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OUR STANCE

The question of whether or not the UW faculty chooses to unionize is perhaps the most consequential decision our faculty will ever make.

The best universities in the United States – including the UW – share institutional leadership between the faculty and administration. This democratic approach allows consideration of multiple voices and diverse views, in both a representative way in the Faculty Senate and in a direct way through college and departmental faculty governance. This multi-faceted approach provides for fully informed decisions in which faculty choose to participate. These collaborative systems are the best way to advance our commitment to academic excellence, our duty to educate students and our legacy as a great public university. A faculty union threatens this collaboration.

Shared governance between the faculty and the administration is essential to our mission and to our status as a world-class research university. Our strong partnership with a highly effective faculty senate has led to significant improvements on faculty issues. We have made clear and steady progress toward creating more predictable career paths for our faculty, toward refreshing our classrooms with the technology needed for more effective teaching, and toward increasing salaries without unduly decreasing the size of our faculty or increasing teaching loads in a way that would diminish the ability of faculty to carry out the cutting-edge scholarship and research that is changing our world for the better.

We believe that collective bargaining—a binary, contentious approach that could prevent the administration from hearing all those wonderfully diverse voices—would adversely affect the excellence of the University. We do not want to diminish the voices of the faculty, sideline the Faculty Senate on important issues, and eclipse the collaborative approach we have worked on for generations. Let’s keep working together; we have important issues to address.

Learn more: [http://uw.edu/informedchoice](http://uw.edu/informedchoice)
LETTERS TO THE FACULTY

An Important Message about Faculty Unionization

September 10, 2015

Dear Colleagues,

We hope this letter finds you eagerly anticipating the start of another academic year. We know this is a busy time and along with the anticipation, there is also much preparation and hard work.

We are writing to you about a topic of critical importance to the University. As some of you may be aware, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 925 this summer launched a campaign called “Faculty Forward” to organize UW faculty into a labor union.

The University of Washington unequivocally respects the right of all people to decide whether to be represented in collective bargaining. This belief is central to our identity as an institution. More than 15,000 of our staff are represented in collective bargaining that while occasionally is difficult and tense has always ended constructively. Both of us come from families with deep ties to unions, and we appreciate the benefits that unions have provided to workers in this country.

With regard to faculty, however, we believe that the concept and process of shared governance is different from that of a management-employee relationship, and we have grave reservations about the effect collective bargaining would have on our shared governance process. We also have serious concerns about its impact on the freedom we as faculty enjoy to pursue excellence in teaching, research and scholarship, the cornerstones of our success as a university.

We strongly believe that shared governance between the faculty and the administration is essential to our mission and to our status as a world-class university. Our strong partnership with a highly effective faculty senate has led to significant improvements on faculty issues. We have made clear and steady progress toward creating more predictable career paths for our instructors, toward refreshing our classrooms with the technology needed for more effective teaching, and toward increasing salaries without unduly decreasing the size of our faculty or increasing teaching loads in a way that would diminish the ability of faculty to carry out the cutting-edge scholarship and research that is changing our world for the better. We believe that collective bargaining over such matters as evaluation, promotion and tenure would not only affect the excellence of the University but would diminish the voice of the faculty, sideline the Faculty Senate and eclipse the collaborative approach we have worked on for generations.

The ultimate decision about unionization will be yours. It is imperative that you have as much information as possible about the unionization process and what having a union would mean. For example, we have talked to faculty who do not understand that an election will be held if only thirty percent of the faculty sign cards indicating their preference for a union. Indeed, some of our faculty have been sent requests to sign union cards with little or no explanation of what that will mean for you or for the University. Moreover, it is NOT the case that a majority of the entire faculty is required to vote affirmatively for us to be represented by a union. Rather, only a simple majority of those who actually vote is required, no matter how few they are. It is also

Learn more: http://uw.edu/informedchoice
important to be aware that if a union is voted in, there is no option for an individual to opt out of any contract that results, and that payment of union dues could become mandatory.

Before you sign a union card, please make sure that you are fully informed about what this means.

We will communicate with you in the weeks and months ahead through direct conversations, print materials and a special purpose webpage to share facts and information. We will be active participants in this discussion.

