

GRADUATE EMPLOYEE INFORMATIONAL PACKET



COALITION OF GRADUATE EMPLOYEES

**WELCOME TO EMPLOYMENT AT OSU,
AND WELCOME TO YOUR...**

UNION UNION
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UNION UNION

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NOT YOUR ORDINARY WORKPLACE



As a Graduate Employee at Oregon State University, you are represented by our Union, the Coalition of Graduate Employees (CGE). Our labor union represents all 1,700+ Graduate Employees at OSU.

We are united not only as Graduate Employees at OSU, but as educators across Oregon and across the United States. We are an affiliate, known as a “Local,” of the American Federation of Teachers. All together, our Federation represents 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 a democratic structure by-and-for Graduate Employees.

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

We, the employees, are the Union. When management refers to “the Union,” they’re talking about us.

We are the Coalition of Graduate Employees.

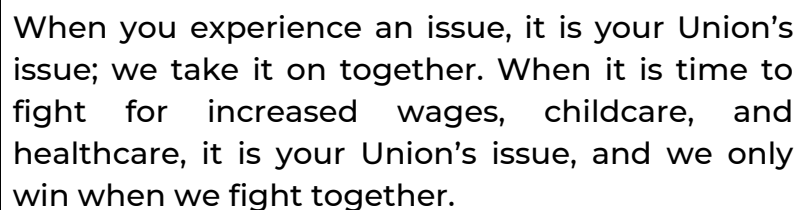
Your Union is not a student club. You and your Union are protected by Oregon's Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act as the legal entity representing all Graduate Employees at this University. OSU is legally obligated to engage with us through our union in negotiating our employment contract, and to uphold the contract language that the two Parties agree to.



We are the collective voice of all Graduate Teaching (GTA) and Research Assistants (GRA) at Oregon State University.



To be a member of your union,
YOU MUST SIGN UP by signing a "blue card"
and stopping by your union hall at 101 NW
23rd St., or by signing up online at the link
below (QR code on page 6):
cqe6069.org/members/join/



At every step of the process, OSU administration refused to bargain in good faith or to changes to the contract that would address the issues that we face. Instead, they have tried to implement stagnant wages and other limitations.

Our benefits and protections are not due to OSU's "generosity" as they often claim. OSU administration fight us at every turn when we assert basic needs like a living wage, employment security and stability, and safe working conditions.

When we fight back, we win. It takes all of us together, united, to make OSU a more just and equitable place of work for all Graduate Employees. Past, present, and future.

WHAT IS A UNION?

UNIONIZED GRAD WORKERS

A Union is a group of workers who organize together to protect and improve the conditions of their work.

We are employees united to ensure we have the best workplace possible and to ensure OSU serves us, our students, and our community. Unions bring democracy, dignity, and respect to our work and our lives.

CGE is democratic and all leadership is elected by members. CGE 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.



UNIONIZED WORKERS AT OSU

We are part of a community of unionized workers at Oregon State University...

- We are organized as the Coalition of Graduate Employees (CGE)
- Faculty are organized as the United Academics at Oregon State University (UAOSU)
- Classified staff are organized as the Service Employees International Union 503, Sublocal 083 (SEIU)

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 at solidarity@cge6069.org.

THE STATE OF UNIONIZED WORKERS IN THE U.S.

Nationwide, unionized workers earn 26.2% more than non-unionized workers. Average wage gains through workplace union solidarity are even higher for women and People of Color. Through grad employees becoming members of CGE, together we negotiate contract wins, protect each other, and organize each and every year moving forward.

Corporations and profit-minded administrations blame their problems on employees who form unions together. They complain that our wages are too fair, our benefits are too comprehensive, and that we take too much power away from supervisors and administrators. It is important to know that if they had their way and got rid of our union, they would pay us less, remove our job security, and slash healthcare benefits.

YOUR RIGHTS AT WORK

Unions get the goods.

THE CONTRACT

Through CGE, Graduate Employees for the last two decades have asserted and retained a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA, sometimes called “the contract”) with OSU. The CBA establishes wages, benefits, and working conditions and provides a mechanism to address violations and workplace problems.

**CGE
2020-
2024
CBA
HERE**



As a unionized grad employee at OSU, you have the right...

- to turn down work that exceeds your FTE*
- to a workplace free of discrimination and harassment
- to receive employment documents on time
- to use your sick leave when you need it
- to leave an unsafe working environment
- to fight for fair wages and working conditions directly with our Employer.

