

RCW 41.56.425 Washington State University—Certain employees enrolled in an academic program—Scope of collective bargaining. (1)

In addition to the entities listed in *RCW 41.56.101, this chapter applies to Washington State University with respect to employees who are enrolled in an academic program and are in a classification in (a) through (g) of this subsection on any Washington State University campus. The employees in (a) through (g) of this subsection constitute an appropriate bargaining unit:

- (a) Graduate teaching assistant;
- (b) Graduate staff assistant;
- (c) Graduate project assistant;
- (d) Graduate veterinary assistant;
- (e) Tutor, reader, and graders in all academic units and tutoring centers;

- (f) Except as provided in this subsection (1)(f), graduate research assistant. The employees that constitute an appropriate bargaining unit under this subsection (1) do not include graduate research assistants who are performing research primarily related to their dissertation and who have incidental or no service expectations placed upon them by the university; and

- (g) All employees enrolled in an academic program whose duties and responsibilities are substantially equivalent to those employees in (a) through (f) of this subsection.

(2)(a) The scope of bargaining for employees at Washington State University under this section excludes:

- (i) The ability to terminate the employment of any individual if the individual is not meeting academic requirements as determined by Washington State University;

- (ii) The amount of tuition or fees at Washington State University. However, tuition and fee remission and waiver is within the scope of bargaining;

- (iii) The academic calendar of Washington State University; and

- (iv) The number of students to be admitted to a particular class or class section at Washington State University.

(b)(i) Except as provided in (b)(ii) of this subsection, provisions of collective bargaining agreements relating to compensation must not exceed the amount or percentage established by the legislature in the appropriations act. If any compensation provision is affected by subsequent modification of the appropriations act by the legislature, both parties must immediately enter into collective bargaining for the sole purpose of arriving at a mutually agreed upon replacement for the affected provision.

(ii) Washington State University may provide additional compensation to student employees covered by this section that exceeds that provided by the legislature. [2008 c 203 s 2. Formerly RCW 41.56.205.]

***Reviser's note:** This RCW reference has been corrected to reflect the reorganization of chapter 41.56 RCW by 2025 c 290 s 2.

Intent—2008 c 203: "(1) The legislature acknowledges the ability of student employees who provide instructional, research, and related academic services at the University of Washington to collectively bargain and recognizes that student employees performing equivalent services at Washington State University do not enjoy collective bargaining rights. The legislature further recognizes that while the titles of the student employees may differ between the two

institutions, student employees at Washington State University should enjoy the same collective bargaining rights as their counterparts at the University of Washington. The legislature therefore intends to grant bargaining rights to student employees at Washington State University to the same extent such rights are granted to student employees at the University of Washington.

(2) This act is intended to promote cooperative labor relations between Washington State University and the employees who provide instructional, research, and related academic services, and who are enrolled as students at the university by extending collective bargaining rights under chapter 41.56 RCW and using the orderly procedures administered by the public employment relations commission. To achieve this end, the legislature intends that under chapter 41.56 RCW the university will exclusively bargain in good faith over all matters within the scope of bargaining under section 2 of this act.

(3) The legislature recognizes the importance of the shared governance practices developed at Washington State University. The legislature does not intend to restrict, limit, or prohibit the exercise of the functions of the faculty in any shared governance mechanisms or practices, including the faculty senate, faculty councils, and faculty codes of Washington State University; nor does the legislature intend to restrict, limit, or prohibit the exercise of the functions of the graduate and professional student association, the associated students of Washington State University, or any other student organization in matters outside the scope of bargaining covered by chapter 41.56 RCW.

(4) The legislature intends that nothing in this act will restrict, limit, or prohibit Washington State University from consideration of the merits, necessity, or organization of any program, activity, or service established by Washington State University, including, but not limited to, any decision to establish, modify, or discontinue any such program, activity, or service. The legislature further intends that nothing in this act will restrict, limit, or prohibit Washington State University from having sole discretion over admission requirements for students, criterion for the award of certificates and degrees to students, academic criterion for selection of employees covered by this act, initial appointment of students, and the content, conduct, and supervision of courses, curricula, grading requirements, and research programs.

(5) The legislature does not intend to limit the matters excluded from collective bargaining to those items specified in section 2 of this act." [2008 c 203 s 1.]