We look forward to hearing your perspectives. With that in mind, we encourage you to send your thoughts and questions to us by email to uwpres@uw.edu. We both will have access to that account.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this matter and for your many contributions to the University’s success. The issue before us is critical for the UW, and we hope you will take the time to become informed and engaged.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Learn more: http://uw.edu/informedchoice
The Faculty Unionization Process

October 1, 2015

Dear Colleagues,

Recently, we wrote to you about the campaign launched by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) to unionize the UW faculty. In that message, we said that we would communicate with you about this effort and provide information so that you can make an informed decision on the question of unionization. We cannot emphasize strongly enough that the question of whether or not the UW faculty chooses to unionize is perhaps the most consequential decision our faculty will ever make. Unionization is not something that can be done on a trial basis to see if you like it and if not you can reverse the decision. Once a union is established, it is difficult to vote it out.

Working directly and in collaboration with faculty members in the governance of the University is essential to who we are and what we do. Shared governance is not just about the Faculty Senate. It is also about your college/school councils and the many college/school and departmental committees that are all part of how we work together. We believe that this direct relationship with an independent faculty at all levels of the University is the best way to advance our commitment to academic excellence, our duty to educate students and our legacy of more than 150 years as one of the finest universities in the world. Whether at the department, school, college or University-wide level, in our view the most successful way to address the legitimate workplace concerns you may have is to work side-by-side with you, without an intermediary. The best universities – including the UW – are organized and managed in this way.

Today, we'd like to highlight some basic information about the process of unionization and address in the Q & A that follows some of the questions that you may have about it. Many of you have already been approached by organizers or received emails from them asking you to sign a membership card. The union is attempting to gather enough signatures to show the state Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) that there is sufficient interest at the UW to hold an election and form a faculty union. PERC is the Washington state agency responsible for governing union organizing efforts and is responsible for conducting union elections among public employees.

Let us emphasize one other point. Power at the University does not reside solely with the administration but exists throughout our academic personnel system among faculty colleagues. Senior faculty all play a critical role in decisions such as appointment, tenure, promotion, and merit increases for their junior colleagues and for each other. It is critical that everyone—regardless of where one might stand on this matter—feels comfortable expressing her or his views to colleagues without fear of consequence or retaliation of any kind. All of us have an obligation to ensure that this discussion occurs freely and openly and that everyone who wishes to express a view can do so. No one should feel that his or her job, career, promotion, or working conditions will be affected by expressing opinions on this issue.

In the Q&A on page 8 you’ll find important information about the process of union organizing, which touches upon your rights and responsibilities as a faculty member. We welcome your comments and input at uwpres@uw.edu.

Learn more: http://uw.edu/informedchoice
Sincerely,

[Signature]

Learn more: http://uw.edu/informedchoice
An Informed Choice about Faculty Unionization

October 22, 2015

Dear Colleagues,

UW faculty face a crucial decision that could determine the future of the University. As we’ve communicated previously, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) has launched a campaign called “Faculty Forward” to organize the UW faculty into a labor union. SEIU was invited to organize by the AAUP-UW Chapter. We are committed to ensuring that you have information that will allow you to make an informed choice about unionization.

Many of you have already been engaging in discussions and educating yourselves about what having a union means. You’ve expressed opinions, raised concerns and asked questions to us and each other. For our part, we are working hard to ensure you feel comfortable expressing yourself and have ready access to as much information as possible.

Today, we are launching an information-sharing platform, backed up with facts, figures, and citations to help you make an informed choice as the campaign unfolds: www.uw.edu/informedchoice.

On the site, you’ll find materials and facts about the process of union organizing and our current system of shared governance; the SEIU and issues pertaining to a faculty union; links to relevant news; and more. We’ve directly addressed some of your specific questions in Q&A documents. There’s also a place for you to send us questions and comments on every page because we are mindful there are myriad perspectives on a matter so consequential to the University.

Please visit this new online resource and explore the content. The current platform is just a foundation — we will build upon the site with more information and resources in the weeks to come. There’s still much more to say and discuss about this issue. For those of you who have been actively participating in these discussions, know that we truly appreciate your thoughtful input. We look forward to hearing from you in the weeks ahead and hope you will continue to inform yourselves and stay engaged. This is of critical importance to our University and to each of you.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Learn more: http://uw.edu/informedchoice
Why We Cannot Be Silent About Faculty Unionization

November 17, 2015

Dear Colleagues,

We have written to you several times to provide information about the faculty unionization effort by SEIU. We were not planning to write to you again this soon, but we have learned that SEIU is circulating a petition asking the UW administration “to take a neutral stance throughout the democratic process of forming a union and to respect the rights of faculty to unionize.”

