



Welcome to graduate employment at Oregon State University. Learn more and join your Union today.

# New Employee Information Packet



The **Coalition of Graduate Employees** at Oregon State University is a labor union representing 1,700+ graduate employees at OSU. We are an affiliate, known as a “Local,” of the **American Federation of Teachers**. We are united not only as Graduate Employees at OSU, but as educators across Oregon and across the United States. All together, we make up 1.7 million educators across this country.

We stick up for one another in solidarity. We fight collectively for fair employment, safe working conditions, equitable treatment, robust healthcare, quality education, and living wages. **We are not a student club** – you and your union are protected by the National Labor Relations Act. **OSU is legally obligated to work with you and your union to uphold the contract we collectively negotiate.**

We are a democratic structure by-and-for graduate employees.

We are *not* a “third party between” OSU and employees.

We, the employees, *are* our union.

**We *are* the Coalition of Graduate Employees.**

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# Introduction

The **Coalition of Graduate Employees** is *your* labor union.

By [joining CGE as a full member](#), you will shape the direction and decisions of your union. We are the collective voice of all graduate employees at Oregon State University – graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) and graduate research assistants (GRAs).

We are a federally recognized labor union protected under the National Labor Relations Act. The university, your employer, is legally obligated to negotiate working conditions with us, to address workplace grievances, and uphold the work contract.

**CGE is not a student club or a group. We are not a “third party.”**

When you experience an issue, whether unsafe conditions or discrimination, it is *your* union’s issue: **we take it on together.**

When it is time to fight for increased wages, childcare, and healthcare, it is your union’s issue, and **we only win together.**

CGE fought tooth and nail for your **workplace protections** and graduate employee rights throughout COVID-19.

The gains and wins throughout the past 20 years – tuition remission, healthcare coverage, fair pay for our work- only happened through **your union and high membership.**

Our benefits and protections are not due to OSU’s generosity.

In fact, just last year, **OSU attempted to cut your pay** and remove your annual cost-of-living adjustment, which accounts for inflation.

**We fought back and won.** It takes all of us together– united – to make it happen. Past, present, and into the future.

## What is a union?

A union is made up of workers who organize together, democratically, to protect and improve the conditions of their work. Simple.

# Your Employee Rights and Healthcare

There are two sides to the workplace: bosses and employees. We are employees united to make sure we have the best workplace around and to ensure OSU is a great place to be for us, our students, and our community. **Unions bring democracy and dignity to our work.**

Not all unions are created equal. We are proud of CGE. Our union is democratic and all leadership is elected by you. Our union passionately advocates for equity, inclusion, and social justice. There are multiple elections every year, dozens of positions to get involved with, and priorities come from the bottom-up, not the top-down.

High membership is how we ensure we are able to negotiate and organize each and every year moving forward. **Unionized workers nationwide earn 26.2% more than non-unionized workers** – and average wage gains through workplace union solidarity are even higher for women and people of color.

Corporations or profit-minded administrations will blame employees who form unions together for their problems. These complaints are that our wages are *too fair*, our benefits are *too comprehensive*, and that we take *too much power* away from bosses. It is important to know that if they had their way we wouldn't be organized together for strength. This misinformation is intended to make conditions better for employers to pay people less, withdraw job security, and slash healthcare benefits.

There are three unions of employees united on campus:

- o We are organized as [Coalition of Graduate Employees](#).
- o Faculty organize as [United Academics at Oregon State University](#).
- o Classified staff are organized as [Service Employees International Union 503, Sublocal 083](#).

All three unions at Oregon State fight to ensure *each and every one of us* receives safe working conditions, fair wages, equity, and robust benefits. **We are only as strong as we are united.**

Questions? Visit our [website](#) to learn more, or send us an [email](#).

Ready to sign your membership card? [Click here](#).



Through CGE, Graduate Employees for the last two decades have asserted and retained a **Collective Bargaining Agreement** (CBA or called “the contract”) with OSU which guarantees healthcare for graduate employees, workplace safety, protections against unfair treatment, paid sick leave, and standards on how many hours you are expected to work.

The 2020-2024 contract can be found on our website – [click here](#) to check it out.

As a CGE member, **you are entitled to file grievances about your work if the conditions are not acceptable.** CGE has the resources and experience to file grievances and improve the issues you are dealing with on the job, whether over harassment, unpaid services, workload, or anything else you find unacceptable about your employment.

