

GSGA44-R02

A Resolution to Support Voluntary Recognition of the University of Maryland Graduate Labor Union-UAW by the University System of Maryland and the University of Maryland, College Park

Summary: This resolution calls on the University System of Maryland (USM) and the University of Maryland, College Park (UMD) to voluntarily recognize and bargain in good faith with the University of Maryland Graduate Labor Union (UMD GLU)-UAW, which represents graduate assistants and fellows on campus.

WHEREAS Maryland law currently does not compel universities within the University System of Maryland (USM) to collectively bargain with any student workers, including graduate teaching, research, and administrative assistants and graduate fellows; and

WHEREAS under the current shared governance system practiced in the USM, including the Meet and Confer Agreement established in 2012, graduate student employees have not been able to redress serious labor concerns, including cost of living, insufficient stipends, ineffective grievance processes, and lack of parental leave policies. For example, despite repeated calls from the Graduate Assistant Advisory Council to raise assistantship stipends to adequately cover the cost of living in the College Park area, among graduate assistant respondents to the most recent 2023 gradSERU survey, 61% reported being housing insecure while 35% reported food insecurity; and,

WHEREAS collective bargaining is academically recognized as an effective avenue to address concerns about employee working conditions, as well as to provide vulnerable employees, such as international students with visa status and students with marginalized races and genders, with protection from harassment and workplace exploitation;¹ and,

WHEREAS peer-reviewed, published studies conclude that collective bargaining improves the well-being and health of workers,² including graduate workers.³ Published in 2013, Rogers *et*

¹ Hagedorn, J., Paras, C. A., Greenwich, H., & Hagopian, A. (2016). The Role of Labor Unions in Creating Working Conditions That Promote Public Health. *American Journal of Public Health, 106*(6), 989–995. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2016.303138>

² Reynolds, M. M., & Brady, D. (2012). Bringing you more than the weekend: union membership and self-rated health in the United States. *Social Forces, 90*(3), 1023-1049. <https://academic.oup.com/sf/article-abstract/90/3/1023/2235814?redirectedFrom=fulltext>

³ Rogers, S. E., Eaton, A. E., & Voos, P. B. (2013). Effects of Unionization on Graduate Student Employees: Faculty-Student Relations, Academic Freedom, and Pay. *ILR Review, 66*(2), 487-510. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001979391306600208>

Hewitt, Gordon J. (2000). Graduate Student Employee Collective Bargaining and the Educational Relationship Between Faculty and Graduate Students. *Journal of Collective Negotiations in the Public Sector 22*(2), 153–66.

Julius, D.J., & Gumpert, P.J. (2003). Graduate Student Unionization: Catalysts and Consequences. *The*

al. found union-represented graduate-student workers reported higher levels of personal and professional support, unionized graduate student employees fared better on pay, and unionized and nonunionized students reported similar perceptions of academic freedom. No scientific, peer-reviewed evidence exists to support the idea that collective bargaining negatively impacts graduate student employees; and to advocate against collective bargaining as such, is to deny evidence-based science that says it is in our best interests, health, and wellbeing; and,

WHEREAS many public and private institutions across the country,⁴ including 70% of our peers within the Big 10 conference, currently collectively bargain with their graduate student employees; and,

WHEREAS Johns Hopkins University (JHU), UMD's biggest in-state private competitor, voluntarily recognized the JHU graduate union Teachers and Researchers United (UE 197) and negotiated a comprehensive contract which included a \$47,000 stipend minimum, 4 years of guaranteed funding, 12 weeks of paid parental leave, child subsidies, fully subsidized health insurance premiums, \$80,000 yearly fund for visa renewal fees, 14 days paid leave to maintain immigration status, free local transit passes, and improved grievance procedures, among other benefits;⁵ and,

WHEREAS UMD GLU-UAW, a union of graduate assistants (GAs) and fellows at UMD, has obtained support from a supermajority of GAs on campus (greater than 60%), including representatives from all colleges and departments, indicating their desire to be represented by UMD GLU-UAW.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT in the absence of State laws and regulations which grant collective bargaining rights to all graduate student employees within the University System of Maryland, the Graduate Student Government supports the voluntary recognition of the UMD Graduate Labor Union-UAW by the University System of Maryland and the University of Maryland, College Park to negotiate conditions of graduate student employment in a legally binding way.

Review of Higher Education 26(2), 187-216. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/rhe.2002.0033>.

⁴ Nietzel, M. T. (2022, December 17). As grad student unionizing effort grows, universities raise stipends, benefits. *Forbes*.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelt Nietzel/2022/12/16/as-grad-student-unionizing-effort-grows-universities-raise-stipends-benefits/>

Quinn, R. (2023, September 6). *Grad worker unionization is booming, even down South*. Inside Higher Ed | Higher Education News, Events and Jobs.

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/faculty-issues/labor-unionization/2023/09/06/grad-worker-unionization-booming-even-down-south>

⁵ Price, L. (2024, April). *Johns Hopkins graduate student workers union reaches tentative agreement with university*. Baltimore Sun. <https://www.baltimoresun.com/2024/04/01/johns-hopkins-union-graduate-workers/>

Author(s): Rose Ying (NACS), Nora-Shayne E Jameson (EPIB)

Sponsor(s): Keegan Clements-Housser (Director of Operations), Divon Pender (VPLA), Mikol Bailey (VPFA)

Date and Time of Submission: November 6, 2024

Date of Presentation: November 22, 2024

Action(s) Taken: Approved by the Assembly through unanimous consent with minor amendment for textual clarity on line 18 and presented to relevant University of Maryland, College Park and University System of Maryland parties. Relevant parties at the University of Maryland, College Park include the Office of the President, the Office of the Provost, and all college and school Deans. Relevant parties at the University System of Maryland include the Board of Regents, the Office of the Chancellor, and the Office of Academic and Student Affairs.

Approved

Decision of GSG President

Varaa

[Varaa \(Dec 13, 2024 06:08 EST\)](#)

Signature of GSG President

12/13/2024

Date

[Passed] GSGA44-R02 Recognition of Labor Union-UAW

Final Audit Report

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