We fully respect the rights of all employees, including faculty, to unionize and we have said or done nothing contrary to those rights. We have, instead, expressed our firmly held opinion that unionization of our faculty would be contrary to the interests of our faculty, our students and our community. We do not believe that unionization will be helpful in our drive for excellence. We do not believe that abridging the gains we have made in and through shared governance — at the democratically elected Senate, college/school and department levels — will serve the University and all of its constituencies. And we do not believe that our presence in a bipartisan Olympia, with a divisive organizing campaign or contentious negotiations in the background, will be as fruitful.

We also respect the right to petition. It should be clear, though, that the University administration is not taking a neutral stance and will participate in the debate and discussion of faculty unionization. We have carefully considered this matter, and we believe our views are legitimate and belong in the debate, as do everyone’s views, regardless of faculty rank or position. We are troubled by the apparent aim of this petition to stifle debate on this issue. We are a community of ideas, and the best ideas are formed through discussion and debate. Faculty members have the right to hear and consider all opinions, just as they have the right to discard opinions that are not persuasive. It is contrary to our strength as an academic institution to eliminate one source of information and perspective.

With that in mind, we encourage you to visit the websites created to address this matter. The Informed Choice website, which we launched, argues a collaborative approach between faculty and the administration is the best path forward. UW Excellence, launched by faculty members, makes the case against faculty unionization and has a petition where faculty members are registering their opposition. UW Faculty Forward, an AAUP/SEIU effort, makes the case in favor of faculty unionization and has a petition where faculty members are registering support.

Every single faculty member is a leader at this University. Leaders lead through discourse, through analysis and through persuasion. For both of us, if we see something that will take the University off our path to excellence, we must speak up about it. We intend to express our views in this debate, and we encourage you to do so as well and to protect each other’s right to be heard, free from any intimidation.

Thank you for listening.

Learn more: http://uw.edu/informedchoice
Q & A ON THE PROCESS OF UNION ORGANIZING

What is negotiable in collective bargaining?
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.

Would a faculty union impact my salary?
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.

Would payment of union dues be mandatory?
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 obligation to pay dues and paycheck deduction of dues will be subjects of negotiation for 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.

If I pay dues, how much would I pay?

Learn more: http://uw.edu/informedchoice
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.

What is the process for organizing the UW faculty into a union?
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. 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.

Which faculty are included in the process?
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. 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.

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?
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

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.

Learn more: http://uw.edu/informedchoice
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.

**What does signing a card mean?**
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.

**How will I know if a petition is filed or an election is being held?**
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.

**How long will this process take?**
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, complex first contracts can take one to two years to negotiate.

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

**How did union organizers get my contact info?**
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.

**Why is a service employees union attempting to organize faculty?**
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.

**Would I have a chance to vote every year on whether to keep the union or not?**
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.
Faculty Unionization: the Basics

The debate over unionization of faculty is not a new question, with the first consideration in the early decades of the 20th century. There was also a brief surge in campus organizing during the 1960s. In 2012, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) launched a national campaign aimed at colleges and universities called “Faculty Forward” to win more membership among faculty. These campaigns have primarily been directed at organizing adjunct faculty and part-time lecturers. Still, despite this lengthy time and intensive effort, most faculty have chosen not to be unionized.

When a faculty is unionized, the union becomes the faculty’s exclusive representative on issues that are subjects of bargaining. These consist of all issues related to wages, hours and terms and conditions of employment. Consequently, in a unionized setting the administration can no longer directly address employment issues with faculty members, either individually or through shared governance, as we do now at the UW. Instead, the administration legally functions as “management” to negotiate a new employment contract for their “employees.” Those negotiations are conducted for the employees/faculty by their designated exclusive bargaining agent.

A nationwide movement to unionize faculty
According to the SEIU, there are multiple Faculty Forward campaigns at work today on campuses across the country. The first indications of Faculty Forward activity at the UW arose last spring.

The issue that drives most union organizing campaigns is compensation. It is never the only issue, but salaries and benefits are nearly always important considerations. Adjacent issues in many campaigns are focused on governance, workload, and redistribution of a university’s financial resources. Sometimes organizing can focus on issues that are not subject to bargaining, such as academic standards and academic freedom.

