Title: RESOLUTION URGING THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON'S
UNEQUIVOCAL ADOPTION OF THE SEATTLE MINIMUM WAGE SCHEDULE
AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENT-ADMINISTERED PROGRAMS

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Resolution number: 06. 14-15

WHEREAS on June 3rd, 2014 Mayor Ed Murray signed the Seattle City Council minimum wage
ordinance 124490 (herein referred to as ‘the minimum wage ordinance’) to increase the
minimum wage of employees working in the geographic region of the City of Seattle to $15/hr,
phased in over 3-7 years depending on the size of the employer and the provision of medical
benefits1; and

WHEREAS as of April 1st, 2015 the minimum wage ordinance mandates a minimum hourly
compensation of $11/hr for employees of large employers, defined as businesses with more than
501 employees2; and

WHEREAS the minimum wage ordinance mandates future wage increases for large employers
over the next 2-3 years arriving at $15/hr on Jan 1, 2017 for employees not receiving health
benefits and on Jan 1, 2018 for employees receiving health benefits; and

WHEREAS other government agencies such as Seattle Public Schools3 believe the minimum
wage ordinance applies by law to their workers; and

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1 Seattle City Ordinance No. 124490 (see 2)
2 http://www.seattle.gov/civilrights/labor-standards/minimum-wage
WHEREAS San Francisco has also implemented a minimum wage ordinance that will reach a mandated minimum compensation of $15/hr by July 1, 2018, and the University of California - San Francisco, while not under an obligation to follow the ordinance under California law, has opted to adopt their city’s minimum wage schedule for all workers; and

WHEREAS prior to April 1, 2015 over 2,600 student workers were paid below $11/hr at the University of Washington (UW); and

WHEREAS UAW 4121, the union representing more than 4,000 Academic Student Employees (ASEs) at the UW, included in their initial bargaining demands, presented to the University on December 5, 2014, a provision demanding a minimum compensation for hourly ASEs to match the Seattle minimum wage; and

WHEREAS hundreds of student workers who had been paid below $11/hr prior to April 1, 2015 were employed in units funded by the Services and Activities Fee (SAF) Committee; and

WHEREAS the student-administered SAF Committee funds several essential student services on campus including Hall Health Primary Care Center, Recreational Sports, the Student Parent Resource Center, ASUW, GPSS, the Samuel E. Kelly Ethnic and Cultural Center, the Counseling Center, Student Publications, and Student Legal Services; and

WHEREAS the UW administration, aware of the minimum wage ordinance and its mandate, requested the input of student government (GPSS, ASUW, and the SAF Committee) on March 31, 2015, giving student leaders less than one day to project the effect of legally mandated wage increases on SAF-funded units; and

WHEREAS student leaders have worked diligently in the time they’ve had available to implement the $11/hr wage requirement and to support the well-being and flourishing of all students, whether undergraduate and graduate, at the University of Washington; and

WHEREAS ultimate non-compliance with the minimum wage ordinance could incur significant costs and penalties should the Washington Supreme Court find that the city law applies to state agencies, including legal fees, sanctions, fines, and interest on retroactive pay; and

WHEREAS proposed legislation in the Washington State Legislature would enforce a cap on student fee increases to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) level; and

4 http://hr.ucsf.edu/hr.php?B=2232&AT
5 http://www.seattletimes.com/business/economy/uw-lifts-minimum-wage-for-students-to-11/
WHEREAS many programs funded through the SAF Committee can legally be funded in whole
or in part through administrative funds; and

WHEREAS administrative support would provide a means to increase wages and maintain
services currently offered through SAF-funded units without raising student fees; and

WHEREAS the UW prides itself in being “one of the world’s preeminent public universities,”
and defines itself through “the conviction that together we can create a world of good,”7 a “desire
to effect positive change in the world around us,” and a commitment to “serving all our citizens
… [and] elevate the quality of lives of Washingtonians”8, and

WHEREAS if the UW does not follow with the minimum wage ordinance, many Seattle campus
workers will be the lowest paid employees in the City of Seattle working for a large employer;
and

WHEREAS the UW and its lowest-compensated employees perform various and essential
functions within the economy of Seattle; and

WHEREAS many workers in the UW School of Social Work practicum program continue to
receive wages of $0/hr for uncompensated labor, paying the UW tuition and often accumulating
debt for the privilege of fulfilling the roles of regular employees at practicum sites while
providing essential services to vulnerable and at-risk populations in Washington9; and

WHEREAS the UW is guided by public trust and a shared responsibility to serving all citizens it
has the moral responsibility to uphold and promote policies that address income inequality,
promote the general welfare, health and prosperity of workers, and ensure the possibility of full
civic participation of workers who would otherwise struggle to meet basic needs;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENT
SENATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON:

THAT the GPSS calls on the UW administration to follow the City of Seattle’s minimum wage
schedule for ALL workers and make an official announcement of this intention immediately; and

THAT the GPSS recognizes that the category of “all workers” includes students currently
performing uncompensated, unprotected, and unrecognized labor while fulfilling the roles of
regular employees at practicum sites; and

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7 http://www.washington.edu/about/
8 http://www.washington.edu/about/visionvalues/
9 GPSS Resolution No. 04. 14-15
THAT the GPSS expresses solidarity with all hourly workers who would benefit from the increase in the minimum wage to $15/hr; and
THAT the GPSS recognizes the contribution of student leaders in bringing wages of student workers in SAF-funded units to $11/hr effective April 1, 2015; and
THAT the GPSS encourages the UW administration to consider the moral, fiscal, competitive, and perceptual cost of not expeditiously announcing an intention to follow the Seattle minimum wage schedule; and
THAT the GPSS encourages the SAF Committee to project the increase in fees and/or cost of cuts to SAF-funded services under the following scenarios, assuming the UW adopts the Seattle minimum wage standard: 1) the UW administration funds 100% of the increased labor cost, 2) the UW administration funds 50% of the increased labor cost, and 3) the UW administration funds 0% of the increased labor cost; and
THAT the GPSS encourages the UW administration and the SAF Committee to identify services currently provided by SAF that can be legally funded through administrative funds; and
THAT the GPSS encourages the UW administration to make a commitment to maintaining current services without significantly increasing student fees; and
THAT the GPSS directs the President of GPSS to ensure the SAF Committee complete the above projections in a timely manner, monitor the progress of the University towards following these recommendations, advocate on behalf of students and workers to the UW administration, and work with student labor groups to achieve these directives; and
THAT a copy of this resolution be forwarded to UW Interim President Ana Mari Cauce, UW Interim Provost Jerry Baldasty, the UW Board of Regents, Assistant Vice President of Labor Relations Peter Dennis, UW Faculty Senate Chair Kate O’Neill, Editor-in-Chief of The Daily Joe Veyera, UAW 4121 President David Parsons, GPSS President Alice Popejoy, ASUW President Christina Xiao, the 2015-2016 GPSS Leadership, and the 2015-2016 ASUW Leadership

Presented to GPSS for approval on Wednesday, May 6, 2015
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