



Office of the President

516 High Street
Bellingham, WA 98225-9000
360-650-3480 ~ Fax 360-650-6141

Dear WAWU Operational Student Employee Organizing Committee:

Thank you for your letter dated January 24, 2025. We appreciate your continued efforts in advocating for the recognition of WAWU's Operational Student Employee (OSE) unit. However, we must again respectfully decline your request.

While we understand that employers can voluntarily recognize a union representing an appropriate bargaining unit of eligible employees, we believe it is premature to do so given that there is a bill currently pending with the state legislature to establish bargaining rights for OSEs. As we have previously indicated, decisions regarding collective bargaining rights for public-sector employees are made by the Legislature, not by the University.

The University believes that legislation establishing the right to bargain, the process for seeking recognition of a union, and the rules that govern bargaining are necessary prerequisites to recognizing a unit of operational student employees.

The University recognizes and supports the choices made by its eligible employees to form unions, and we take pride in our partnerships with campus collective bargaining representatives to address employee interests while advancing the University's mission. At the same time, we deeply respect the rights of employees to express their views on topics like unionization and to participate in selecting their union representative. Therefore, we encourage unions organizing on campus to follow the election or card-check process established by the Legislature and overseen by the Public Employment Relations Commission.

Should bargaining rights be extended to operational student employees, we look forward to following the appropriate process for certifying a bargaining unit. While we cannot recognize the bargaining unit you have proposed, we want to reassure you that the University remains committed to treating all employees equitably, regardless of union status or affiliation. Thank you again for reaching out, and we look forward to continuing this dialogue.

Sincerely,

Sabah Randhawa
President