



# Graduate Employees' Organization Contract Achievements

Year	What We Got	How We Got It
1975	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First healthcare benefits</li> <li>• 8% raise</li> <li>• Non-discrimination clause</li> </ul>	<b>One month walkout:</b> Members approved job action with a 689-193 vote; 50% of undergrads joined the picket line
1983	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First tuition waiver (&lt;50%, for 0.5 fractions)</li> <li>• First dental benefits</li> <li>• Required department training</li> <li>• 10% raise over 2 years</li> </ul>	<b>Grassroots organizing</b> where stewards became the backbone of the union, dues were collected by hand, and one-on-one conversations kept members in the loop
1987	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% tuition waiver (for 0.5 fractions)</li> </ul>	<b>Rallies</b> with 300 members in attendance, leading to a <b>walkout authorization</b>
1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare benefits maintained after University threatens to end them</li> <li>• 9% raise over 3 years</li> </ul>	<b>Walkout authorized</b> after the University threatened healthcare benefits
2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Childcare subsidy</li> <li>• Workplace harassment grievance procedure</li> </ul>	<b>One-day walkout</b> to win childcare subsidy
2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transgender healthcare coverage</li> </ul>	<b>Special conference procedure</b>
2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13.2% raise over 3 years to match cost of attendance</li> <li>• Full tuition waiver for .237+ fractions</li> <li>• Healthcare for all fractions</li> <li>• Same-sex partner healthcare coverage</li> </ul>	Rally with 300 members and Grade In with 150 members <b>Two-day walkout authorized</b> , but only one day needed as the University conceded on wage demands
2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintained zero-premium healthcare</li> <li>• Zero-premium dental for all fractions</li> <li>• Lactation accommodations</li> <li>• Centralized disability accommodations office and fund</li> </ul>	<b>Members ran a sustained pressure campaign</b> with rallies, marches, and high attendance at bargaining sessions
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10.3% raise over 3 years</li> <li>• International GSI hard hours cap</li> <li>• Compensated diversity, equity, and inclusion GSSA positions</li> </ul>	Grade In and Sit In with 300+ members at each, <b>walkout authorized</b>

# What is GEO?

- The Graduate Employees' Organization (GEO) is the labor union that represents ~2000 Graduate Student Instructors (GSIs) and Graduate Student Staff Assistants (GSSAs) at the University of Michigan.
- GEO won recognition in 1975, and is the second oldest of about 30 graduate employee unions in the country. Every three years, we negotiate the contract with the University that determines our wages, benefits, working conditions, and rights.
- GEO is an activist, volunteer-run community of GSIs and GSSAs working to protect our employee rights and concerns, and to improve the quality of education at the University of Michigan.

## Our Mission

**Organizing:** to organize and build power among graduate academic employees.

**Collective Bargaining:** to promote the welfare of the membership and to provide a voice in the determination of the terms and conditions of employment.

**Education:** to improve the standard of instruction, to encourage student and teacher experimentation in course content, curriculum, and methodology, toward achievement of quality education.

**Social Justice:** to cooperate with other segments of our society and with other labor organizations for the achievement of common goals.

## Using and Enforcing the Contract

The GEO contract is the best in the country for graduate employees. But the contract and all the work that has gone into it are meaningless unless we work together to enforce our rights. This means educating both ourselves and our employing faculty about our rights and their responsibilities.

*Remember:* you have recourse if you have a problem on the job, including a grievance procedure and third-party arbitration for harassment on the job.

## Some Awesome Things in our Contract

**Cap On Hours** - We get paid for all the hours we work, including preparation time and email. Keep track of your hours! Compare your actual work hours to those listed on your fraction calculation form. If it looks like you will go over your contracted hours, please inform your steward or call GEO. There is table for logging your hours in the GEO planner/calendar. We almost always win hours grievances.

**Sick Leave** - You are eligible for up to three weeks of paid medical leave every consecutive 12-month period. It is the University's responsibility to find and compensate replacements during your leave.

**Job Security** - If you are offered a GSI or GSSA position—verbally or in writing—the department must fulfill that commitment. Even if the course is canceled, your pay, tuition waiver, and health insurance are all guaranteed.

**Everything else!** - You can find the contract at [umgeo.org/member-resources/our-contract/](http://umgeo.org/member-resources/our-contract/)

## How to Get Involved with GEO

- Join the union! Check 'Member' on your yellow card and make sure your friends join as well
- Come to the General Membership Meetings to participate in decision-making
- Become a steward in your department
- Like us on Facebook and Twitter @geo3550