Unionization Efforts

by Ardina, Michael and Juan
Outline

1. Disclaimer
2. Why is this happening?
3. How’s the process?
4. How will it work?
5. Possible pros and cons?
6. How to get involved?
7. Q and A
The contents of this presentation are based on our limited understanding of the complex issues surrounding the proposed graduate student unionization. The whole purpose of this talk is just to inform Econ Grad Students so that they can make their personal informed decision. There is no graduate student union election scheduled for graduate students at Washu as of yet.
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This decision overrules decades of legal precedent and marks a fundamental shift from the way the NLRB has traditionally viewed the relationship between graduate student assistants and their universities.

The NLRB decision was not unanimous. This new interpretation by the NLRB could yet be reconsidered by a federal court.
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Authorization cards are legal documents used by unions as evidence that a group of employees is interested in union representation. Once signed, the cards become the property of the union, are effective for one year, and cannot be unilaterally revoked. SO THINK BEFORE SIGNING!

If at least 30% of the relevant employee group signs cards, the union can file a petition with the NLRB for an election. The outcome of the election binds all eligible employees. Union representation is determined by a secret-ballot election by the majority vote. The union that wins the election becomes the exclusive representative of the bargaining unit, including those individuals who voted against union representation or did not vote.
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- If there is no agreement, the union can ask us to strike or put pressure in ways.
Possible Pros and Cons

- Note that "possible" is bold and in red.

Pros:
- Receive more benefits, possibly a higher stipend.
- Have an "official" voice (the union representatives) in the decisions that the school makes concerning our welfare.

Cons:
- Receive less benefits, possibly decrease stipend.
- Loose flexibility.
- The negotiation process may take a long time.
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  - Grad Student Unionization at Brown University: https://www.brown.edu/about/unionization-be-informed/
Q&A

- Questions about unionization?

- Questions about the department in general, which hopefully the GSA can address?