



Council of Graduate Students

For immediate public release:

On February 23, 2023, the Council of Graduate Students (COGS) General Assembly unanimously voted to pass the following resolution in support of the recently launched Graduate Labor Union (GLU-UE) unionization campaign. The resolution is an acknowledgment that COGS is neither designed nor the proper forum in which to engage the university in discussions of labor conditions. We hope that the success of GLU-UE will enable COGS to fulfill its mission to advocate for the best interest of graduate students within the University of Minnesota and act as the representative organization for the graduate student body, financially provide for graduate students through a grant process, and promote social community within the graduate student body.

For questions related to the resolution itself, please direct comments to COGS Representative Lilly Webster (Math) (webst390@umn.edu). For questions related to COGS and its support, please contact the Director of Communications, Patrick McCormick (mccor718@umn.edu).

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Resolution Affirming Support for the Graduate Labor Union - United Electrical

WHEREAS graduate workers (TAs, RAs, and/or Graduate Instructors) have no formal say in their working conditions or compensation,

WHEREAS graduate worker stipends do not provide a living wage, have **decreased** relative to cost of living, and substantial portions of which are taken by the University of Minnesota in student fees,

WHEREAS the benefits package offered to graduate workers is insufficient to support the costs of childcare, transportation, dependent healthcare, and retirement planning,

WHEREAS graduate workers do not have clear and enforceable job expectations, are not informed of their appointment in a timely manner, are required to participate in unpaid training, and work in unsafe conditions,

WHEREAS graduate students do not have clear, robust, and fair procedures for resolving issues of conflict, harassment, and discrimination in the workplace,

WHEREAS international graduate workers pay the exorbitant International Student and Scholar Services fee and suffer unaddressed discrimination due to fear of retaliation,

WHEREAS the platform laid out by the Graduate Labor Union - United Electrical directly addresses the above concerns,

WHEREAS the advocacy priorities voted on by the General Assembly in October 2022 for the Council of Graduate Students 2022 - 2023 administration are consistent with the platform laid out by the Graduate Labor Union - United Electrical,

WHEREAS over 1,700 graduate workers signed cards on Day 1 in support of the Graduate Labor Union - United Electrical,

WHEREAS successful execution of the University of Minnesota's missions of Research and Discovery, Teaching and Learning, and Outreach and Public Service depends upon the labor of graduate students serving as research assistants, teaching assistants, teaching associates, project assistants, and administrative fellows,

WHEREAS the Council of Graduate Students is bound per its Recognized Student Government Association status to uphold the University of Minnesota's mission statement,

WHEREAS the Council of Graduate Students' advocacy is limited by its largely advisory and consulting functions, is dependent on the university's recognition, and does not include any role in labor-management negotiations,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of Graduate Students affirms its strong support for the Graduate Labor Union - United Electrical and acknowledges that these two organizations can coexist,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Council of Graduate Students recognizes and affirms that Graduate Assistants at the University of Minnesota are public employees under the Public Employment Labor Relations Act, Minnesota Statutes 197A.11, and therefore enjoy the same rights as all other public employees in the state, including the right to organize.