



## UW Academic Student Employees: What's Changed with Collective Bargaining

	Before Collective Bargaining (Pre-2004)	With Collective Bargaining (2004-Present)
<b>Compensation</b>	<p>UW decided ASE wage rates unilaterally and increases were unpredictable.</p> <p>Median graduate appointee AY salary was \$1,534/month for 50% FTE appointments (\$1,028/month for summer appointments)</p> <p>UW hourly minimum wage was \$7.15/hour</p>	<p>We've bargained that all wage ranges will increase across the board annually, that departments may pay above the minimum base rates, and that summer wages are supplemented by 20%.</p> <p>Median graduate appointee AY wages have increased by 83% since 2004. Summer median graduate appointee wages have increased by 120% since 2004.</p> <p>Our union fought to increase the Seattle minimum wage to \$15, and to ensure that UW applied this wage to all hourly employees (not just those represented by the union). As a result, the minimum wage for hourly ASEs on all campuses is now \$16.72, an increase of 134% since 2004.</p>
<b>Fee and Tuition Waivers</b>	<p>A 50% FTE graduate assistant received a waiver equal to about 92% of campus-wide tuition and fees (Graduate Tier 1 rate). UW Administration could unilaterally impose new fees at any time.</p>	<p>For years we've organized to reduce tuition costs for all students, and to increase the value of waivers for all ASEs. Under the current CBA, the tuition/fee waiver for a 50% FTE graduate assistant now covers 96% of required campus-wide tuition and fees (Graduate Tier 1 rate), despite total in-state tuition/fees costs increasing 123% since 2004. This represents an <b>out-of-pocket savings of (at least) \$1,358 per year.</b></p> <p>In addition, ASEs with 50% appointments receive a lump sum payment of \$100 per year.</p> <p>If a new fee is imposed by students, the University must bargain with the Union. Fees not imposed by students may not be imposed on ASEs with waivers</p> <p>We've worked in coalition with campus groups to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate the International Student Fee, which had cost an additional \$135 per year for international students.</li> <li>• Win a full waiver of the U-Pass Fee for all ASEs (including hourlies), which had cost \$84/quarter.</li> </ul>
<b>Health Insurance Benefits</b>	<p>Without any obligation to bargain, UW Admin decisions were focused on minimizing total</p>	<p>We've shaped the health insurance plan to be more responsive to ASE needs and we ensured that UW Admin did not impose premium shares or cuts to the benefits.* Our plan includes comprehensive dental,</p>

	costs of the health insurance plan, resulting in cuts.	and vision coverage, including for dependents. Some critical improvements have included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low deductible and out of pocket maximum.</li> <li>• Increased employer share of dependent premiums to 65% (currently this saves approximately \$860 per year per dependent)</li> <li>• Improved coverage for mental health care (\$0 deductible and 25 covered visits per year)</li> <li>• Expanded coverage to be fully trans affirming.</li> </ul> <p>*UAW benefits experts helped UW Admin identify a problem in the plan structure, enabling them to recover \$1 million in overpaid premiums.</p>
<b>Childcare Benefits</b>	UW provided no childcare subsidies specifically for ASEs, nor paid time off for childcare.	To make UW more family-friendly and increase the likelihood that ASE parents can have additional support while pursuing their degrees, we created a fund that can provide an ASE up to \$5,000 per year to cover the costs of childcare. We also negotiated paid leave for childcare emergencies or to care for a dependent, and guaranteed access to safe and comfortable lactation stations.
<b>Vacation and Holiday</b>	Time off on holidays or for vacation was at the discretion of the department or PI, with requests often denied or ignored.	We established 4 weeks paid vacation time per 12-month appointment, (pro-rated) for all 50% ASEs. If required to work on a holiday, ASE must be given another day off with pay.
<b>Family/ Medical and Sick Leave</b>	No leave benefits for family, medical reasons.	Through collective bargaining and policy advocacy at the City and State, we've helped address critical needs of ASE caregivers to have more support and flexibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7 days paid sick leave</li> <li>• 12 weeks paid family/medical leave (with 820 hour/year employment)</li> <li>• Three months unpaid leave with continued health insurance fully paid by UW.</li> </ul>
<b>Anti-Discrimination</b>	UW policies addressing discrimination and harassment were oriented toward compliance with laws and risk-management principles. ASEs could not avail themselves of neutral third-party arbitration, a transparent complaint process, or elected peer advocates trained in contract enforcement and advocacy.	Over years of organizing, we've established better systems for addressing systemic harassment and workplace inequity by restructuring the balance of power in our learning and working environments. This has been driven by the principles that <u>effective prevention</u> must (a) empower the most vulnerable with meaningful protections and real recourse (b) drive culture change, increase institutional accountability, and address structural inequities, and (c) be led democratically and by the voices of the most vulnerable. We've improved our CBA to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection against discrimination and harassment, including microaggressions, sexual harassment, hostile workplaces, and retaliation.</li> <li>• Robust complaint process for discrimination and harassment issues, including interim measures, access to real recourse through neutral third-party arbitration, and union representation to support you during the course of a grievance (see dispute resolution).</li> <li>• Guaranteed access to safe and comfortable all-gender restrooms.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection against being required to work in conditions that pose an imminent threat to health and safety.</li> <li>• A joint program to develop peer-to-peer trainings for preventing harassment through data-driven, survivor-centered practices. UW pays two ASEs at the rate of their normal TA/RA work to develop and conduct the program.</li> <li>• Other terms that address structural sources of inequity: compensation (including mandatory tuition/fees, <u>family leave</u>, <u>affirming health insurance</u>, <u>childcare subsidies</u>, and more).</li> </ul>
<b>Dispute Resolution</b>	UW policies for addressing complaints provided that UW Admin was always the final decision-maker, and that there was neither access to peer advocates or neutral third party arbitrators.	<p>All workplace disputes are resolvable by a fair and transparent grievance procedure that ultimately provides the right to appeal to a neutral third-part arbitrator. This means Admin doesn't have the final say. Elected union representatives are trained to assist and advocate for peers through this process.</p> <p>Since 2014, ASEs have recovered over \$7 million through the grievance procedure, after receiving less than they were entitled to under the CBA.</p>
<b>Appointment Security</b>	Appointments could be (and were) withdrawn after being offered.	If an appointment is withdrawn after being accepted, the University must provide an equivalent position or provide equal pay and benefits for the term of the withdrawn appointment. 50% FTE appointments must generally be for at least one academic year, when funding is available.
<b>Workload Protections</b>	TAs and other ASEs whose employee work assignments prevented them from making progress toward their degree had no real recourse against unpaid work or overwork.	<p>Our CBA establishes a strong standard – 220 hours per quarter for 50% FTE – of paid workload. This provides clear recourse for any ASE to protect themselves from having to work more than this number of hours. The CBA distinguishes appointment workload from other academic expectations and enables those who wish to work more hours to do so.</p> <p>ASEs also now have a clear mechanism for addressing class-size, as well as the criteria and decision-making process for hiring.</p> <p>Moreover, hourly employees are protected against being required to complete unpaid work and have recourse against being asked to under-report. This includes all required trainings or other work assignments, including tutee no-shows.</p>
<b>Discipline and Dismissal</b>	Without clear policy standards or real recourse (see Dispute Resolution) ASEs could be disciplined or dismissed arbitrarily.	Our CBA establishes that UW must prove “just cause” – an important and well-defined due-process standard – in order to discipline or dismiss ASEs.
<b>Health and Safety</b>	Health and safety standards were not always clear or well-enforced, due primarily to ASEs lacking guaranteed access to representation, third-	We established that ASEs have the right not to work in conditions that pose an imminent threat to health and safety. ASEs are entitled to all equipment and training necessary to do their jobs safely. Local 4121 also gained representation on the campus-wide health and safety committee.

