



# GRADUATE EMPLOYEES' ORGANIZATION BARGAINING BULLETIN



## HR IS AT THE TABLE – BUT ARE THEY BARGAINING?

### WHAT HAPPENED?

On April 24th, we showed up in great numbers and HR showed up with nothing.

After dragging their feet for weeks and insisting that including GSRAs in the current contract would require a separate bargaining procedure, **HR caved and agreed to proceed to integrate GSRAs into the proposals.** By holding our ground against HR, we won bargaining together with GSRAs and GSIs under one unified contract!

We confronted HR with firsthand testimonials and the irrefutable, brutal data about the University endowment's continuing investment in the ongoing genocides in Palestine and Tigray. We heard powerful testimonials from graduate students about the betrayal of working at a university that supports the brutal violence affecting their families and loved ones.

We showed how our working conditions are directly connected to the university's endowment policies. So long as the university's financial and material interests are in industries of war and death, its year by year spending will continue to be aligned with those investments instead of in teaching and learning.

We passed an article asking for termination of investment in directly or indirectly supporting occupation, genocide, apartheid, and war and public, transparent decision-making for future investments. We also passed articles protecting GSI positions, union presence at orientations, and additional protections for workers with disabilities.

HR once again passed back counterproposals which struck most of our demands without alternatives, told us that class sizes had nothing to do with working conditions, and flat-out deleted entire articles such as the 12 month funding guarantee for Doctoral of Musical Arts students. They cited administrative burdens and efficiency while mangling the contract graduate students have spent months writing to improve our workplace.

### TOP 6 MOST RIDICULOUS THINGS HR SAID TODAY

1. "Faculty deserve academic freedom because they are faculty"
2. "Passing back a proposal completely struck out is bargaining"
3. "We have consistently stated we won't agree to specific class size policies. It's overreaching university operations"
4. "This would be too administratively burdensome"
5. "My appreciation for your testimonies [about genocide] does not translate to any changes in the contract"
6. "Class sizes are not part of working conditions because they are set before someone is hired"

### HEAR FROM YOUR CO-WORKER

"I am ashamed to attend and work for an institution that has been complicit in the genocide of my own country and countless others. My labor and the labor of my coworkers contributes to generating revenue for a University whose investments and affiliations are tied to countless deaths in places such as Palestine, Tigray, Sudan, the Congo, and other regions devastated by war and imperialism."

-Hiab



# WHAT'S NEXT?

# MAY DAY



## HEAR FROM YOUR CO-WORKER

My name is Marta, I'm a second year PhD candidate in Environmental Engineering. Worker control of the endowment is crucial to protecting my autonomy as a teacher and researchers, and so that I can ensure the profits of my labor don't contribute to the war machine OR line the pockets of upper level administrators with clear conflicts of interest between their investments/ UMs investments and the mission of this institution. It is absurd that amidst grants cuts for critical research on water, wastewater, and alternative energy in my department, and my own struggle as a GSRA without guaranteed medical leave or transitional funding, UM is embarking on a 1.2 billion dollar data center project to make nuclear weapons. Why is the university making these kinds of decisions? Why are ads for UM GPT on my Canvas homepage? Why is my advisor asking me to use AI in my research and seek military funding? I believe the answer can be found in the endowment, which is why we as graduate students need transparency now. Worker control of the endowment is needed to hold our institution accountable.

## NEXT STEPS:

- 4/29 11am - 2pm North Campus work-in at Pierpont Commons to increase visibility on North Campus for Friday's bargaining and our contract campaign.
- **MAY DAY RALLY AND BARGAINING: 9:00am Friday, May 1 in front of Pierpont Commons.** Stand united for international workers, hear great speeches from your coworkers and show HR we are here to win!

## SEE YOU AT:

- Contract Committee Mondays @ 1 PM, GEO Office and Zoom
- Organizing Committee: Mondays @ 3 PM, GEO Office and Zoom
- Organizing Assembly: Wednesdays @ 6 PM, GEO Office and Zoom

Hear from our coworkers about what *actually* went down in the bargaining room on our new podcast, **This Week at the Table!** [bit.ly/GEOPodcast](http://bit.ly/GEOPodcast)



## GRADUATE EMPLOYEES ORGANIZATION

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