**UFWW FYI –**

**Some Background on the UFWW and WWU**

The idea of working at a university that has a unionized faculty is an unfamiliar concept for many people both in and out of academia. Accordingly, the purpose of this page is to provide some background about the role of the UFWW at Western.

* The United Faculty of Western Washington has represented the faculty at Western since 2006.
* The union bargains for and enforces the conditions of our collective bargaining agreement (CBA). This covers each faculty member’s salary, benefits, and working conditions once they are hired. It does NOT limit what can be negotiated in your contract, though…each candidate is responsible for bargaining salary for their initial hire. Note that first-year faculty do NOT receive salary increases scheduled in the CBA in their first year, but WILL receive all subsequent negotiated salary increases. You should also be aware that all medical and dental benefits are bargained at the state level for all WA state employees.
* Our CBA is available for viewing on our website at *[www.ufww.org](http://www.ufww.org/" \t "_blank)*. The National Educator’s Association called it "the best contract in the U.S." after we successfully negotiated the current three-year term in 2012. This article is worth reading if you would like to get a better idea about the role of the UFWW on Western’s campus and how we have worked with Western’s administration and student association to further Western’s mission.
* Every faculty member is represented by the UFWW, whether they are a member or a representation fee payer. The fees are the identical for both groups of faculty; only UFWW members have voting privileges and other benefits (e.g., insurance). At the end of each academic year, representation fee payers who request it receive a rebate for any UFWW expenses not related to the representation of its members and negotiation/enforcement of our CBA (e.g., fee payers are refunded the portion of UFWW dues that is spent in support of various political candidates and/or political campaigning). Faculty must join the union by filling out and submitting a UFWW membership form that can be found on our website.  Otherwise, a faculty member is a fee payer by default.
* The UFWW leadership is elected by our members. They are all faculty members at Western (i.e., there is no “outside representation” on the UFWW Executive).
* Some faculty, especially junior faculty, may have questions once they arrive at Western that may be awkward to ask of their mentor, chair or dean. In these situations, the union can serve as an independent sounding board, and any conversations remain completely confidential for the faculty member.