



GRADUATE EMPLOYEES' ORGANIZATION BARGAINING BULLETIN



PLEASE DO YOUR JOB, HR

WHAT HAPPENED?

At the April 17th session, we passed articles expanding **care for transgender employees**, increasing GSIs' **autonomy over curriculum**, and expanding **benefits**. Our proposals on benefits expansion included reducing prescription costs, no co-pays for mental health, guarantees to reproductive care, and continuous benefits coverage for 4.5 months past appointment. We also passed an article which would expand the international assistance fund from \$20k to \$1 million, which is more vital than ever as graduate students are detained by ICE and facing prohibitive legal costs.

HR did not provide any counterproposals on previous weeks' proposals, but did pass a proposal for negotiations over GSRA-specific protections, **insisting that GSRA protections need to be negotiated separately because of "administrative burdens."** Grad workers in the bargaining room saw this as an effort by HR to divide GSIs/GSSAs and GSRAs and impede the negotiation process.

In response to our questions about why they had struck our demand for the university to share union membership status with the federal government, HR deflected and deferred to the university's existing insufficient policies. They then doubled down on **refusing to discuss the ongoing ICE detention of a Taubman GSI**. HR stated that the university is not responsible for Philippe's detention, and that they were unwilling to discuss what to do to free our coworker.

HEAR FROM YOUR CO-WORKER

Because of prohibitive waitlists and medical gatekeeping in my home country I was unable to access gender-affirming care as a child. I was forced to endure a masculine puberty, with all its attendant physical effects, that I did not want. I am 28 years old now, and I have spent most of my twenties trying to undo the effects of that male puberty. It has cost me thousands of dollars in hair removal alone, besides the costs of voice therapy, hormone blockers and surgeries. Accessing gender-affirming care to reverse the effects of male puberty is not just about trying to align my outward appearance with my own self-perception. It's also about being safe in the world. Being perceived as a trans woman who does not "pass" has meant being refused housing and employment, frequent street harassment and threats, and even physical violence, which have cumulatively resulted in a diagnosis of cPTSD from repeated and continuing traumatic experiences. Even now, many years into transition, it means waking up each morning and selecting my clothes based on what I think is least likely to cause me to be challenged for using the women's bathroom on a campus in which the provision for gender-neutral bathrooms is woefully inadequate.

Having access to care as a minor and to puberty blockers in particular would have meant a life in which so much less of the above is true, where I were happier, safer, and less impoverished by the costs of gender transition. When right-wing commentators talk of gender-affirming care for minors as causing irreversible damage it is deeply ironic for me because that is exactly how I perceive my own puberty prior to transition.

The harm Michigan Medicine is doing to the generation below mine is hard to estimate. And now that Dana Nessel and a group of other AGs have successfully struck down the legal threat that was the Regents' pretext for discontinuing youth care, the only reason it would not be restored is because the Regents wish to appease the Trump administration they claim to oppose.



WHAT'S NEXT?

HEAR FROM YOUR CO-WORKER

I am an undocumented graduate student worker. On December 23, 2025 I submitted my DACA renewal application and it is still being processed. My DACA expired February 25, 2026 and... resulted in my employment being terminated while my renewal is still pending. As a result, I have suddenly lost my primary source of income... I am struggling to cover basic living expenses such as rent, utilities, and food. The financial burden began even before my DACA expired. Every two years, I am required to pay \$555 to renew my status. I delayed renewing because I simply did not have the funds, and the emergency grants I sought did not consider renewal costs as urgent.

As an employee of the University of Michigan, I have worked multiple jobs to support myself through graduate school. I anticipated this issue and reached out to my employers, advisor, and department for guidance. Despite weeks of trying to prepare, no one had clear answers or solutions. One of my employers greeted me by saying, "Hey, volunteer," as a way of letting me know of my termination... With summer approaching, I will not be an active student, which means losing access to many resources while still facing uncertainty about my renewal timeline.

I am sharing my story because this is not an isolated experience. Our immigrant and undocumented student community is under attack. Many of us face these challenges, and we need stronger institutional support. We need staff, faculty, and administrators who understand our situations and can provide meaningful solutions—not just short-term fixes that fail to address the depth of this burden. The financial and emotional toll of this experience has been overwhelming and belittling to say the least.

HEAR FROM YOUR CO-WORKER

I would like to share with members of HR my experience as a GSI teaching a literature course in which the use of Generative AI is mandatory for students' writing assignments ... In this 300-level literature class, instructions for three out of four written assignments (short essays from 2-4 pages) render the use of UM-GPT obligatory ... I expressed feeling unsure of how to teach something I believe to be harmful to my students' learning, to the environment, and to the common good ... About half of my students also objected to using AI for their course written assignments, explicitly stating in their submitted assignments that they did not consult UM-GPT."

— Anna, PhD Candidate in Romance Languages and Literatures

NEXT STEPS:

- Join Organizing Assembly on Wednesday at 6pm to confirm language and pass new language
- **Bargaining next week (4/24) is 9:30am in Palmer Commons:** Union rights and Divestment!
- GMM on April 23, 2026 at 6pm – STRIKING! When, why, who, and how?

SEE YOU AT:

- **Contract Committee Mondays @ 1 PM, GEO Office and Zoom**
- **Organizing Committee: Mondays @ 4 PM, GEO Office and Zoom**
- **Organizing Assembly: Wednesdays @ 6 PM, GEO Office and Zoom**



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