Q. What is the process for organizing the UW faculty into a union?
A. It’s a two-step process. First, a union seeking to represent our faculty must obtain signed membership cards from at least 30% of the faculty. If they are successful in obtaining the signatures, they then petition the Washington Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) to hold an election whether to represent the faculty or not.

Q. How do you vote for or against a faculty union?
A. If PERC decides all conditions are satisfied, it conducts a secret ballot election, the outcome of which is determined by a simple majority of faculty who actually vote, just like any political election. Although we have more than 6,000 faculty who would be eligible to vote, if only 500 of them were to vote and the union obtained 251 votes, the union would be certified as the exclusive bargaining representative of ALL UW faculty.

Q. What does signing a card mean?
A. Signing a union membership card means that you are asking to become a member of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). You are committing to pay dues, and you are giving the union the right to petition for an election in your name. It is not just indicating that you want an election to be held.

Q. How will I know if a petition is filed or an election is being held?
A. The University will keep all faculty informed of developments regarding the organizing effort. You will also be contacted directly by PERC if a petition is filed.

Q. How long will this process take?
A. There is no statutory timetable. The organizing process alone could take several months or more, and if a petition is filed, PERC’s process could also take several months. When a new group chooses union representation, most first contracts take one to two years to negotiate.

Q. Would payment of union dues be mandatory?
A. On its own authorization cards that the SEIU is asking faculty to sign, the union is including a personal commitment to pay dues no matter what the contract says. As a matter of process, the payment and collection of dues will be a subject of a first contract. UW’s existing contract with the SEIU Local 925 requires the payment of dues by everyone in the bargaining unit. Those dues are automatically deducted from the employees’ paycheck.

continued >
Q. If I pay dues, how much would I pay?
A. Members of SEIU Local 925 pay union dues that are 1.7% of gross salaries, up to a cap of $95 per month or $1,140 per year.

Q. Which faculty are included in the process?
A. Washington state law requires that all faculty at the UW be included in any voting unit, regardless of the appointing unit or the appointment track, rank, or title. For those positions designated as faculty, see the Faculty Code at Section 21-31. All UW campuses would be included in the single bargaining unit. If there is disagreement about who should be included, PERC will hold a hearing and decide.

Q. If there is a PERC election, will faculty members who hold administrative appointments as chairs be eligible to vote and included in a bargaining unit?
A. The relevant PERC statute excludes administrators from a faculty bargaining unit, and “administrators” are defined as:

- deans, associate and assistant deans, vice-provosts, vice-presidents, the provost, chancellors, vice-chancellors, the president, and faculty members who exercise managerial or supervisory authority over other faculty members. RCW 41.76.005(9). [http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=41.76.005](http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=41.76.005)

We have concluded that department chairs, school/program directors, and campus deans (“chairs”) of our academic appointing units have managerial and supervisory responsibilities over the faculty within their unit. It is important to note that not all faculty members appointed to a director role are considered to be managerial or supervisory, only those with leadership responsibility of an academic appointing unit (e.g., School of Music in the College of Arts and Sciences or the Education Program at the University of Washington Tacoma).

The identification of chairs as excluded from a bargaining unit is an important question at this time for a couple of reasons. First, chairs of our academic appointing units have leadership responsibilities, and if a union were to represent faculty, those responsibilities might be inconsistent with representation in a bargaining unit. Second, if chairs are excluded as administrators, that means that they are also agents of the University. The University is legally responsible for their statements and actions.

When this question was first raised, we undertook an investigation and legal analysis. Based on those efforts, we have concluded that department chairs, school/program directors, and campus deans of our academic appointing units have managerial or supervisory authority over other faculty. Accordingly, we are providing training to those persons so that the University can comply with the law.

We recognize that not everyone will agree with this conclusion, and we considered that chairs at WWU were included in the bargaining unit. There are sufficient differences between the roles of chairs at WWU and those at UW, and those differences dictate a different result. Of course, if there is a dispute about our conclusion, PERC or the courts will make the ultimate decision.
Q. Which comparable universities have faculty unions?

A. Tenure-track faculty unionization in the United States

Among the AAU’s 62 member universities, only 5 have tenure-track faculty unions. None of these universities is in the top 50 of the Shanghai Jiao Tong World Ranking of universities, where the UW is ranked #15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Faculty union</th>
<th>Shanghai Jiao Tong World Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rutgers University</td>
<td>AAUP/AFT</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Florida</td>
<td>UFF</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stony Brook University</td>
<td>UUP</td>
<td>210</td>
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<tr>
<td>University at Buffalo</td>
<td>UUP</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Oregon</td>
<td>AAUP/AFT</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q. What is negotiable in collective bargaining?

A. **Mandatory subjects of bargaining** include all matters related to wages, hours, or other terms and conditions of employment. Permissive and prohibited subjects of bargaining break down as follows:

Permissive subjects include criteria and standards to be used for the appointment, promotion, evaluation, and tenure of faculty. This means that either party can refuse to bargain about these subjects, but they can mutually agree to bargain about them.

Prohibited subjects include:

1. Consideration of the merits, necessity, or organization of any service, activity, or program established by law or resolution of the employer, except for the terms and conditions of employment of faculty members who may be affected by such service, activity, or program.
2. The amount of any fees that are not a term or condition of employment.
3. Admission requirements for students, conditions for the award of certificates and degrees, and the content, methods, supervision, and evaluation of courses, curricula, and research programs.

Neither party is allowed to make a proposal or ask for bargaining about prohibited subjects. Those subjects remain in the complete control of the employer.

Q. Would a faculty union impact my salary?

A. Yes. Compensation is a subject of bargaining. Washington state law requires that once a petition for an election is filed, the status quo on compensation and working conditions remains in place, at least until the results of the election are certified. Also, if the faculty elects to unionize, the University must continue to maintain the status quo until an agreement is reached. When a new group chooses union representation, most first contracts more than a year to negotiate – some at the UW have taken up to three years to negotiate. During that period, faculty compensation could remain static for a lengthy period of time. See Appendix C for examples.

Q. Are the union organizers permitted to talk to me in the workplace or at my home?

A. Yes. The union is permitted to come onto the campus as a part of its campaign to gather signatures, but its organizers may not disrupt your teaching and research work. They should not harass or intimidate anyone. If you do not wish to interact with union organizers, you may ask them to leave. If anyone harasses or intimidates you, you should notify laborrel@uw.edu.

There have also been instances of union organizers visiting faculty members at their homes. While this is permitted, there is no obligation for faculty members to discuss these issues at home or to grant entrance to their homes. The University has not provided contact information of any kind to union organizers. However, if a petition for an election is filed, the University will be required to provide your home address to PERC and to the union.
Q. How did union organizers get my contact info?
A. There have been instances of union organizers visiting faculty members at their homes. While this is permitted, there is no obligation for faculty members to discuss these issues at home or to grant entrance to their homes. The University has not provided contact information of any kind to union organizers. However, if a petition for an election is filed, the University will be required to provide your home address to PERC and to the union.

Q. Why is a service employees union attempting to organize faculty?
A. The SEIU is one of the largest labor unions in the country. The majority of their members are healthcare service workers. They also represent service employees in other occupations in both the United States and Canada. “Faculty Forward” is the SEIU national campaign to win more membership among faculty on campuses nationwide. Most of these efforts have been directed at adjunct and part-time faculty.

Q. Would I have a chance to vote every year on whether to keep the union or not?
A. No. There is no periodic reelection process under the law. While there is a process for decertification, the use of such a process is rare and unions are seldom voted out once they are voted in. Thus, every faculty member must consider the long-range implications of this singularly important vote.