



# Global Nonviolent Action Database

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## University of Washington Student Worker Coalition strikes against cutting higher education budgets, 2010

*Time period notes: It is unclear if the campaign has ended.*

January 21,

2010

to: October 7,

2010

**Country:** United States

**Location City/State/Province:** Seattle, Washington

**Location Description:** University of Washington

### Goals:

The SWC has 7 goals for the budget cut protests: transparent and democratic budget allocation; a cut from top administrators that would cap salaries at \$150,000 per year; no layoffs, no speedups for workers; prioritizing an open, accessible public education for all; freezing tuition; and an increase in need-based aid.

## Methods

### Methods in 1st segment:

- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 008. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
- 016. Picketing
- 038. Marches
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 177. Speak-in

### Methods in 2nd segment:

- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 008. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
- 016. Picketing
- 038. Marches
- 048. Protest meetings
- 062. Student strike
- 097. Protest strike

### Methods in 3rd segment:

- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols

- 008. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
- 016. Picketing
- 038. Marches
- 048. Protest meetings
- 062. Student strike

**Methods in 4th segment:**

**Methods in 5th segment:**

**Methods in 6th segment:**

- 001. Public speeches
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support

**Notes on Methods:**

There seemed to be a break in activity during the University's summer vacation (segments 4 and 5)

## Classifications

**Classification:**

Defense

**Cluster:**

Economic Justice

**Group characterization:**

- Staff
- University students
- faculty

## Leaders, partners, allies, elites

**Leaders:**

UW Student-Worker Coalition (SWC)

**Partners:**

Those also participating in the protests during the National Day of Action to Defend Public Education, other students, faculty, staff

**External allies:**

Not known

**Involvement of social elites:**

Not known

## Joining/exiting order of social groups

**Groups in 1st Segment:**

- Faculty
- SWC

- University of Washington students
- staff

**Groups in 2nd Segment:**

**Groups in 3rd Segment:**

**Groups in 4th Segment:**

**Groups in 5th Segment:**

**Groups in 6th Segment:**

**Segment Length:** *Approximately 6 weeks*

## Opponent, Opponent Responses, and Violence

**Opponents:**

University of Washington administration

**Nonviolent responses of opponent:**

Not known

**Campaigner violence:**

None known

**Repressive Violence:**

None known

## Success Outcome

**Success in achieving specific demands/goals:**

0 points out of 6 points

**Survival:**

1 point out of 1 points

**Growth:**

2 points out of 3 points

**Notes on outcomes:**

The campaign may be ongoing but so far has not succeeded in ending budget cuts.

The University of Washington Student Worker Coalition (SWC) is a group created to advocate for the rights of students who work on campus and employees of the campus. The SWC has protested against worker abuses, unfair labor practices, and most recently, against budget cuts affecting employees of the University, student workers, and the student body as a whole.

On January 21, 2010, the SWC organized a first protest against the planned budget cuts of the University. About 80 SWC members gathered in Red Square on the University of Washington's campus and then marched to the 22nd floor of the UW Tower to interrupt the Board of Regents meeting where the demonstrators shouted their demands.

The SWC organized another protest on March 4, 2010, again in response to budget cuts. The organizers planned the protest in solidarity with National Day of Action to Defend Public Education scheduled for the same day. The budget cuts affected student jobs, campus tuition, the number of classes offered by the university, graduate student funding, labs, and student academic services. Not only did the cuts diminish opportunities offered by the college, but the cuts also lowered the quality of work and support. The cuts caused the University of Washington tuition to increase by 14% in the past year.

For the March 4 event, the protest organizers encouraged students to cut class and join a march across campus for one hour. Faculty and staff joined the students in their protest. The main goals of the protest were to emphasize the budget cuts and the method that the university chose to deal with them, which placed the brunt of the budget cuts on the students and manual laborers. Students, faculty, and staff skipped class and marched in a circle around the University of Washington Quad and through classes in Kane Hall. The march continued and protesters marched to the Ave, the main retail street near campus, turned onto Northeast 45th Street, and marched to the University of Washington Tower. Protesters also marched through Savery and Miller Halls. Protesters chose high traffic areas on and around campus to increase the visibility of the protest. The University of Washington Police Department and the Seattle Police Department followed the protesters to help maneuver the protest march through intersections. Protesters planned for the march to last from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m., but the large turnout extended the event. The University of Washington Police Department estimated the amount of protesters numbered from 400-600 people.

The SWC survived throughout the protest and continued its fight on March 11, 2010 by holding a general assembly to discuss the future of the campaign. The Coalition also planned to protest at the Statewide Conference Against Budget Cuts on Saturday, April 3, 2010. It is unclear if this action took place, but the SWC did continue their campaign against budget cuts and for student and worker demands on May 3, 2010. About 100 students set up picket lines at the main campus entrance at Northeast 45th Street and instituted roving picket lines around campus. The pickets lasted from 4 a.m. to 2 p.m. Another general assembly convened on May 4 following the picketing.

After the summer break, the SWC organized a speak-out/open mic night against the elite's responses to the economic crisis. The SWC held their open mic night on October 7, 2010, in Red Square in front of Gerberding Hall on the University of Washington's campus. The action was in solidarity with the October 7 National Day to Defend Education. The SWC continues to plan actions against budget cuts but has not yet succeeded in changing the University of Washington's practices.

## Research Notes

### Influences:

The University of Washington students were influenced by other protests occurring on the March 4th National Day of Action to Defend Public Education. (1)

### Sources:

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**Additional Notes:**

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