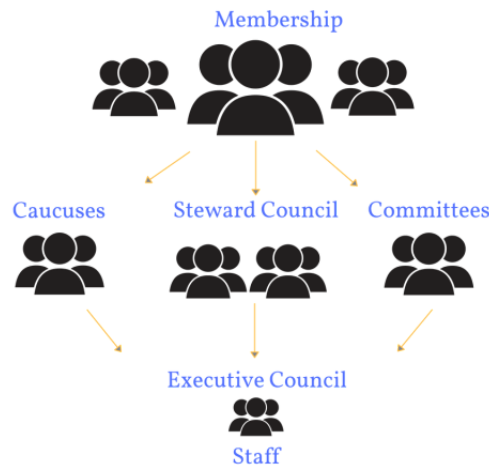
More importantly, our union is most effective when its members understand the power of collective action in improving the work standards at OSU. The contract protections secured are only strong if we apply pressure on the bosses when needed, and this often happens outside of formal grievances.



PacificSource is the health insurance provider to graduate employees. Partners and dependents able to enroll at no extra cost. This is the link to the [full medical and vision benefits handbook](#), dental coverage, and a [quick summary](#).

You may find it useful to activate and check out your [PacificSource InTouch profile at this link](#). This is your online portal for your health insurance information, including coverage and benefits explanations for every visit you make. You can use it to print new ID cards, download useful documents, view deductibles, find service providers in-network, and more.

# CGE Structure and Contract Gains



The priorities and tasks of your employee union come from rank-and-file graduate teaching and research assistants codified in CGE's [democratic constitution](#).

From **members** come elected **department stewards**, as well as **caucuses** and **committees** that guide and inform all the union does. These groups inform the **executive council**, a team of elected leaders who maintain operations and long-term plans. **Staff** are supervised by the executive council, but hold no decision making authority.

## Our Contract (the collective bargaining agreement)

### BEFORE CGE (pre-1999)

- \$0 for health care
- \$0 to cover fees
- No tuition waiver guarantees
- No paid leave or time off
- No guaranteed access to work space
- No minimum salary or FTE
- No standards on workloads
- No benefits for international graduate workers
- No ability to file grievances

### AFTER CGE (2020)

- 90% of health care paid by OSU
- 90% fee remissions
- Guaranteed tuition waivers
- 15 days time off
- Double sick leave, 3 weeks Family Leave
- Access to work space and online tools
- Workload maximums
- A minimum salary and FTE, .38 in 2022
- \$500 SEVIS/visa \$495 DACA
- ENHANCED grievance process
- Name in Use, Gender Neutral Restrooms

Members like you set the priorities we have fought for and won as employees. Everything from healthcare, fee coverage, tuition waivers, transparent and competitive salaries, protections for international and LGBTQIA2+ employees, and a formal legal process to resolve workplace issues *all* came from membership. [Join your union](#) to keep us pushing for improvements for employees today and into the future.

# Join *YOUR* Union – Membership Info

Each workplace protection and benefit employees have today came from CGE members past and present. By joining your union, you become a part of this 20-year history at Oregon State University and contribute to building upon these gains.

Members are able to vote and participate in all union functions. All of the efforts and community building we do, from barbecues and dinners, to social justice trainings and social events, and into our critical bargaining sessions and staff support come from membership dues. CGE has some of the lowest union dues compared to other graduate employee unions – members like you becoming involved ensure prudent and wise financial decisions. Dues are 2% of our salary to keep the Union strong.

**Without high membership and involvement, Oregon State University will fight to weaken your contract.** Members of the administration team who negotiated with CGE in 2019 to 2020 made over \$170,000 a year, up to roughly \$350,000 a year. *OSU attempted to cut your pay amidst a pandemic – can you believe that?* They resisted protections for international workers and those who experienced workplace bullying. They refused to advance childcare, denying that it would attract top talent to do so. OSU's team didn't approve our proposal to give LGBTQIA2+ students safe bathroom access. Thanks to members, we fought and won, increasing employee benefits and protections across the board, and members will drive us to win more.

This is a great place to work *—only* because employees have united together and negotiated with OSU as a union. It was through hundreds of CGE members attending events, rallies, bargaining, spreading awareness, and performing direct actions that we had the strength to make it happen.