**FTE=Full time Equivalency. Grad employees are assigned FTEs from .40-.49. As a salaried worker, you are assigned an avg. workload between 16 and 19.6 hrs per week (depending on assigned FTE).*

PROBLEMS IN YOUR WORKPLACE

As a CGE member, there are multiple ways to address problematic working conditions. Your workplace should facilitate you doing your job, not impede it. We have fought as a union for decades to ensure your work is facilitated well, and we have the CBA to back that up. When a grad employee experiences an issue, there are multiple ways for our union to address it. Below is our step-by-step recommendation for what to do when an issue arises:

1. **Recognize that it's an issue.** Too often, we accept poor working conditions as a condition of grad school. It's not. Recognize when something doesn't seem right and talk to someone about it.
2. **Contact a steward.** Use the "Contact a Steward" form at cge6069.org/leadership/stewards to reach your steward, or contact your Vice President for Grievances at vp_grievances@cge6069.org.
3. **Decide on best next steps.** Your steward will either help you directly or direct you to someone who can help. We can seek a formal remedy through a grievance, offer guidance and support, or organize a pressure campaign, depending on what is most helpful to the impacted employee.

GRAD EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE

In 1999, Graduate Employees at Oregon State University achieved one of the most difficult things a group of workers can do: they unionized. Over what? Healthcare. At the time, OSU administration held firm that it would be impossible to provide Graduate Employees health care. So, the employees got together, formed a Union, made a plan, and *they won*.

That legacy continues with each contract cycle. OSU claims they can't afford their share of the health care premiums and administrative fees, and every year we fight back to win. Our health care is ours because of the tens of thousands of hours our union has spent bargaining over it since 1999.



PacificSource is the health insurance provider to Graduate Employees at OSU. Partners and dependents are able to enroll as well.

Read through a quick summary of your healthcare coverage with this QR code.



You may also find it useful to activate and view your PacificSource InTouch profile with this QR code. This is your online portal for your health insurance information, including coverage and benefits explanations for every healthcare appointment you make. You can use it to print new ID cards, download useful documents, view deductibles, find service providers in-network, and more.

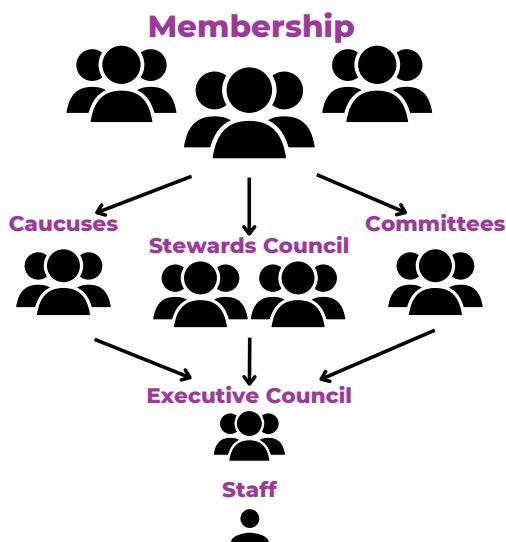


CGE STRUCTURE



The actions and priorities of your employee union come from Graduate Teaching and Research Assistants just like you. This equal leadership structure is specified in CGE's democratic constitution.

Members elect department stewards, and members can form/join caucuses and committees that guide and inform all the union does. These groups inform the Executive Council, a team of elected leaders (grad employees and members themselves) who maintain operations and long-term plans. Staff hold no decision making authority and are supervised by the Executive Council.



JOIN YOUR UNION - MEMBERSHIP INFO

Our Contract

BEFORE WE UNIONIZED (pre-1999)

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

This list is not exhaustive. Many wins and improvements aren't included here.

SINCE WE'VE UNIONIZED (2022)

- 90% of health care paid by OSU
- 90% fee remissions
- Guaranteed tuition waivers
- 15 days time off
- Paid sick leave and sick leave donations
- Guaranteed access to adequate workspace
- Workload maximums
- Minimum salary and FTE
- \$500 SEVIS/visa and DACA reimbursement
- Formal grievance process for contract violations

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

MEMBERSHIP DUES LET US POOL OUR RESOURCES TO WIN

Members are able to vote and participate in all union functions. Members also support their union by paying dues (calculated at 2% of your salary). Dues pay for:

- organizing efforts and campaigns
- community-building events like cookouts, social justice training, member meetings
- support staff who take care of a lot of the legwork of running your union

Without these dues, your union would not exist. To make sure we respect all members' hard-earned dues, members like you make the decisions about how your dues are spent.

