

Provisional GEO Bargaining Platform

October 12, 2010

Title:	Purpose:	Specific Proposals:
Disability Access	To improve the accommodation process, employment conditions, and academic/professional success of graduate student employees with disabilities	Extend the ten term rule for students with disabilities. Include accommodation language in offer letters so the accommodation process can begin early. Develop an employment accommodation request form with specific milestones and timelines for getting accommodations in place. Development by Rackham of a fund that is specifically set aside to pay for accommodations. Centralize the accommodation process in one person or office other than the Office of Institutional Equity. Faculty and administrative staff in all hiring departments should be given disability sensitivity training.
GSRAs	To ensure GSRAs understand their duties and are afforded the same benefits and protections as other university employees.	Bring GSRAs within the GEO bargaining unit.
Parents' Rights	To decrease the disproportionate financial burden on employees who have dependents and make working conditions more conducive to work-family balance	Increase child care subsidy to cover full cost of child care. Improve existing on-campus child care centers by extending hours, expanding capacity, and increasing flexibility. Institute flexible, short-term drop-off of child care service on campus. Make the workplace accommodating to parents who bring children to work. Provide nursing mothers with a right to breastfeed at work. Provide reasonable break times for nursing mothers to express breast milk at work and provide lactation space that is sanitary, private, and free from intrusion by others. Make the childcare subsidy available to all graduate employee parents. Six weeks paid parental leave separate from sick leave.
Wage Increase	To ensure a reasonable salary increase to reflect our historically low wage level.	3% wage increase first year, 3% wage increase second year, 6% raise increase third year
Comprehensive Health Benefits	To expand and equalize the benefits for graduate student employees to reduce overall financial burdens for common expenses and ensure parity of coverage	Remove mental health and physical therapy caps. Include coverage for alternative therapies. Maintain current co-pays and establish a cap of copays per individual per year. Increase benefits under vision plan to be able to get two modes of corrective eye wear in a year. Make Dental II to Dental I. University must cover chronic conditions. Default low fraction employees to GradCare rather than to no insurance. Access to UHS specialists over summer.
Flexible Pay Schedules	To allow GSIs and GSSAs the option to be paid on a schedule they may prefer over being paid once a month for four months.	Provide Graduate Student Employees with options to be paid bi-weekly, have their paychecks distributed over longer periods of time, or be paid at start of month rather than end. These would be opt-in things.
SEVIS Reimbursement Transparency	To ensure IGSIs get SEVIS fees reimbursed.	The University must inform, in writing, or departments must post, detailed, step-by-step instructions for how IGSIs can get their SEVIS fee reimbursed
Protection for ESL GSIs	To protect GSIs who have passed English proficiency exams from being fired from their positions (due to student complaints, for example).	If a GSI has passed the language exam, that should demonstrate sufficient proficiency in English, and he/she should not be pulled from his/her position as a GSI due to student feedback ("I can't understand what my GSI is saying."). The GSIs pay should not be lowered due to reassignments. Such GSIs should be able to retain teaching positions and not be reassigned to a non-teaching position.

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Immigration Process Protection for IGSI's	To better protect international graduate student employees during the process of immigration necessary to come to the University of Michigan	Have the university pay for unanticipated legal fees and lawyer costs that are necessary for foreign students to become GSIs at Michigan. Require the University be held to its employment offer as extended in a letter even if the GSI is delayed in arrival due to immigration process problems.
Job Posting	To create standardized, university-wide policies for posting GSI and GSSA positions	Clarify and standardize the job posting process and timeline across and within departments. Enforce the posting of all jobs as stated in the contract
Contract Fixes	To strengthen contract language and GEO's voice in University decisions	Have a GEO member on any University-wide committee or HR committee that makes decisions regarding employment policies and benefit packages. Introduce a clause prohibiting academic retaliation based on activity or membership in the union. Require departments to respond to inquiries about the denial of employment. Establish hiring-unit level policies about GSI office space, office sharing, and office access; mandate that unit policies be made with input of graduate employees
Work Necessities	To ensure GSIs are provided access to the equipment and supplies necessary to perform their jobs	Policies regarding copying, printing, and distribution of class materials should be readily available and easily interpretable. Unlimited printing and unlimited copying for GSIs and GSSAs. All IT policies (specifically regarding the maintenance and repair of equipment necessary for the fulfillment of job duties) should be readily available and easily interpretable. Standardize classroom capabilities and/or provide clear means for accessing those resources. Department- and university-level handbook with all relevant policies and information should be distributed at the beginning of the term and updated as changes arise.
Work Environment	To ensure that GEO is consulted prior to a reduction in GSI kitchen or office space and that GSIs have adequate and accessible office space to do their jobs	All GSIs required to hold office hours must have access to private, clean space furnished with a desk and at least two chairs. Departments must talk with union before reducing existing office and/or kitchen space. Ensure that kitchens are accessible. Music students will get keys for Burton Tower after-hours.
Retirement Benefits for GSIs	To provide GSIs and GSSAs with the ability to establish a retirement fund.	Graduate Student Employees should be able to contribute to a 401K with employer match like other University employees are able to do
Occupational Safety	To ensure Graduate Student Employees are not put in harms way in the course of their duties.	Require paid lab training and orientation. Enforce OSHA regulations.
Health- and Environment-Friendly Workplace	To protect the health of GSIs and the natural environment	Require use of safe cleansers and chemicals. GEO should investigate options for safer and greener power consumption and paper usage.