

## Judge scolds UW for e-mail on lawsuit

Originally published January 11, 2006 at 12:00 am Updated January 10, 2006 at 10:44 pm

A King County Superior Court judge has rebuked the University of Washington administration for sending an unauthorized e-mail about a class-action lawsuit involving back pay for 3,000-plus faculty.

By [Seattle Times staff](#)

A King County Superior Court judge has rebuked the University of Washington administration for sending an unauthorized e-mail about a class-action lawsuit involving back pay for 3,000-plus faculty.

In an October partial summary judgment, Judge Mary Yu ruled that the UW breached its duty by not awarding most faculty a 2 percent merit increase in the 2002-03 academic year. The ruling could cost the UW up to \$16 million.

On Nov. 30, UW President Mark Emmert sent a facultywide e-mail to “offer as much clarification as possible” about the lawsuit. But Monday, Yu ordered the UW to send a corrective e-mail and refrain from further unauthorized communication.

Yu said the court is concerned about Emmert’s e-mail because it was sent to class-action members without notice to counsel; it discussed the alleged budgetary impact to the UW, “which on its face appears to be an attempt to influence class members regarding their participation”; and it didn’t include contact information for class-action counsel.