Dues let us collectively pool our resources so we can support each other. OSU has a team of six-figure suits whose sole jobs are to find ways to skirt our contract. Our dues let us counter that through saving for things like a hardship fund and a strike fund.

This is a great place to work – only because Graduate Employees have united together and negotiated with OSU as a union. It was through thousands of CGE members attending events, rallies, bargaining, talking to one another, and taking direct action across two decades that we gained the strength to make great things happen.

**Join your
union here!**



GET INVOLVED

CGE is more than a collective of employees fighting for and winning a great place to work. **We are a social space to connect, an organization committed to developing and growing new leaders, and an activist hub for OSU and the Corvallis community.**

There are many ways to get involved in your union after you join CGE:

- Join the Virtual Union Hall Discord server (a free voice, video, and text chatting application) chock-full of social events, connections to the community, and up-to-date info on employee life at OSU. If you would like to join, email us after you become a member!
- Want to get really involved? Join the Executive Council, a team of Graduate Employees who manage projects, communicate with membership and media, build newsletters, represent workers to Oregon State, and supervise our staff.
- Become a steward, an elected representative recognized by our employer as the on-the-ground leaders who keep a pulse on work conditions, equity, and inclusion. Stewards are also the first point-of-contact for employees who have any employment-related questions.
- Join the bargaining team. The b-team develops bargaining strategy, surveys members, researches and drafts proposals, and negotiates with OSU at the bargaining table.
- Join a Caucus or Committee (or both!). Caucuses are where members bond, organize events, and steer our work as a union. Committees let you dig deep on important work like Finance and Constitution. If you have an idea for a new caucus or committee, reach out and we can get it started together!
- Join the Contract Action Team. The CAT does the "boots-on-the-ground" organizing work to support negotiations outside of the bargaining table. CATs write letters to the editor, run social media, organize rallies and events, and get members to show up to bargaining sessions.

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



Caucuses

- Anti-Harassment Caucus
- Disability Justice Caucus
- Environmental Justice Caucus
- Housing Caucus
- International Student Caucus
- Mental Health Caucus
- Pride Caucus
- Women of Color Caucus
- Working Parents Caucus

Committees

CGE-OSU joint committees:

- Transportation
- Health & Safety
- Health Insurance Advisory
- Housing
- Supervisor Training

CGE committees:

- Finance Committee
- Constitution Committee

CONTACT INFO

All of 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 Leadership 2024-2025

- **CGE President:** Austin Bosgraaf (he/him),
president@cge6069.org
- **Secretary-Treasurer:** Danielle Whalen (she/her),
treasurer@cge6069.org
- **VP for Solidarity:** Sarah Sellke (she/her),
vp_solidarity@cge6069.org
- **VP for Bargaining:** Brandi Whiteman (she/her)
vp_bargaining@cge6069.org
- **VP for Communications:** Erika Stewart (they/them),
vp_communications@cge6069.org
- **VP for Grievances:** Case Pharr (he/they),
vp_grievances@cge6069.org
- **VPs for Membership:** Vic Quennessen (she/they), Brett Clark (he/him),
vp_membership@cge6069.org
- **VPs for Organizing:** Maddy Duong (she/her), em barrett (they/he),
vp_organizing@cge6069.org
- **VP for Social Activities:** Rachael Garcia (she/her),
activities@cge6069.org
- **VP for Political Engagement:** Luke Nearhood (he/him),
vp_politics@cge6069.org

CGE Staff

- **Staff Organizer:** Lauren Nelson (she/her),
organizer@cge6069.org
- **Operations Support Staff:** Alexis Kiessling (she/her),
operations@cge6069.org

CGE Union Hall

101 NW 23rd St.
Covallis, OR
97330

www.cge6069.org
solidarity@cge6069.org
Fbook: facebook.com/cge6069
Insta: @cge6069
Twitter: @cge6069

COALITION OF
GRADUATE
EMPLOYEES



**Scan this code for
resources and
information, including
current campaigns
and feedback forms.**



**Scan this code for
resources and
information particular
to international
workers.**