The UW Faculty Forward website refers to some of those issues that are not subject to bargaining: federal policy advocacy and collaboration with a congressman from California on issues around adjunct faculty working conditions and student loan debt; a desire for a more powerful voice with the legislature in Olympia and enhancing a culture of collaboration. And, of course, it references compensation.

Contract negotiations
We think it is important to focus on what would actually change if UW faculty chooses to unionize. If a union becomes the exclusive agent for faculty, it will seek to negotiate a first contract for the bargaining unit. The bargaining will be about “mandatory subjects of bargaining,” meaning wages, hours, and working conditions. The first contract is essentially the foundation upon which the future relationship between the employer and the exclusive representative of the bargaining unit would build upon for years to come. As a result, first contracts can and do take considerable time to resolve since each item must be negotiated. In the past, despite good faith bargaining by both sides, first contracts at UW have taken one to three years to resolve. See Appendix C for specific examples. A faculty contract would likely involve even more complicated issues.

During that period, the employer must maintain the status quo, meaning that all terms of employment that are subject to bargaining are frozen in place. Under the law, the University...
would be prohibited from making any changes to faculty compensation, benefits and a host of other issues that we currently resolve directly with faculty input and, if necessary, on an *ad hoc* basis. For example, merit increases, unit adjustments and retention increases could not continue. Promotions and promotional increases would continue, as that structure is part of the status quo. Discussions about and adoption of policies, outside the context of collective bargaining, that address wages, hours and other terms and conditions of employment would also cease.

**Decertification process**

One of the least understood issues with respect to union representation is the process of unwinding a union relationship once it is in place. It sounds simple: If any portion of the faculty believed that the union was not adequately representing them or meeting their expectations, they could start a decertification campaign. But the simplicity ends there.

*Decertification* would require signatures on a petition of at least 30% of the members of the bargaining unit – or in our case, over 2000 faculty members. The entire bargaining unit would be the subject of decertification – it is not permissible to remove a portion of the faculty from the bargaining unit. That petition would then be presented to the Public Employee Relations Commission (PERC). Once PERC determines that the signatures are valid, an election would be scheduled. All of this work would have to be done with no assistance or support from the University, financial or otherwise. One member of the faculty would have to be listed as the petitioner and participate in any hearings or proceedings related to the decertification.

Most importantly, decertification can only occur in a narrow 30 day window before the expiration of the union contract. Union contracts at UW generally last two to three years, so this window would not open very frequently.

It is a difficult, time-consuming and costly process, to say the least. The decision to unionize is not something to enter into with the thought of just giving it try.

**Sources:**


Learn more: [http://uw.edu/informedchoice](http://uw.edu/informedchoice)
Q & A on Shared Governance at the UW

How does faculty governance affect me?
The UW’s governance structure is designed to ensure meaningful participation by faculty in the day-to-day operations and long-term planning of the University’s priorities and policies. Through close collaboration, the faculty and administration strive to meet the needs of our faculty, students, and community to achieve our shared goals of excellence in all we do.

How well is our system of joint leadership performing?
Thanks to the committed involvement of faculty and administration, the UW’s system of joint leadership is performing well. Together we have made important progress and engage in meaningful dialogue. Here are a few examples:

Increasing compensation: Faculty compensation is a top priority. Since the Great Recession and the state government-imposed salary freeze, we have invested in merit salary increases that include a 4 percent average increase in September 2013, an additional 4 percent average increase in July 2014, and a 3 percent average increase in September 2015. We have also made the opportunity for unit adjustments available in March 2014, October 2014, October 2015, and January 2016.

Award-winning promotion process: We are being recognized for our open and transparent promotion process. As a result of work together, in 2014 the UW was recognized as a “Great College to Work For” by the Chronicle of Higher Education. One of the points of recognition was tenure clarity and process.

Improving job security: Together we are working to improve career opportunities and job security for our lecturers. In 2013, we adopted guidelines that promote the recruitment of full-time lecturers to appointments that support promotion and multiple year appointments. Our conversation continues on how to improve the opportunities for part-time lecturers.

Grant for retirement support: Together we won a grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation for a voluntary retirement incentive (VRI) program, which the foundation recognized as a best practice in supporting faculty during the transition to retirement. This program stemmed directly from repeated discussions with UW faculty about their concerns with health care expenses in retirement.

