

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

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# Committee to Organize Graduate Students (COGS)

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- 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

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- 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

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- 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