

Working Effectively with GTA Unions: The Situation at The University of Iowa

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Committee to Organize Graduate Students (COGS)

- Graduate employee union covering approx. 2,600 TAs and RAs supported by GEF (service to UI)
- Started in 1997-98; biannual contract
- Bargaining team:
 - Board of Regents/UI
 - ♦ BOR – GCO
 - ♦ Grad College
 - ♦ HR
 - ♦ GCO
 - ♦ Staff-budget HR
 - COGS
 - ♦ UE Rep
 - ♦ 6-8 students
- Timeframe: initial proposals October → March

Issues of Interest

- Stipends: min 50% GA - AY \$16,575
- FY \$ 20,258
- Tuition payments: fixed \$ amount
- Benefits: student, spouse, family; “Grad Care”
- University, state economics

Issues of Interest

- Iowa is a “Right to Work” state
 - union membership not mandatory
 - only members vote
 - membership turnover
- “Mandatory” Scope of Bargaining
 - employment vs. academic issues
 - prohibited from striking
 - interest arbitration is possible
- Separate roles - academic vs. employment