

*The goal for this statement is for it to be sent to Sabah and BoT on Thurs after the meeting

Statement in support of Students for Self Operated Dining:

As the academic year comes to an end, the 2021-22 ASWWU Executive Board reiterates our support for shredding the contract with Aramark and investing in a self-operated dining system.

The decision to choose either Big 3 contracting or self-operated dining for winter 2023 and beyond is swiftly approaching. We strongly advocate for investment in and planning for a self-operated dining system as soon as possible.

Since the Students for Self Operated Dining System group began, student leaders have consistently collaborated with or otherwise engaged with them to advocate for self-operated dining. Students have repeatedly advocated for years against the contract with Aramark due to the many moral, ethical, and sustainable dilemmas associated with contracting the Big 3 corporations (Aramark, Sodexo, Chartwells).

In addition to divesting from a corporate contract that is morally and ethically in conflict with the university's [mission statement](#) and the Sustainability Action Plan goals and objectives, investing in self-operated dining would also allow far more autonomy for the university and reveal exciting possibilities to improve our dining system. Through self-operation, we would not have to worry about negotiating with a third party to enact dining system change — change could be more expedient and could better reflect student needs and values. The university could have more control over the menu. We could maintain better quality working conditions with students employed by WWU, not Aramark. New and improved food security programs could be implemented. Relationships could be formed with local restaurants and farms. Overall, through self-operated dining, our dining system would be viewed as favorable and competitive compared

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to other Washington state and Pacific Northwest universities. By nature, self-operation is a model with far more potential. Instead of focusing on what our contract does and does not allow, we could consistently ask “How can we improve our dining system to fit students’ needs and compete with other institutions?”

We look forward to seeing a commitment to divestment from the Big 3 and investment in self-operation, supporting students’ needs, values and interests, and improving our campus community soon.