

THE WESTERN UNION

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CLEAR DIRECTIVES FROM FACULTY SURVEY

Immediately following the faculty vote in favor of collective bargaining, the UFWW formulated an aggressive strategy to collect information necessary to develop a first contract that would fairly address the diverse needs and goals of the entire bargaining unit. A key component of this strategy was the UFWW Bargaining Survey launched in May 2006. More than 250 members of the faculty, including over 45% of the tenure-track faculty, responded to the survey which asked respondents to assign a priority rating to each item in a list of 51 potential bargaining issues.

The results point to strong faculty agreement on key bargaining priorities. In general, issues related to faculty compensation received the strongest endorsements from survey respondents, capturing two of the top five spots in the ranking of priorities (see chart). About 87% of the respondents reported that regular cost-of-living increases should be a high or the highest priority in bargaining the first contract.

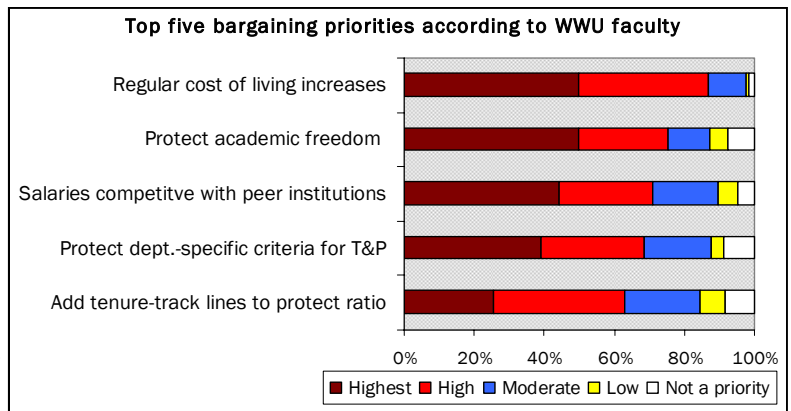
Developing a discipline-specific schedule of salaries that are competitive with those at our peer institutions was designated as a high or highest priority by almost three-fourths of the respondents.

But money was clearly not the only thing on the minds of survey respondents. In fact, the item receiving the second most support referred to the protection of academic freedom. Strong majorities of respondents also reported that protecting the role of discipline-specific standards in deciding promotion cases and adding tenure-track lines to maintain the ratio of tenure-track to non-tenure-track faculty should be

highest or high bargaining priorities.

Bargaining Team chair, David Bover reports that the survey has played a key role in early contract negotiations. "Along with the information collected in our countless meetings with individuals and departments, these survey results have enabled us to develop proposals that help us retain the things that work well for the faculty but that address those areas that need to be improved most in order to strengthen the university."

A complete summary of the results of the UFWW Bargaining Survey is available at <http://www.ufws.org/western>.



UFWW BARGAINING TEAM CONTINUES TO NEGOTIATE AND ADDS A NEW MEMBER

Bargaining for the first contract between the University and the UFWW has begun in earnest. The bargaining teams for each side have exchanged proposals and will continue to meet regularly this quarter and through the summer to work toward an agreement. According to David Bover, chair of the UFWW Bargaining Team, these initial conversations have set a constructive tone for the negotiations. "Exchanging initial

proposals has opened up important dialogue about each side's priorities heading into negotiations, and we look forward to working with the administration to establish a first contract that reflects our shared philosophies."

In April the UFWW Bargaining Team added a new member, Genet Simone, Program Director of Elementary Education at the Bremerton Education Center, who brings with her a

wealth of knowledge about the unique challenges facing our off-campus faculty colleagues. Genet replaces Ramona Chauvin who recently accepted an academic position in her home state of Louisiana, and joins Bover, Edoh Amiran, Susan Costanzo, Kyle Crowder, Anna Eblen, Larry Estrada, Vicki Hamblin, David Leaf, Kevin Leonard, Bill Lyne, Matt Roelofs, and Katie Stables on the Bargaining Team.

YOUR UNION BY THE NUMBERS

177 The number of UFWW members as of May, 2007.

6 The number of WWU departments still in need of a steward

-1.25% The decline in the real value of faculty salaries from 2004 to 2006 at public universities nationwide, reversing a ten-year trend in which salaries grew faster than the cost of living.

