

University Proposals/Counters Status Update – 2/18/25 Negotiations

Proposals awaiting Union response

Employment Records

-University counter on 1/28/25 pending a Union response.

Training

-University counter on 1/28/25 pending a Union response.

Discipline and Dismissal

-University counter on 8/2/24 pending a Union response.

Recognition

-University counter on 6/18/24 pending a Union response.

Hourly Assignments

-No response from Union

Academic and Management Rights

-No response from Union

No Strike No Lockout

-No response from the Union

Comprehensive and Complete Agreement

-No response from the Union

Economics

-University counter on 11/18/24 pending a Union response.

2/18/25 counterproposals

Professional Development

Work Travel

Paid Leaves

Titles and Classifications

Proposals where University is holding to its last counter

Job Postings

- The University has agreed to a job postings process, and creation of a website for this purpose, including specific information outlined in postings.
- The University is holding to its last counterproposal on 10/30/24.

Sick Leave

- The University has agreed to sick leave with accrual consistent with what Massachusetts law provides for employees.
- The University is holding to its last counterproposal on 8/26/24.

Appointments and Reappointments

- The University has agreed to an appointment process that includes significant advanced appointment notice for TAs who are course leads, notification of appointment changes, and the inclusion of a range of information in appointment letters to provide students with important information.
- The Union's continued demand that colleges adopt TA and RA appointment procedures that incorporate a list of 10 criteria and issues faculty must use in making appointments, as well as mandatory meetings of faculty, department chairs/heads and students to discuss all TA and RA appointment procedures prior to implementation or change, is unacceptable.
- The University is holding to its 6/18/24 Stipended Appointments counterproposal

Appointment Security

- University agreement to issues raised in the Union's Appointment Security proposal are found in its Stipended Appointments proposal, as well as the University's Workload proposal which includes a 20-hour average limit on weekly hours, an accelerated grievance process for workload disputes and a credit for hours worked if an assignment is canceled and replaced with a new assignment.
- The University is holding to its 6/18/24 Stipended Appointments counterproposal and 10/30/24 Workload counterproposal.

Workload

- The University originally proposed language limiting workload and has agreed in its counterproposal to setting a 20-hour average limit on weekly hours, an accelerated grievance process for workload disputes and a credit for hours worked if an assignment is canceled and replaced with a new assignment.
- The Union's proposal conflates work and academics, and demands the right to arbitrate academic workloads, which is unacceptable.
- The University is holding to its 10/30/24 Workload counterproposal.

Workspace and Materials

- The University has agreed to language about access to workspaces, materials, PPE, ergonomic equipment and accommodations, as well as advance notice prior to office or lab moves.
- Continued Union demands that the Union can determine what equipment, tools, materials or PPE are necessary for graduate student assignments are unacceptable, as is the Union's repeated demand that graduate students seeking an accommodation do not need to provide medical documentation supporting the need for an accommodation.
- The University holding to its last counterproposal on 12/9/24.

Vacation and Personal Time

- The University originally proposed and has agreed to accrual of vacation and personal time.
- The University is holding to its last counterproposal on 8/26/24 and is rejecting the Union's unacceptable demand for 21 days of vacation time along with 14 days of personal time with potentially unlimited extensions.

Holidays

- The University originally proposed and has agreed to provide paid holidays consistent with the University calendar.
- University is holding to its last counterproposal on 8/26/24.

Intellectual Property

- The University agreed to non-retaliation language concerning student exercise of rights under University IP policies.
- The University is holding to its last counterproposal on 7/16/24, and rejecting the Union's demands, including that anything created in the

course of student research or teaching work is the “sole and exclusive property of” the student, which is contrary to IP law.

Past Practice

-University is holding to its current counter...clarification provided 2/18/25

Union Rights and Bargaining Unit Information

-The University agreed to a series of Union rights, including access to meeting space and student mailboxes, dedicated bulletin board space for Union postings, as well as the inclusion of union materials with all new PhD orientation packets and periodic information reports to the Union that includes standard information provided to unions, including contact information, appointment information, college and supervisor for students who have authorized the release of that information.

-The University is holding to its last counterproposal on 12/9/24, and is unwilling to agree to the wide range of demands in the Union’s proposal, including a requirement that all college or department orientations set aside at least 20 minutes for a Union presentation and that that all new PhDs attend a mandatory 45-minute Union orientation each semester, as well as a dedicated Union office and access to University resources, two Union tables for all campus events and a report each semester that includes detailed information about students, including country of birth/origin, gender, and race, along with a range of other information not found in similar union contract provisions..

Union Security (and VCAP)

-The University is rejecting the Union’s demand that graduate students be required to pay Union dues or fees. The University is holding to its 7/16/24 counterproposal that Union membership, dues and fees be voluntary for all graduate students.

-The University is willing to agree to VCAP concept if the Union accepts the University’s proposal for voluntary union dues/fees.

International Graduate Student Worker Rights

-The University has agreed to address concerns about international student issues through the Labor Management Committee, provide advanced notice to students of any governmental agency seeking information about the student, request that any DHS agent seeking to question students under a valid search warrant do so in a private setting, provide work assignments for international students on the same terms as all other students, continue supporting international students with information necessary for immigration matters, provide a list of attorneys

and other resources helpful to students for immigration matters, assist students with completing work authorization documents, prohibit loss of seniority or compensation due to legal name changes or social security changes, continue to offer resources through the Office of Global Services and, where possible, undertake reasonable efforts to arrange for temporary performance of SGA services if an international student is unable to return to campus as a result of immigration or documentation status issues.

