a lot of emotions were running through my head."

The Saints were able to connect for a goal at 51 minutes when Vikings freshman goalkeeper Brandon Locke attempted to clear the ball but missed allowing the Saints Brandon Madsen to place the ball in from about 6 yards from the goal.

The Vikings played an even game during regulation play having a 14-10 advantage in shots and a 5-4 advantage in shots on goal. The Vikings had seven corner kicks to Saint Martin's three.

"I thought the Vikings played really good tonight and it was so exciting to be able to see a goal scored with one second left to tie the game," Emily Steinman, a fan in the stands, said. "I wish we could have got the win but a tie is better than a loss in the books."

The Vikings will stay at home and face Concordia University on Saturday, Oct. 12, at Harrington Field starting at 7 p.m. for their third GNAC conference match.

they take on Concordia University at home on Saturday, Oct. 12.

### SOFTBALL

Western softball continued their fall pre-season on Saturday, Oct. 5, with a double-header against Seattle University. The Vikings will play another pre-season matchup against the University of Washington on Saturday, Oct. 12, at Husky Softball Stadium.

Vikings got off to a lightning fast start with a goal 32 seconds into the match from senior forward Ryan Schaefer. In the 76th minute, with the game tied at one, Schaefer delivered again, punching home the go-ahead goal from 12 yards out for his fourth of the season. Red-shirt freshman midfielder Alessandro Tomasi topped off Western's victory with his first goal of the season in the 84th minute. The Vikings will attempt to remain undefeated in GNAC play as

### MEN'S SOCCER

The Viking men opened up GNAC play in a physical 3-1 victory against Seattle Pacific University on Thursday. The game saw a combined 34 fouls and three yellow cards for SPU. The

outstanding performance, leading the team with 14 kills, including two aces and 12 digs.

On the road for their second match of the week, the Vikings defeated Montana State Billings in four sets 12-25, 25-21, 25-20, 28-26. Heilborn had another successful performance recording her 11th double-double this season leading the team in kills, blocks and digs. Sophomore pin hitter Tess Biscup also provided 13.5 points off the bench, with a career high 13

**Conor Wilson**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

### VOLLEYBALL

Retaining their No. 2 national ranking this week, Vikings volleyball remained undefeated after two 3-1 victories, improving to a 6-0 record in Great Northwest Athletic Conference play. The Vikings played a home match Tuesday, almost beating Simon Fraser in straight sets: 25-17, 25-13, 23-25, 25-16. Redshirt freshman Calley Heilborn delivered an



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# Western rolls past MSUB

*Zoe Milburn ties conference single game goals record with four in 8-0*

**Nolan Baker**  
THE WESTERN FRONT

It happened a mere one minute and fourteen seconds into the second half of Saturday's game against Montana State University Bill-

ings. Freshman midfielder Estera Levinte collected a rebound off the goalkeeper and calmly buried her shot into the lower right corner of the goal.

For the Vikings, it was their first possession of the second half, and

with it they tallied their third goal in ten shots. For the visiting Yellowjackets, it was a backbreaker.

Led by a four goal performance from junior forward Zoe Milburn, the Vikings rolled past MSUB 8-0. It was the second highest scoring

game in Western women's soccer history.

"I figured it out today," Milburn said, "how to time my runs and it just worked out great, had four goals."

Those four goals tied a Great Northwest Athletic Conference record for goals in a single game, a fact Milburn found out about shortly after being drenched by her water bottle wielding teammates.

Her third and fourth goals, assisted by seniors Tivona Tinsley and Peyton Chick, were the start of an onslaught by Western's offense where they scored four goals in just five minutes. Junior Jenna Killman and Peyton Chick capped off the day with two more goals, sending the Yellowjackets back to Billings with their fourth loss of the season.

The No. 17 nationally-ranked Vikings now improve to a 7-2-0 record, and remain unbeaten in GNAC play. Saturday's game marked their 13th straight win at Robert S. Harrington Field, where they have a 52-2-1 record since its opening in 2014.

"When you have people behind you, in your corner, then you're able to go out and play to your fullest potential," said Head Coach Travis Connell.

"It's not just 11 players, it's not just 30 players on the team, but it's a whole university and a whole community that is behind us as we compete," Connell said.

The game broke open in just the seventh minute when a shot from Jenna Killman deflected off the Yellowjackets' goalkeeper and was blasted to the near post for Zoe Milburn's first of four goals.

Milburn played with an unmatched ferocity. With just a few seconds remaining in an already 8-0 game, Milburn raced into the midfield and made a perfect sliding tackle on a Yellowjackets player.