	party arbitration, proper training or equipment.	
<b>Workspace and Materials</b>	Provision of workspace and materials was up to departments or individual supervisors.	Under our CBA ASEs have guaranteed access to space and materials necessary to carry out their work effectively. Also, ASEs cannot be required to pay out-of-pocket for necessary materials.
<b>Protection of Academic Quality and Jobs</b>	Improving the quality of instruction and research was understood to be the role of faculty and UW Admin.	<p>Research and teaching improves when the ASE workforce is more empowered, has better working conditions and more support toward attaining degrees, and can help create a stronger and more equitable University. Moreover, overall aims of the institution to fuel innovation and improve the quality of life and education in our community continue to flourish. Since 2004:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of ASEs has increased</li> <li>• UW research awards from grants and contracts has increased by 71% (<a href="https://www.washington.edu/research/wp/wp-content/uploads/Total_Grants_Contracts_1995_2020.pdf">https://www.washington.edu/research/wp/wp-content/uploads/Total_Grants_Contracts_1995_2020.pdf</a>)</li> <li>• UW hires more faculty and admits more students from historically minoritized populations.</li> </ul>
<b>Immigration / International Students and Scholars</b>	International ASEs had to rely upon advocacy by UW Administration or supportive individual faculty/staff.	<p>Through years of organizing, we collectively have improved international students and scholars' conditions from the ground up. Our Union has helped lead fights to ensure that everyone – regardless of immigration status – is welcome and supported. Some examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defeating ICE's directive to deport international students from working at Universities with online enrollment;</li> <li>• Stopping WA state from imposing an additional surcharge on international student tuition;</li> <li>• Passing the Washington DREAM Act;</li> <li>• Eliminating the International Student Fee for all UW students;</li> <li>• Successfully fighting Trump administration travel bans through protest and litigation;</li> <li>• Expanding the Optional Practical Training (OPT) program after a lawsuit threatened to reduce it;</li> <li>• Supporting multiple immigrant rights; organizations to expand our advocacy for non-citizens.</li> </ul> <p>As a part of UAW, international student/scholar members also have access to expert information about changes in laws and regulations, as well as a national network to advocate for change.</p>
<b>Political Voice</b>	ASEs were represented by the Graduate and Professional Student Senate.	Through our Union, we have been able to supplement the work of GPSS through local, state and federal lobbying. As a member of the labor community we coordinate closely with other unions and progressive organizations in pushing policy that improves the lives of all working people. We also now have an organized mechanism to strengthen our voice by raising money for candidates and to hold them accountable.