

1 Title: **RESOLUTION URGING THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON'S**
2 **UNEQUIVOCAL ADOPTION OF THE SEATTLE MINIMUM WAGE SCHEDULE**
3 **AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENT-ADMINISTERED PROGRAMS**
4

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18
19 Resolution number: 06. 14-15
20

21 WHEREAS on June 3rd, 2014 Mayor Ed Murray signed the Seattle City Council minimum wage
22 ordinance 124490 (herein referred to as ‘the minimum wage ordinance’) to increase the
23 minimum wage of employees working in the geographic region of the City of Seattle to \$15/hr,
24 phased in over 3-7 years depending on the size of the employer and the provision of medical
25 benefits¹; and
26

27 WHEREAS as of April 1st, 2015 the minimum wage ordinance mandates a minimum hourly
28 compensation of \$11/hr for employees of large employers, defined as businesses with more than
29 501 employees²; and
30

31 WHEREAS the minimum wage ordinance mandates future wage increases for large employers
32 over the next 2-3 years arriving at \$15/hr on Jan 1, 2017 for employees not receiving health
33 benefits and on Jan 1, 2018 for employees receiving health benefits; and
34

35 WHEREAS other government agencies such as Seattle Public Schools³ believe the minimum
36 wage ordinance applies by law to their workers; and
37

¹ Seattle City Ordinance No. 124490 (see 2)

² <http://www.seattle.gov/civilrights/labor-standards/minimum-wage>

³ <http://www.seattletimes.com/business/economy/seattles-15-wage-law-may-not-affect-citys-biggest-boss-uw/>

38 WHEREAS San Francisco has also implemented a minimum wage ordinance that will reach a
39 mandated minimum compensation of \$15/hr by July 1, 2018, and the University of California -
40 San Francisco, while not under an obligation to follow the ordinance under California law, has
41 opted to adopt their city's minimum wage schedule for all workers⁴; and
42

43 WHEREAS prior to April 1, 2015 over 2,600 student workers were paid below \$11/hr at the
44 University of Washington (UW)⁵; and
45

46 WHEREAS UAW 4121, the union representing more than 4,000 Academic Student Employees
47 (ASEs) at the UW, included in their initial bargaining demands, presented to the University on
48 December 5, 2014, a provision demanding a minimum compensation for hourly ASEs to match
49 the Seattle minimum wage; and
50

51 WHEREAS hundreds of student workers who had been paid below \$11/hr prior to April 1, 2015
52 were employed in units funded by the Services and Activities Fee (SAF) Committee; and
53

54 WHEREAS the student-administered SAF Committee funds several essential student services on
55 campus including Hall Health Primary Care Center, Recreational Sports, the Student Parent
56 Resource Center, ASUW, GPSS, the Samuel E. Kelly Ethnic and Cultural Center, the
57 Counseling Center, Student Publications, and Student Legal Services⁶; and
58

59 WHEREAS the UW administration, aware of the minimum wage ordinance and its mandate,
60 requested the input of student government (GPSS, ASUW, and the SAF Committee) on March
61 31, 2015, giving student leaders less than one day to project the effect of legally mandated wage
62 increases on SAF-funded units; and
63

64 WHEREAS student leaders have worked diligently in the time they've had available to
65 implement the \$11/hr wage requirement and to support the well-being and flourishing of all
66 students, whether undergraduate and graduate, at the University of Washington; and
67

68 WHEREAS ultimate non-compliance with the minimum wage ordinance could incur significant
69 costs and penalties should the Washington Supreme Court find that the city law applies to state
70 agencies, including legal fees, sanctions, fines, and interest on retroactive pay; and
71

72 WHEREAS proposed legislation in the Washington State Legislature would enforce a cap on
73 student fee increases to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) level; and
74

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/>

⁶ <https://depts.washington.edu/safcom/fee-history/2014-2015-fees/>

75 WHEREAS many programs funded through the SAF Committee can legally be funded in whole
76 or in part through administrative funds; and

77

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

80

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

85

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

89

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

92

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

97

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

102

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

105

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

108

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

112

⁷ <http://www.washington.edu/about/>

⁸ <http://www.washington.edu/about/visionvalues/>

⁹ GPSS Resolution No. 04. 14-15

113 THAT the GPSS expresses solidarity with all hourly workers who would benefit from the
114 increase in the minimum wage to \$15/hr; and
115 THAT the GPSS recognizes the contribution of student leaders in bringing wages of student
116 workers in SAF-funded units to \$11/hr effective April 1, 2015; and
117
118 THAT the GPSS encourages the UW administration to consider the moral, fiscal, competitive,
119 and perceptual cost of not expeditiously announcing an intention to follow the Seattle
120 minimum wage schedule; and
121
122 THAT the GPSS encourages the SAF Committee to project the increase in fees and/or cost of
123 cuts to SAF-funded services under the following scenarios, assuming the UW adopts the Seattle
124 minimum wage standard: 1) the UW administration funds 100% of the increased labor cost, 2)
125 the UW administration funds 50% of the increased labor cost, and 3) the UW administration
126 funds 0% of the increased labor cost; and
127
128 THAT the GPSS encourages the UW administration and the SAF Committee to identify services
129 currently provided by SAF that can be legally funded through administrative funds; and
130
131 THAT the GPSS encourages the UW administration to make a commitment to maintaining
132 current services without significantly increasing student fees; and
133
134 THAT the GPSS directs the President of GPSS to ensure the SAF Committee complete the
135 above projections in a timely manner, monitor the progress of the University towards following
136 these recommendations, advocate on behalf of students and workers to the UW administration,
137 and work with student labor groups to achieve these directives; and
138
139 THAT a copy of this resolution be forwarded to UW Interim President Ana Mari Cauce, UW
140 Interim Provost Jerry Baldasty, the UW Board of Regents, Assistant Vice President of Labor
141 Relations Peter Dennis, UW Faculty Senate Chair Kate O’Neill, Editor-in-Chief of The Daily
142 Joe Veyera, UAW 4121 President David Parsons, GPSS President Alice Popejoy, ASUW
143 President Christina Xiao, the 2015-2016 GPSS Leadership, and the 2015-2016 ASUW
144 Leadership
145
146 *Presented to GPSS for approval on Wednesday, May 6, 2015*
147 *Approved on Wednesday, May 6, 2015*