



GRADUATE EMPLOYEES' ORGANIZATION BARGAINING BULLETIN



FLIP-FLOP: HR REFUSES TO BARGAIN!

HAVE YOU SEEN HR? BECAUSE WE HAVEN'T

This week, GEO members returned to the bargaining table in the larger, more accessible room our union successfully won last week. Meanwhile, HR hid themselves. Last week, they refused to meet with us on the grounds that the meeting was being recorded. When we assured them this week, it was not in fact being recorded but transcribed, so it would be accessible to our members, they backtracked. Now they claim they can not meet with us because they object to our open bargaining proposal, despite us asking to meet with them to discuss it, and they still have failed to provide any counterproposal.

Instead of facing us, HR is hiding behind a state-appointed mediator, Micki Czerniak, who speaks for HR while claiming neutrality. When members raised concerns on how this so-called "mediator" was being used to avoid direct bargaining, Micki proved herself to be happy as an extension of HR, dismissing these concerns out of hand and doubling down as HR's mouthpiece, repeatedly invoking her own professional acumen and parroting their lies about our lack of "ground rules proposals." She even demanded that we cease referring to HR as such and instead acknowledge them as representatives of the regents of the University of Michigan.

This game of telephone the university is playing is unacceptable. So the question on everyone's mind is this: **Where is HR and why are they refusing to meet with us?** But one thing we do know, the members of GEO are ready to discuss and negotiate a contract for all grad workers! Is it because they're not ready? Is it because they know we will confront them on their cooperation with the Trump Administration, which has resulted in three postgrads being kidnapped by ICE?

We're ready. Are they?

FROM THE BARGAINING TABLE

HR's refusal to meet with us shows that grad workers seeing what the university really thinks of us--the people who do much of the teaching and research labor on campus--is far scarier than any closed-door meetings HR would prefer to hide behind. Through email and through passing messages to the mediator, HR is already bargaining with us; in fact, we've received proposals from them. Agreeing to open bargaining and then refusing to actually bargain with us in person is farcical.

"HR's absence this week reflected a practical lack of interest from the university in meeting us face-to-face, although they ostensibly agreed to open bargaining. Given our efforts to compromise with the university on the bargaining ground rules, I thought we would have a chance to bring up grad workers' concerns about the university's behavior this week with the representatives of the Regents themselves. Instead, we were forced into a game of telephone with the mediator they called in. This felt really frustrating, but it also confirmed to me that open bargaining is how we're going to win a better contract for all grad workers; HR wouldn't be trying so hard to prevent it if it wasn't."

- Lavinia, School of Information

Organizing for democratic and accessible bargaining conditions is the first step to winning a better contract. In the coming months, we will likely encounter a pattern of reluctance from HR to agree to all kinds of measures which would make the university's actions (at the bargaining table and in general) more transparent.



WHAT'S NEXT?

HR refuses to meet us face-to-face and is adamant that we respond to their questions to our open bargaining proposals over email. We need to strategize around how we can get them to the table, and how we want to proceed collectively as we move forward to our next bargaining session. If you are interested in continuing these conversations, then join us on Monday, November 24th from 1pm-3pm, at the GEO office (213 W. Liberty St.) or on Zoom.

Come to Organizing Committee (OC) on Monday, November 24th from 4pm-5:30pm on Zoom to continue talking about how we can increase our numbers at bargaining and talk to our co-workers in our departments about our collective demands.

GSRA Unionization Updates: We have 31.8% of cards signed, but we have less than 15 days until we turn in cards to the Michigan Employment Relations Commission (MERC)!!!! We need all hands on deck now more than ever, so sign up to phonebank or doorknock here: bit.ly/GEOOutreachPlans

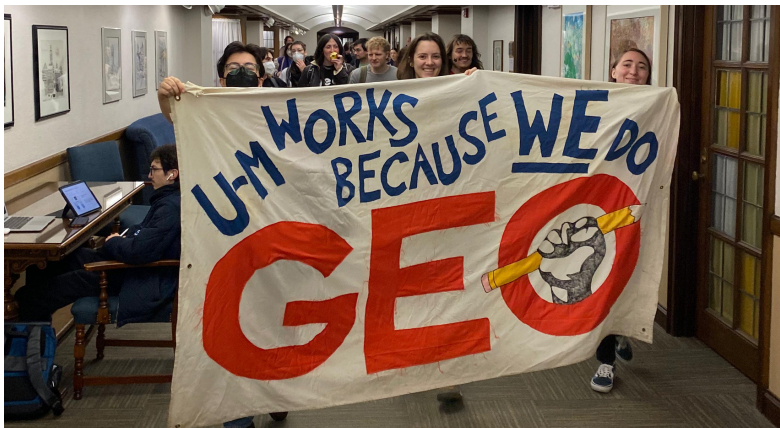


SEE YOU AT:

- Phonebanking Extravaganza: Monday, Nov. 24th @ 11 AM to 9 PM, GEO Office
- Bargaining Organizing: Monday, Nov. 24th @ 1 PM, GEO Office and Zoom
- Organizing Committee: Monday, Nov. 24th @ 4 PM, GEO Office and Zoom
- Organizing Assembly: Wednesday, Dec. 3rd @ 6 PM, GEO Office and Zoom
- Bargaining Session #3 (potentially): Friday, Dec. 12th @ 8:30 AM and on Zoom

**QUESTION TO THINK ABOUT:
HR IS REFUSING TO COME TO THE TABLE, HOW DO
WE PRESSURE THEM TO BARGAIN WITH US IN
PERSON?**

BARGAIN! TOGETHER! NOW!



**GRADUATE
EMPLOYEES
ORGANIZATION**

**FOR ALL DOORKNOCKING
AND DEPARTMENTAL MEETING
RESOURCES SCAN THIS QR
CODE**

