

Union Policy Board

University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee

UWM Students,

For the past four-and-a-half years I have been deeply involved with the UWM Student Union as an undergraduate student here at UWM. Beginning as a concessions worker in the UWM Union Cinema, and working my way to Marketing Coordinator of the Cinema. I have also served on hiring committees for professional Union staff and I am currently the Chairperson of the Union Policy Board. In this time with the UWM Student Union, I have received the privilege of working with some of the best people, both students and professional staff, that I have ever worked with in my life. It is these people, whose dedication to what they do here in the Student Union, that makes this Union such a special place for UW-Milwaukee as a whole.

Be it the wonderfully diverse programs showcased at the Union Cinema, the amazing local artwork put on display in the Union Art Gallery, the fascinating guest lecturers brought in to speak to the student body, or the food service options which serve as a social gathering place for students from all across campus, it is the people behind these operations which serve to highlight the unique culture our Student Union brings to both UWM and Milwaukee as a whole.

While these amazing individuals work so hard behind-the-scenes to make this Student Union the special place it is for our campus, each year more and more resistance has come about from the Student Union building itself. From the chronic need of repairs to an unintuitive floorplan caused by years of piecemeal construction, the Student Union is a building that has given so much to our University, but has long been pushed passed its limit. Recurring elevator malfunctions, plumbing failures, electrical wiring issues, and an ageing design are just the start of a long list of roadblocks that contribute to the Student Union's rapidly growing list of problems; DAILY problems which directly impact the great work being done here in the Union.

It is the responsibility of the Union Policy Board, a governance board in partnership with the Union Director, comprised of students, faculty, and staff to implement policies for the Student Union. Additionally, and arguably even more importantly, it is the job of the Union Policy Board to work with the Union Director to ensure the UWM Student Union remains the social, cultural and recreational center for the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee students and campus community. It is from that last statement, along with my experiences as a long-term student worker here in the Student Union, that I encourage you to vote yes, and endorse the implementation an additional student fee of \$124 per semester to be used to support the renovation and/or replacement of the existing UWM Student Union.

As a tuition paying student, I know this fee is not something to be taken lightly, but I also have seen, first-hand, the good that this additional money can provide. That is why I believe a better Student Union is well worth the cost. In our current state, the Student Union still manages to go above and beyond to provide great experiences for students and campus community alike. However, with a new and/or renovated building, the further amount of experiences the Student Union can provide is incredibly exciting to imagine. UWM is a place

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filled with amazing potential, and our students and campus community deserve a building that reflects the great work being done here on this campus.

In many ways the UWM Student Union is the heart of UWM's campus, being a gathering place for students and faculty from all areas of this University. It is a window into the life and culture of UWM as a whole. Our students deserve a Union that represents the best of UWM. This additional student fee, to be used to support the renovation and/or replacement of the existing UWM Student Union, is where we ensure that this Union becomes a place fully worthy of the great people within it.

Jacob Beihoff

Chairperson

UW-Milwaukee Union Policy Board, 2017