FAQ ABOUT UNION REPRESENTATION

We have received notice from the Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) of a recognition request from the Public School Employees Union (PSE). PSE has filed a recognition request to form a bargaining unit which includes employees from the following University departments: All full-time and regular part-time exempt employees as defined in RCW 41.56.021 assigned to provide student counseling and employees assigned to extension/continuing education, excluding coaches, employees assigned to Child and Family Outreach, employees assigned to Idaho Social Work, employees who are faculty, classified, confidential, supervisory and all other employees.

These FAQs are intended to provide you with information about the process and to encourage you to make an informed decision about your rights. We will update the FAQs on a regular basis; updates will be announced on the 24/7 which can be accessed via EWU’s home page.

In Washington, most state employees have the right to request that a union represent them for purposes of collective bargaining. EWU respects your ability to make your own choice, and wants to assure you that we will respect your decision. The information in this handout was created to respond to the many questions about union organizing activities and membership that we have received from EWU employees. Accordingly, in response to your questions, we ask that you take a moment and consider the information in this handout if you are making a choice about union representation.

If you have additional questions, or if you have experienced issues regarding your right to make an informed decision, you may contact Carol Hawkins, Labor Relations Manager at (509) 359-7496 for assistance.

Q- What happens when I sign a union authorization card?

If someone requests that you sign a union authorization card, you are free to sign or not to sign a union authorization card without fear of reprisal from either the union or the University. EWU will not request any information from you about your decision to sign an authorization card. We respect your right to authorize a union to represent you.

After you sign an authorization card, and the union files a petition to represent a unit of EWU employees that includes your position, the PERC will count the authorization cards and determine whether to certify the unit, hold an election, or dismiss the petition:

If the percentage of interest cards amounts to less than 30% of the proposed unit of
employees, the union has not submitted enough interest to initiate the process of certifying a new bargaining unit.

If the percentage of interest cards is between 30% and 50%, PERC with facilitate a ballot vote to allow civil service employees to elect or not elect representation. A simple majority of those who vote (50% + 1) will determine represented status for all civil service employees included in the proposed bargaining unit.

If the percentage of interest cards is 51% or greater, PERC may initiate a cross-check to verify signatures on the cards. Upon completion of the cross-check process, PERC may automatically certify the bargaining unit without offering an opportunity for the civil service employees to vote for or against representation in an election.

You have the right to sign and to revoke a union authorization card. If you have questions about signing or revoking an authorization card, contact the Public Employment Relations Commission at (360) 570-7324 or through their website at http://www.perc.wa.gov/.

Again, your union authorization cards are confidential. EWU will never see your authorization cards, nor will it request that you provide a copy of your authorization card, or ask you to tell anyone whether or not you decided to request a union to represent you.

**Q- What happens now that EWU has received the notice from PERC?**

The University expects to receive a notice from PERC scheduling a hearing where EWU and PSE discuss the proposed bargaining unit. EWU respects employees’ right to organize, we are committed to working with employees and any representation they may select. EWU will be participating in this legal process and will provide updates as legally allowed and as they become available.