Can all faculty members participate in this system of shared governance?
Yes. University faculty councils are made up of voting members of the faculty from across the university. Faculty members elect representatives to serve on the Faculty Senate and elected faculty councils. Collaboration between these faculty members and the administration is essential to recognizing, addressing and promoting differing circumstances and needs among all faculty. While not all faculty members are eligible to vote, all faculty members can and do contribute to important UW dialogues. The voices of our non-voting faculty members help ensure informed decision making.

How would a union impact our system of shared governance?
Union representation would fundamentally alter the relationship between the UW administration and faculty, creating a dynamic not unlike that of a manufacturing company. The administration would be treated as “management” and faculty as “employees.”

Learn more: http://uw.edu/informedchoice
Putting a finer point on it, Local 925 wants to become the UW faculty’s exclusive representative on matters involving wages, benefits, tenure and other terms and conditions of employment. Collective bargaining would replace a variety of trusted collaborations achieved through UW’s governance system that allow for, and encourage, multiple voices and perspectives. Instead, the union would act as the sole voice for all faculty on all matters relating to pay, benefits, and working conditions.

Even if the union were to seek input from a range of faculty members, the diversity of opinion would be synthesized into a single union position. Supervisors could no longer directly address faculty employment issues and the Faculty Senate and its extensive branches – councils and committees – would see a diminished role at the University. The Senate would lose its authority to deal with any issues about salary, workload, and other terms and conditions of employment, since the union would legally become the exclusive representative of faculty on such matters. This arrangement neither reflects the management structure of a world-class university nor serves the needs of its creative and independent faculty.

Would a faculty union allow faculty to more easily address workplace issues with the administration – such as health and retirement benefits? No. If represented by SEIU, faculty members would have to take up their concerns with the union, eroding collaborative decision-making about workplace matters between faculty and the administration, supervisors, and faculty councils and committees. A union would require faculty and the administration to adopt a management-employee relationship for negotiation purposes – a step back from the current cooperative and multi-pronged approach embraced by the UW.

Will a union improve my current wages, hours and working conditions? These issues would be subject to bargaining. During an organizing campaign, any promises or even speculation by the UW about wages or other such issues would constitute a violation of labor laws and could be construed as an “unfair labor practice.” Please note that the law does not prohibit a union from making promises, since a union cannot fulfill its promises unless it also achieves agreement with the employer.

The union promises it will give the UW more of a voice in Olympia. Is this true? No. A faculty union would diminish the faculty’s voice in Olympia. Over the last four years, our faculty, administration and students have united to advocate together for the UW. This year, our efforts have produced the biggest investment in the University since the Great Recession. Following our lead, Olympia has urged other universities to involve students.

We encourage all faculty members to speak up and engage in the governance process. If the UW and the union are engaged in a contentious negotiation, it is unlikely we will be able to speak with a single, united voice in Olympia. We are greatly concerned that dissonance in Olympia will diminish our ability to make the best possible case on behalf of the UW among legislators.

Learn more: [http://uw.edu/informedchoice](http://uw.edu/informedchoice)
Visually

Top-ranked public universities with independent tenure-track faculty

UCLA
UC San Diego
Georgia Institute of Technology
University of Michigan
UNC
Texas
University of Virginia
Wisconsin
University of Washington

U.S. faculty unionization

1.5 million

Faculty in higher education in the U.S.

25%
388,743 unionized faculty in higher education

12%
173,301 unionized tenure-track faculty

0.46%
6,896 unionized tenure-track faculty represented by SEIU

0
Unionized tenure-track faculty represented by Local 925

Learn more: http://uw.edu/informedchoice
### 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.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Faculty union</th>
<th>Shanghai Jiao Tong World Ranking</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rutgers University</td>
<td>AAUP/AFT</td>
<td>64</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Florida</td>
<td>UFF</td>
<td>83</td>
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<td>University of Oregon</td>
<td>AAUP/AFT</td>
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### Comparing Faculty Salaries

Mean salaries at universities with independent faculties modestly exceed those at universities with unionized faculties.

![Graph showing faculty salaries with and without union](image)

Data includes mean salaries for Full, Associate, and Assistant Professors

Research suggests there is no statistically significant gain in average faculty salary for unionized faculty in four-year institutions.

*Source: AAUP faculty salary data published in Academe*  
Institutions: Public doctoral universities with enrollments>15,000  
*See Appendix A for more information*

Learn more: [http://uw.edu/informedchoice](http://uw.edu/informedchoice)
What do these top-ranked universities have in common?

