

Why should **faculty** support a union of **graduate employees**?

A majority of graduate employees support our union, but the administration continues to oppose it and present only one side of the issue. They argue that the union will negatively impact advisor/advisee relationships, despite ample evidence to the contrary [1,4]. We have legitimate grievances, including funding cuts, inadequate healthcare and childcare benefits, and weak protections against sexual harassment and discrimination. Faculty are taking a stance [3], and **your support is crucial**.

FACTS

- Our union campaign was initiated and is entirely run by graduate student employees. We contacted the UAW for support because they are the largest union of graduate employees in the country.
- Graduate employee unions have not imposed and will not impose changes to academic affairs. Please see [2] for an example of a graduate union contract.
- Unionization does not impact academic performance; as evidence, the University of Washington and University of California remained highly competitive after unions were established.
- The union will not impose limits on how much we choose to work. No existing graduate employee unions keep track of hours, why would ours?
- Contracts are inherently flexible, even allowing for department-specific sections.
- Contracts help resolve ambiguity about what counts as work and what counts as education, simplifying advisor/advisee relationships.
- Graduate workers will draft and negotiate the contract with the administration. UAW will provide legal aid; they will not write the contract.

REFERENCES

- [1] Hewitt, Gordon J. (2000). "Graduate Student Employee Collective Bargaining and the Educational Relationship between Faculty and Graduate Students," *Journal of Collective Negotiations in the Public Sector*, 29:153-166.
- [2] <http://ucongradunion.org/home/resources/current-members/full-contract/>
- [3] <http://www.nugradunion.com/support/>
- [4] Rogers, Sean E., et al. (2013). "Effects of Unionization on Graduate Student Employees: Faculty-Student Relations, Academic Freedom, and Pay." *ILR Review* 66.2: 487-510.



**GRADUATE EMPLOYEES OF
NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY**

GENU-UAW: A UNION FOR RESEARCH AND TEACHING ASSISTANTS