-The University is holding to its last counterproposal on 12/20/24, and is not willing to further entertain Union demands on immigration matters that are heavily regulated by federal law, and are otherwise subjects that are not the proper focus of collective bargaining under NLRB and federal court precedent.

Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment or Retaliation

-The University originally proposed and has agreed to comprehensive language prohibiting discrimination, harassment, abusive behavior and retaliation, as well as protection for students engaging in union activities and language respecting gender identity.

-University is holding to its last counterproposal on 10/11/24, and already offers students comprehensive protections under the University's extensive Title IX policy and procedures that govern investigation of discrimination, harassment and related allegations by the University's Title IX Office.

Grievance and Arbitration

-The University originally proposed and has agreed to a comprehensive grievance and arbitration process, incorporating many requests from the Union.

-University is holding to its last counterproposal on 10/11/24.

Health and Safety

-The University originally proposed and has agreed to significant language on health and safety, including a process to provide graduate student rights in situations where they believe an unsafe working condition exists.

-University is holding to its last counterproposal on 12/9/24, and is unwilling to agree to Union language that reserves determination of "dangerous, hazardous or unsafe tasks" to the Union, vests the Union with the ability to determine what training is proper or what resources students need to safely perform tasks, or allows the Union to determine when a student can refuse to perform assigned tasks. The Union's insistence on

specific “air exchanges per hour” and CO2 levels are neither accurate nor supported in OSHA regulations. Many of the other demands are unacceptable, such as Union regulation over when the University issues public health notifications, the provision of vaccines on campus or testing of campus community members in the event of a public health emergency.

Rejected language proposals

Successorship

Rejecting for reasons expressed in bargaining on 1/28/25.

Professional and Academic Freedom

Rejecting for reasons expressed in bargaining on 1/28/25. The proposal outlines unfettered rights of students to teach, research and speak as they choose in their TA, RA and hourly assignments, which is not acceptable.

Artificial Intelligence

Rejecting for reasons expressed in bargaining on 1/28/25. Among other things, the proposal creates unacceptable conditions for the University and faculty, including Union approval of any use of AI “related to employment” of graduate students, mandatory audits of University and faculty use of AI with detailed semester reports, termination of AI use through arbitration or lack of Union agreement, and many other conditions that will result in unending grievance litigation over application and interpretation disputes.

Automation

Rejecting for reasons expressed in bargaining on 1/28/25 and 5/16/24. The Union was unable to identify any problem it was attempting to solve with its proposal and could only offer speculation of hypothetical concerns with no objective rationale. The proposed language contains ambiguities that would result in unending grievance litigation over the intent or applicability of the proposal. The proposal is so broadly written that it would prohibit faculty from using a recording of a TA class presentation, or review swipe access information if a student reported that an RA was repeatedly absent from their lab. The language would even prohibit an automated reminder message to a graduate student to submit information supporting a work accommodation request.

Subcontracting

Rejecting for reasons expressed in bargaining on 3/15/25 and 1/28/25. As with Automation, the Union was unable to identify any problem it was attempting to solve with its proposal and could only offer speculation of hypothetical issues that have never occurred. The proposal repeats language in the Automation proposal and is so broadly written that it would prohibit faculty from performing any work that graduate students “perform” or “could perform,” and would also prohibit collaborative research projects with graduate students outside the bargaining unit.

Union Stewards and Officers

Rejecting. The Union’s proposal contains perks for certain graduate students serving as a Union steward or officer that we will not agree to, including a 3-year funding extension for Union officers and full funding and tuition/fee waivers for three graduate students to do union work, with any union work time not counted annually against the student’s college funding commitment.

Accessibility

Rejecting because accessibility concepts are incorporated in other articles (e.g. Health and Safety) and the University already provides comprehensive accommodation/access support for students. Union demands such as waiving the requirement that graduate students provide medical documentation to support an accommodation request, a mandatory decision response to all accommodation/access requests within two business days from University offices, and Union audit of University accessibility processes and procedures are unacceptable.

Economics

-As previously expressed, all economic issues not addressed in the University’s 11/18/24 economic package counterproposal are rejected. The University’s package proposal establishes a minimum \$43,000 annual stipend with annual increases of at least 2.5%, hourly pay minimums and annual increases of at least 2.5%, dental insurance for PhDs, health insurance for PhDs, dependent healthcare for PhD children, and a wide range of student EAP benefits for all bargaining unit members.

-Union proposals rejected by University’s economic package proposal: PhD minimum stipend of \$60,000, Hourly pay minimum of \$66.57/hour, Retirement Benefits for all graduate students, Tax Assistance financial support fund of \$600 per graduate student for tax preparation costs, Tuition and Fees proposal that

waives tuition and fees for all hourly graduate students in addition to PhDs, Relocation stipend of \$6,000 per PhD student for moving expenses, Healthcare Benefits coverage for hourly graduate students in addition to funded PhDs, Parking and Transit cost coverage for all graduate students, Emergency Assistance stipend of \$5,000 annually per graduate student (\$3.75 million annually), Food Security providing free supplemental meals for graduate students, Housing subsidies, 529 College Savings plan, Union EAP proposal, Adoption Assistance (\$5,000 per adoption), Childcare stipends for all graduate students of \$5,000 per year per child, and any other cost issues.

TAs

-Severability

-Labor Management Committee