All have independent tenured and tenure track faculty.

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UW faculty salaries are on the rise – Across the Board

Despite the Great Recession, since 2007 the average salary for a full professor has increased by 14%; the average salary for an associate professor has increased by 18%; and the average salary for an assistant professor has increased by 24%.

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Glossary of Terms

**Authorization card** (can also be a “Membership Card and Authorization”): Part of the union organizer’s first step toward establishing a faculty union as the UW’s exclusive bargaining agent. Union organizers must collect enough faculty signatures on union cards to show that there is a showing of interest in a faculty union. The card being used by SEIU is an application for membership in the Union as well as a commitment to pay dues once a contract is reached. This means that the SEIU’s card goes beyond what is needed to petition for an election.

**Bargaining unit**: A group of faculty or employees who are represented exclusively by a union during collective bargaining with their employer. According to a Washington state law passed in 2002, the bargaining unit must include all faculty members from all schools, colleges and campuses of the employer. Therefore, ALL faculty members at the UW are required to be in the same bargaining unit – regardless of appointing unit or appointment track, rank, or title. Administrators as defined by statute (e.g., deans and chancellors) or faculty members who exercise managerial and supervisory authority (e.g., chairs and directors of academic appointing units) would not be in the bargaining unit at the UW.

If there is disagreement about who should be included, PERC will hold a hearing and decide.

**Collective bargaining**: The process during which the employer and the union representatives meet to bargain to reach agreement with respect to the subjects of bargaining. The obligation to bargain does not require either party to agree to a proposal or to make any concession.

**Collective bargaining agreement**: A contract between an employer and a union on behalf of all employees or faculty members within a bargaining unit.

**Election for representation**: The second step for a union seeking to become the UW’s exclusive bargaining agent. If the union submits authorization cards from more than 30% of the faculty, PERC will conduct a secret ballot election among the bargaining unit. All members of the bargaining unit would be eligible to vote on whether or not to have a faculty union. The outcome would be determined by a simple majority of faculty who actually vote. 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. The result would impact all faculty members in the bargaining unit, irrespective of their decision to vote or their position regarding a faculty union.

**Exclusive bargaining representative (or bargaining agent)**: The faculty union that has been determined by PERC to bargain on behalf of all employees or faculty in the bargaining unit. The University would negotiate exclusively with union representatives, who could be from the SEIU local, Washington state SEIU and the SEIU International. In a union environment, the UW would be forbidden from addressing any concerns regarding wages, benefits, hours and terms and other conditions of employment with employees or faculty at the UW outside of the collective bargaining process.

**Petition for election**: If the union is successful in demonstrating a showing of interest, they can petition PERC to hold an election for representation. PERC is responsible for reviewing the petition and deciding that all conditions are satisfied before moving ahead with an election.

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Showing of interest: Part of the union organizer’s first step towards establishing a faculty union as the UW’s exclusive bargaining agent. The union must obtain signed membership cards from at least 30% of employees or faculty within a bargaining unit to legally demonstrate that there is significant interest in faculty unionization. Without this minimum number, a union cannot submit a petition for election to PERC and move ahead in the process.

Subjects of bargaining: There are three kinds of subjects of bargaining:

1. Mandatory subjects: Wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment are mandatory subjects of bargaining. As mandatory subjects, if one side requests, the other side must bargain about that subject. No changes can be made to mandatory subjects without agreement or impasse.

2. Permissive subjects: The statute defines “criteria and standards to be used for the appointment, promotion, evaluation, and tenure of faculty” as permissive subjects. This means that either party can refuse to bargain about these subjects, but they can mutually agree to bargain about them.

3. Prohibited subjects: The statute states that the following are prohibited subjects:
   a. 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.
   b. The amount of any fees that are not a term or condition of employment.
   c. 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.

The Washington Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC): The State agency that regulates public sector labor relations and collective bargaining in Washington state. This regulatory body is responsible for regulating labor organizing and assisting parties to resolve labor-management disputes.

Union: The term used for both the local bargaining agent representing a defined group of employees or faculty and also the national and/or state affiliate of a local bargaining union.

Unfair Labor Practice (ULP): A practice on the part of either the union or the employer that is judged to be in violation of a statute and, therefore, illegal. Illegal practices include bargaining in bad faith, refusing to bargain, or discriminating against employees for their support or opposition to a union.

Sources:


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