

Issue Two

of the NYU graduate
union newsletter

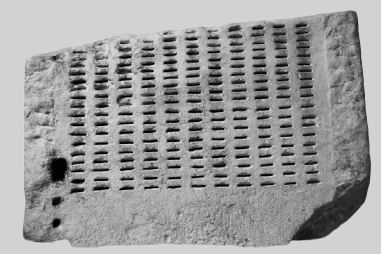


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Ongoing Grievances

Particularly in the first year of our contract, there will be many errors and different interpretations on how the collective agreement should be enforced. Here are some highlights of our efforts to stand up for grad worker rights.

Steinhardt students paid a month late

Due to “processing delays” in Steinhardt HR, many graduate workers won’t see their first paycheck of the year until October. We have grieved what is a clear violation of our contract and evidence of the low priority graduate workers hold in this university (did Bob Berne ever get paid late?).

Many workers missing \$150/day training pay

Across multiple schools, departments, and workplaces, NYU is not paying grad workers their contractually-obligated pre-semester training pay. In most of these cases, mid-level management was simply not aware that this contract provision exists, and the union was able to correct this through informal lobbying. We must be vigilant to educate management about our new rights, as NYU’s top administration is not doing a sufficient job on this account.

Where Grievances Fall Short

The grievance procedure is an important way to fight for strong contract enforcement, but it has limitations. Resolution takes time, and it can’t be used in cases where the contract isn’t violated per se, though our sense of fairness and dignity certainly is. This September we have encountered many cases of negligent or malicious practices that can only be addressed through our collective action as workers, including:

- The suspicious replacement of graduate workers from Poly and elsewhere with underpaid undergraduate workers in the Law Department and Coles
- Ongoing delays with timely bonus payments
- Mismanagement of health insurance billing and fee waivers for working students

GSOC needs your help—we must protest this ill-treatment together. As a start, we have initiated a petition campaign protesting these practices. Please stand up for your colleagues at this university and sign at <http://bit.ly/1NujJSW>.

New administrative obstacles for international students seeking work

NYU is now requiring some international students to use SSN identification rather than ITIN, actually preventing some students from working. Other students have been told that they must now go through the international student payment registration process every semester instead of every year because of the contract. We have grieved these cases as violations of our contract’s maintenance of benefits clause. This is an unfair burden placed on a population that already has too much paperwork as it is.

Workers not awarded 2.5% union raise

Starting this semester, Ph.D. Union workers who are teaching should see a net 2.5% raise on total stipend and hourly/adjunct pay. As with the bonus payments this summer, however, some people have been wrongfully excluded or shortchanged. We are grieving these cases and fighting for full back-pay. If you work in a qualifying job and your combined stipend and work pay do not add up to at least 2.5% more than similar conditions last year, contact us (gsoc@2110uaw.org) and we’ll help get you your raise!

Reminder About Elections

GSOC needs you! There are at least 13 open seats on the Assembly of Stewards this Fall. They need to be filled by advocates who will fight for worker’s rights, represent the needs of their district, and guide our union through its first contract years. We hope that you’ll consider running! Please reach out if you have any questions!

Assembly of Stewards - open seats, by district:

- **Professional Schools** (*including Steinhardt, Silver, Wagner, and Tisch*): four (4) open seats
- **GSAS Sciences, Technology, and Mathematics**: one (1) open seat
- **2 MetroTech, Poly**: three (3) open seats
- **4 and 6 MetroTech, Poly**: five (5) open seats
- **GSAS Humanities and Social Sciences**: no (0) open seats

Elected Stewards are expected to complete 8-hour steward training, attend the monthly Assembly, and serve on at least 1

committee. The time commitment is variable, based on what you can give, but should be a baseline of 3–5 hours a week.

If you still want to get involved, but not quite to the same degree, we are also looking for departmental stewards to serve as advocates for given departments or cohorts on a casual basis. Anyone can become a departmental steward. Just complete steward training and make yourself available to your colleagues if they ever have a workplace problem.

We particularly need departmental stewards in these departments:

Mathematics, Psychology, Chemistry, Creative Writing, Music & Performing Arts Professions, Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering, Computer Science Engineering, Electrical & Computer Engineering, Financial & Risk Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Technology Management & Innovation.

(If your department is not on the list we would still absolutely welcome your involvement!)

Serve on the Local 2110 Joint Council

GSOC is the largest unit in our amalgamated Local, UAW 2110, which represents workers in offices, universities, and cultural institutions across NYC. As dues paying workers of the Local, we are entitled to about 24 seats on their Joint Council (JC), exact numbers to be confirmed once dues start coming in. JC members must be specifically elected as such by the general membership. The JC meets six (6) times a year in Midtown, so the time commitment for this role is pretty small. Serving on the JC is a great way to learn more about the larger labor movement in our city and state, and how graduate workers fit into the big picture.

General Meetings

We are excited to host our first ever general meetings. They will be rad(ical)! It’s an opportunity to learn about the union’s history and mission and how you can get involved. As a bonus: free pizza!

- **At Washington Square**
5pm September 21, Kimmel Center Eisner & Lubin Auditorium (Room 401)
- **At Poly**
6pm September 24, Regna Lounge Rogers Hall, 6 MetroTech Center