During COVID-19, your union made up of hundreds of members (employees like you!) signed agreements with OSU to reimburse internet and cell phone costs while working at home and guarantee a process to challenge in-person work assignments.

Ready to join? [Click here and sign today.](#)

Want to connect to a Steward in your department or to CGE leadership with questions first? Send us [an email](#) today – we would love to talk more!

# Get Involved with CGE

CGE is more than just a collective of employees fighting for and winning a great place to work. We are a **social space** to connect, opportunities to **develop and grow as** an organizational leader, and an **activist hub** for our OSU and Corvallis community.

There are many ways to get involved in your union after you [Join CGE](#).

- o Members get access to a **Discord** server chock-full of social events, connections to community, and up to date info on employee life at OSU. [Email us](#) after you are a member!
- o Every department elects **Stewards**, recognized by our employer as the on-the-ground leaders who keep a pulse on work conditions, equity, and inclusion.
- o We have a number of **Caucuses** where anyone can get involved to bond, create events that you envision, and steer our work as a union. See them on Discord!
  - o Anti-Harassment Caucus
  - o Disability Justice
  - o Environmental Justice
  - o Housing
  - o International Student
  - o Mental Health
  - o Pride (LGBTQ+)
  - o Women of Color
  - o Working Parents
- o Serve as a **Delegate** and vote on behalf of CGE at State and National conferences with American Federation of Teachers (AFT) – get a glimpse and participate in the power of educators united!
- o Being a **Committee** member lets you dig deep and vote on important work, such as Finance, Constitution, and Social & Political Education committees.
- o Are you our next President? Our **Executive Committee** is a 9-member team of graduate employees who manage projects, communicate with membership and media, build newsletters, represent workers to Oregon State, and supervise our staff.

For all of these positions and paths to get involved, CGE is committed giving new and upcoming leaders engaging training opportunities.



# Contact Information and Social Media

All our meetings are open-door. Come and check out a meeting, [email us](#) to learn more, come to social events, and get plugged in. We are so excited to meet you!

## CGE Contact Information, 2021 – 2022 Academic Year

### o President

Nathan Waugh (they/them): [president@cge6069.org](mailto:president@cge6069.org)

### o Secretary-Treasurer

Nick Gantzler (he/him): [treasurer@cge6069.org](mailto:treasurer@cge6069.org)

### o Vice President for Social Justice

Leece Larue (they/them): [socialjustice@cge6069.org](mailto:socialjustice@cge6069.org)

### o Vice President for Bargaining

Brandi Whiteman (she/her): [vp\\_bargaining@cge6069.org](mailto:vp_bargaining@cge6069.org)

### o Vice President for Communications

Tilo Chatterjee (she/they): [vp\\_communications@cge6069.org](mailto:vp_communications@cge6069.org)

### o Vice President for Grievances

Christian Solorio (he/him): [vp\\_grievances@cge6069.org](mailto:vp_grievances@cge6069.org)

### o Vice President for Membership

Cheyenne Jarman (she/her): [vp\\_membership@cge6069.org](mailto:vp_membership@cge6069.org)

### o Vice President for Organizing

Noah Harvey Vaughan (they/them): [vp\\_oranizing@cge6069.org](mailto:vp_oranizing@cge6069.org)

### o Social Activities Chair

VACANT: [activities@cge6069.org](mailto:activities@cge6069.org)

### o Organizer

Sarah Piscioneri (she/her): [organizer@cge6069.org](mailto:organizer@cge6069.org)

### o Operations and Support

Kali Doten (she/her): [operations@cge6069.org](mailto:operations@cge6069.org)

## Social Media

**Facebook Page:** [facebook.com/cge6069](https://facebook.com/cge6069)

**Facebook Group:** [facebook.com/groups/CGE6069](https://facebook.com/groups/CGE6069)

**Housing/mutual aid Facebook Group:** [facebook.com/groups/cgehousing](https://facebook.com/groups/cgehousing)

**Instagram:** [@cge6069](https://instagram.com/cge6069)

**Twitter:** [@cge6069](https://twitter.com/cge6069)

**Discord:** Discord acts as our “virtual union hall.” Upon becoming a member, you will receive an invite link.