

Issue

#17

GRADUATE EMPLOYEES' ORGANIZATION MINI BARGAINING BULLETIN



U-M GIVES DPSS A RAISE, BUT LEAVES GRAD WORKERS WITH LIMITED TRANSIT AND DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

We increased police funding by \$6.6M, but we couldn't possibly expand parking and transportation access!



UNIVERSITY OF
MICHIGAN



\$21.2B
ENDOWMENT

AHR REFUSES: PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION DEMANDS

1. Continue late night ride services
2. Increased bus service to specific facilities such as North Campus Research Complex (NCRC) and the Matthaei Botanical Gardens
3. Guaranteed **free ORANGE parking** pass availability to all graduate workers who want one
4. Free BLUE parking pass as a reasonable disability accommodation

Last bargaining session, grad workers also...

- Shared their **experiences being banned from the workplace** unjustly by DPSS
- Asked if AHR has any plans to initiate salary raises for the fall semester. KDL responded saying **there will be no salary adjustments unless there is a contract in place.**
- Advocated for **international student protections** with the new DHS student visa rule change and the ongoing **fight to reinstate Philippe** with full funding after his wrongful termination and subsequent detainment by ICE.

Swipe to learn more, and **come discuss at Organizing Assembly on Wednesday, 7/22!**

With Philippe's next grievance hearing approaching, grad workers questioned AHR's involvement in the contract violations that led to Philippe's termination and detainment

PROTECTIONS FOR PHILIPPE, NOW!



The lead GSI on two Architecture courses Philippe taught testified to how bright and talented he is, in stark contrast to AHR's baseless claim that Philippe was unqualified for his job.

Philippe's sister described how Taubman and AHR's actions are part of an **emerging pipeline funneling international students of color into ICE detention.** When Philippe was wrongly fired, he was determined to raise the funds to finish his degree. Taubman refused to help, so he started a GoFundMe, before ICE kidnapped him.

The ICE agent kidnapped Philippe because he **“looks like someone we're looking for.”** Despite putting him in this position, Taubman and U-M again refused to help, in some cases actively repressing support. Letters of support from the U-M community and beyond ultimately secured his release.

Despite everything, Philippe is determined to become an architect, and U-M is making him fight for it tooth and nail: **“Everywhere else, schools work to help their students. People are trying to work together. Why is Taubman different? Why discourage support? Why are decisions putting [students] at risk?”**

AHR's lead negotiator, Katie DeLong, refused to comment despite her direct involvement in the grievance process, and objected to Philippe's sister's right to testify.

If you are able, consider contributing to Philippe's tuition fund here: bit.ly/DetainedGradFund

Grad Worker's Proposal: Stopping Campus Bans

U-M and DPSS have an unlimited, unchecked ability to ban grad workers from campus. They have used this power to arbitrarily retaliate against activists and impede their ability to work. GEO presented language to reign in this prejudiced disciplinary mechanism.

Testimonial 1:

A grad worker was banned from their manufacturing lab for legally questioning police about why they had detained a silent protester

"At this university, we should allow people to go to work **and** protest and act on their conscience."

Testimonial 2:

Another worker described how a campus ban unilaterally restricted their presence on campus to vague "pre-scheduled work sessions"

"Pre-scheduled work sessions are only a fraction of what the work of being a grad worker is."

AHR's lead negotiator, U-M's expert on our working conditions, claimed to not know what campus bans are, how they work, or who they impact.

Grad Worker's Proposal: GSSA Positions for Revised DEI Plan, Trans Inclusivity

To protect existing, contractually obligated GSSA positions from U-M's attacks on DEI, grad workers aligned these positions with U-M's new language. We also proposed two new GSSA positions to support transgender inclusivity in our community.

AHR responded with confusion about the new DEI language, which U-M itself wrote. They also expressed a desire to tie GSSA appointments to "degree-relevancy," but failed to provide examples of when the absence of this requirement has been an issue.

Grad Workers Caucus: Navigating Bargaining's Legal Jargon and Impending Student Visa Policy Changes

In the break after lunch, grad workers caucused to discuss bargaining and emerging issues as a group.

Effective Sept. 15, the federal government will impose fixed time limits for students on F visas. We strategized about confronting AHR over their knowledge of these changes. We also unpacked AHR's suggestion that we "package" some of our proposals.

Together, we decided on a set of questions to ask AHR when they came back into the room. **AHR was not aware of the federal visa policy changes.**

HR Counter-Proposal: Disabled Employees

On April 24th, grad workers presented language that would comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), better maintain accommodation requests, and allow workers to optionally disclose disabilities with an office rather than their direct supervisor.

AHR's changes **removed a proposed appeal process and tied accommodations to vaguely-specified "medical documentation."** AHR also suggested a 45-day limit on temporary accommodations while a worker obtains "appropriate" documentation.

Creating strict requirements for medical documentation ignores how complicated it can be for disabled workers to obtain "appropriate" documentation. Placing arbitrary limits on temporary accommodations denies support to grad workers during this process.

A grad worker's perspective: Weaponized Incompetence

AHR holds immense power over our working lives, but their lead negotiator doesn't actually care to understand how policies impact our working conditions.

Campus bans, revised DEI initiatives, illegal firings, and arbitrary limits on disability documentations are all issues that **AHR's lead negotiator claimed to not know enough about to comment.** But that lack of understanding hasn't stopped them from writing contract language on these topics that would negatively impact us as grad workers.

Another grad worker noted: **"These excuses wouldn't fly with my advisor."**

Our First Tentative Agreement: Memorandum of Understanding on Summer Benefits

GEO proposed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to ensure that graduate workers who receive last-minute Fall term appointments can be reimbursed for healthcare costs incurred over the summer. AHR accepted our proposal! This is the first Tentative Agreement (TA) of the current bargaining cycle.

What is a Tentative Agreement (TA)?

A tentative agreement is a signed, formal agreement between both parties to approve the language in a certain article or MOU. Once the contract is ratified by a membership vote, all TAs will be officially incorporated into our contract.





**SEE YOU AT:
ORGANIZING ASSEMBLY ON
JULY 22ND @ 6 PM!
NEXT BARGAINING ON JULY
31ST**

GEO Office (213 W Liberty St), and on zoom
(bit.ly/GEOMemberPortal). There will be
pizza!!