The game was already decided. Milburn refused to give the opposing team space to breathe.

"You saw Zoe down here sliding on defense," Connell said. "She's our center forward, she scored four goals, she's back sliding on defense with fifteen seconds left in the game. That's how you inspire your teammates."

It wasn't just the Viking's stars contributing on Saturday. Freshman Estera Levinte, who was recently moved from defense to a more attack-focused roll at midfield, came off the bench to score two goals in the 46th and 53rd minute.

"It feels great to make an impact on the team always," Levinte said. "I think everyone made an impact, but it feels good to be a part of it."

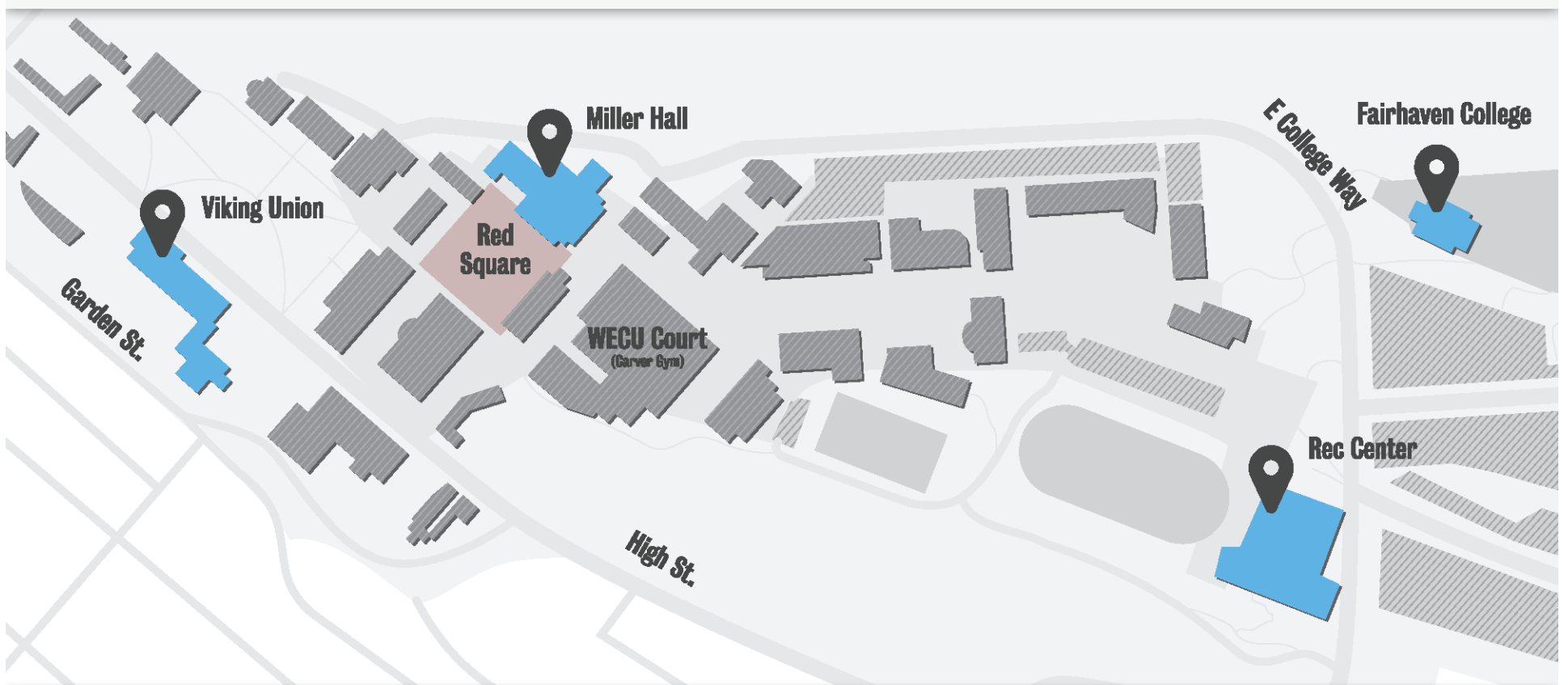
The Vikings are on the road for their next two games against Saint Martin's University and Western Oregon University. They return to Harrington Field on Oct. 29 to face off against Simon Fraser University.



Junior forward Zoe Milburn jukes the Montana State Billings goalie for her third goal of the game on Saturday, Oct. 5. The Vikings shutout Billings with a final score of 8-0 with Milburn scoring a total of 4 goals. // Photo by Alex Moreno

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