

The AWDU Platform

Our Work

AWDU is fighting for a strong and fair contract that will serve our needs:

- Appointment security - **no cuts** to number of appointments
- **Full fee remissions** and benefits for all ASEs (including campus fees)
- **Living wages**
- Reducing and contractually guaranteeing **student-to-teacher ratios**
- Affordable **housing, healthcare** and **childcare**
- **No discrimination** based on race, gender, sexuality and disability in our workplace

We believe that we can win and enforce such a contract if we make decisions, set strategies and take action collectively.

Our Union

We want a union that is **genuinely democratic and participatory**, a union where **all decisions are taken by the membership**. Campus units should have **autonomy regarding campus matters** and campus monthly membership meetings should be the **primary decision-making bodies** of the union. Elected representatives should be responsible only for **facilitating communication** across campuses, coordination, and carrying out the decisions of the membership. **No elected representative should be paid more** than the average GSI salary. Organizing and political work in our union **should be done primarily by members**. Last but not least, our union should be a **vibrant space** for thought and social life!

What has AWDU done?

- **The NO vote on the contract** - which resulted in a 10-fold increase in voter turnout on the Berkeley campus.
- **Department union meetings** in more than a dozen departments.
- **Know Your Rights orientations for new ASEs**
- **Discussions on bargaining demands and contract negotiations** AWDU members led campus and department meetings to determine what issues were most important for Berkeley grads in bargaining, and made sure the Daily Cal covered the latest developments.
- **Member delegations to bargaining** - For the first time in our local's history, regular members were able to attend and participate in our contract negotiations.
- **"Grade In"** in the lobby of Sproul and a **march on Labor Relations** with members of UPTe and CUE.
- **UAW and grad student organizing to defend public education** - Members organized a **forum on online education** with Dean Edley. We played an active role in organizing the **March 4 2010** and **October 7 2010 Days of Action** to Defend Public Education.
- The **first-ever union pub night, first-ever film night, and first-ever ice cream social**. We'll keep organizing events that bring our members together.
- **Active, democratic organizing practices and use of union structure**. Before AWDU began organizing our campus had 3 head stewards. Now we have a Campus Chair, Recording Secretary, 13 head stewards, a growing stewards network, and membership meetings that are always in the double digits.

What will AWDU do?

AWDU candidates are committed to radically change the way the union functions by:

- Converting the statewide Executive Board to a **horizontal instead of a hierarchical structure** and **removing the special powers of the president**.
- Developing a **rank-and-file Stewards Network on all campuses**, so that **every department and program is represented** in union decision-making.
- **Decentralizing decision-making** and giving power to the campus membership meetings and increasing campus budgets for autonomous actions and events.
- **Increasing transparency** by opening leadership meetings to all members, **making financial records available** to all members, and **opening negotiations** to membership during bargaining.
- **Serving in elected positions for one year instead of three**. AWDU candidates have pledged to step down after one year in order to have a vacancy election to promote participation and accountability in our union and ensure that elected leadership are able to remain full time students.

By restoring democracy at the unit level, we believe we can harness the creativity, passion, critical thinking, and commitment of members in order to build a durable movement to preserve the integrity of public education. We have many more ideas (so please ask!), but what happens next will partly depend on the initiative and creativity of members themselves.