

May 31st, 2011

Dear President Wise,

At a time when we're all making difficult decisions about how to navigate the economic landscape and preserve the most critical features of our state institutions, we are writing to ask for your help in protecting one of the University's critical workforces to achieving the mission. As you know, Teaching Assistants, Research Assistants, Tutors, and other Academic Student Employees are vital to the University's instructional and research missions, providing more than half of the contact hours for undergraduates and performing a significant portion of the innovative research work that brings \$1.5 billion into the state each year.

In talking with the leadership of UAW Local 4121 we have learned of the unique – but not widely known - ways in which Academic Student Employees are affected by the increased reliance on tuition/fee dollars to support UW's core missions. Our understanding is that mandatory un-waived fees – which already represent a significant financial burden for these employees at the beginning of each quarter – will be increasing by 50% or more by the end of this biennium. While we are concerned about the effect on Academic Student Employees as individuals, who typically make only about \$15,000 per year and will be paying back close to 8% of that salary back to UW in mandatory fees, we are equally concerned about how this trend will affect the University's ability to recruit and retain the best and brightest graduate students. UW appears to be falling further behind peer institutions in the Global Challenge States in overall Academic Student Employee compensation. If peer universities are figuring out ways to improve overall compensation for Teaching and Research Assistants, even during difficult financial times, the University of Washington take the necessary steps to keep our state competitive.

In short, we encourage you to find ways of stopping the declining overall compensation of Academic Student Employees, including waiving mandatory fees. Our community is well-served by these employees, who keep UW accessible to Washington families and help develop innovative solutions to some of our most pressing problems. Solving this problem immediately will not only benefit Academic Student Employees, but also UW and the state as a whole in both the long and the short term.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to continuing to work with you to enhance access and excellence at the University of Washington.

Sincerely,

Glen Anderson	Hans Dunshee	Nick Harper	Jeanne Kohl-Welles	Timm Ormsby
Sherry Appleton	Joe Fitzgibbon	Steve Hobbs	Marko Liias	Cindy Ryu
Marilyn Chase	Roger Goodman	Sam Hunt	Jim Moeller	Mike Sells
Steve Conway	Tami Green	Karen Keiser	Luis Moscoso	Derek Stanford
Mary Lou Dickerson	Kathy Haigh	Troy Kelley	Sharon Nelson	Dave Upthegrove
	Larry Haler	Adam Kline		