

You Can Protect Your Rights Against Union Assignment

In the last few weeks about 2000 members of the academic staff "Group A" throughout the UW System received letters notifying them a state employee union has requested that the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission (WERC) assign them to their union. This is also known as "clarifying the bargaining unit." An additional 2,500-3,000 staff members will likely receive similar notices from other unions.

Currently, the unions (WSP-AFT, WPEC-AFT, WSEU-AFSCME, WEAC, etc.) are working on an agreement amongst themselves on which union will get which group of employees. If they reach an agreement, they will not have to argue their case for different classifications at a hearing at the WERC. They contend that employees do not have the right to vote for a union.

The WERC, conveniently, agrees that employees do not have the right to appear before the Commission and present evidence on what they actually do. If the Office of State Employment Relations consents to the petition, employees will effectively be lock out of this important decision-making process.

Two fundamental rights are violated:

1. The right to vote or sign an authorization card for or against union representation.
2. The right to present evidence in a hearing that has a fundamental effect on our salaries, benefits and working conditions.

What you can do to object to the assignment:

1. Make a copy of your "assignment letter" and send it to the WERC.
2. Your letter should say:
 - a. I object my assignment to Union XXX
 - b. I request copies of all written and electronic correspondence related to assignment of academic staff of UW to state employee bargaining units.
 - c. I demand the right to appear before the Commission or its hearing officer at proceedings related to the assignment of academic staff.
3. Send the letter to:
Judy Neumann, Chair
WERC
18 S. Thornton St.
Madison, WI. 53703
4. Send a copy to your State Representative and Senator