20.7% The four-year increase in salaries earned by faculty in the California State system (including those at some of WWU's peer institutions) in their most recent collective bargaining agreement. (See <http://www.calfac.org/settlement.html>).

19.7% The increase in state funding for WWU in the 2007-2009 budget in comparison to the current biennium.

3:42:55 UFWW Vice-President Kristi Lemm's time in the cool wind of the 2007 Boston Marathon, setting a new personal best. Congratulations, Kristi!



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STATEWIDE HIGHER EDUCATION UNION DEVELOPS A STRONG VOICE IN OLYMPIA

There is power in numbers. This is the idea behind the formation of the United Faculty of Washington State (UFWS), a new, statewide union of public university faculty from the four Washington State regional universities (WWU, CWU, EWU and Evergreen). Within the past three years, all four universities have voted in collective bargaining.

The UFWS represents more than 2,200 faculty members, who together instruct nearly 31,000 students, second in the state to the University of Washington. In collaboration with the greater than 80,000 members of the Washington Educational Association (WEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and their statewide and national organizations, the UFWS is uniquely positioned to become a vocal advocate for higher education in Washington State.

On the path towards realizing this potential, the Program Council of the UFWS held its inaugural meeting in February. Western's Johann Neem (History), Lawrence Estrada (Fairhaven College, Director of American Cultural Studies), Jeff Young (Biology), and UFWW president William Lyne (English) participated in the two day retreat. Representatives from all four universities used the meeting to establish and discuss the organization's central principles – to promote and defend public higher education, protect academic freedom and integrity of the profession, sup-



UFWW President, William Lyne (left), compares neckties with WWU Provost, Andrew Bodman between legislative meetings in Olympia.

port binding collective bargaining agreements, and provide a powerful public higher education voice.

This last objective was clearly on display when the UFWS made its debut in Olympia during the recently ended legislative session. UFWS members, including Lyne, conferred with key legislators on both sides of the aisle, and testified on faculty salaries, staffing, and university governance. Four key items defined the UFWS legislative agenda: competitive salaries to recruit and retain the best faculty; affordability and access to college for all Washington citizens; faculty representation in higher education decision-making; and increasing the number of tenure-track faculty.

In hearings before the House Higher Education Committee and the Senate Appropriations Committee Lyne highlighted the deepening faculty salary crisis, showing the direct relationship between competitive faculty salaries and the quality of education our students receive. According to Lyne, "our mes-

sage focused on the need for direct state funding of faculty salaries as we fall further behind our peer institutions and the cost of living in Washington state continues to go up."

UFWW affiliate organizations, WEA and AFT-Washington also played a key role in the budget deliberations at the end of the legislative session. The budget originally proposed in the state senate did not fully fund salary increases for faculty. WEA and AFT-Washington made the restoration of these increases their top priority in their meetings with legislative leaders and the Governor. In the end, the budget that passed both the house and the senate included full funding of 5.2% (3.2% in the first year of the biennium and 2.0% in the second year) faculty cost-of-living salary increases.

This legislative session was a good start for the UFWS and, according to Lyne, "we anticipate more success in the future as we continue to develop our strong relationships with law makers and strengthen support for higher education."

BY THE WAY...

Delegates at the Washington Education Association (WEA) annual **Representative Assembly** in March voted 92% in favor of granting the United Faculty of Washington State (UFWS) a seat on the WEA Board of Directors, helping to ensure that the interests of the state's higher education faculty will be well represented in WEA activities.

UFWW Vice President, Kristi Lemm was recently interviewed for a **story on faculty unions** that appears in the most recent issue of the American Psychological Association's *Monitor*. See <http://www.apa.org/monitor/apr07/union.html>.

Building on the success of the recent on-campus steward training sessions, all depart-

mental stewards will be invited to join their colleagues from Eastern, Central, and Evergreen at the UFWS **Statewide Stewards' Meeting** on September 8-9.

Members can **opt out of direct mailings** from the WEA and other affiliates by sending an e-mail to Steven Garfinkle at garfinkle@comcast.net.