

## **OSA petition to advance discussion of higher ed**

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<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/1335/osa-petition-to-advance-discussion-of-higher-ed/>

Members of the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Student Association are calling on their fellow students to sign a petition urging policy makers, administrators and faculty to work together to make higher education more affordable, accessible, accountable and competitive as part of the state's Higher Education Day Oct. 7. The petition, which can be found at <http://studentvoice.petitionhost.com>, can be signed until Nov. 4, at which time it will be forwarded to all stakeholders, including state and national politicians. Preliminary results will be shared with state and federal candidates on Oct. 28, one week before the general election.

“We need to develop a new language that talks about the roles and relationships of key parties — the students, the institutions, state and federal officials,” OSA president Thomas Wolf said. “We need to explore how education impacts both the community and the economy.”

The petition gives voice to students on the key issues in higher education, which they believe should help shape and guide decision-makers. Adapted from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and the UW System's Advantage Wisconsin strategic framework, the student-led initiative seeks to advance the discussion of higher education among all stakeholders — from taxpayers to administrators to faculty and students.

“We need to put higher education on the radar screen this election season,” Wolf said. “We need to identify the subjects that should be on the agenda for discussion with candidates for elective office. The needs of higher education are many, but the potential rewards of making prudent decisions will help fuel long-term growth in our economy.”

In developing the petition, the students wanted to do more than spend one day on higher education issues in Wisconsin. The online petition drive was viewed as a mechanism to help stimulate a broader public discussion during the month of October and leading up to the Nov. 4 elections.

“I'm very pleased but not surprised by the thoughtful and articulate way our students have taken a leadership role in working to advance the discussions surrounding higher education,” Chancellor Richard H. Wells said. “Students are putting major policy issues front and center for all the major stakeholders. This petition really gives them a voice in the discussion.”

Also as a part of Higher Education Day, the University will be holding a Financial Aid Open House during regular business hours on Oct. 7. Higher Education Day was established to raise awareness among Wisconsin residents that higher education in Wisconsin is accessible and to inspire students of all ages to reach for post-secondary education as a goal. For more information, visit <http://highereducationday.wi.gov>.