

GEO is OUR union, and it works best when everyone does their part. For that reason, people in your department, together with the GEO Organizing Committee, have come up with the following goals for this year:



Departmental positions:

STEWARDS – Stewards are elected representatives of their departments at the Stewards' Council, GEO's main decision-making body; they are the heart and soul of the union. Responsibilities include: attending Stewards' Council meetings twice a month (every other Wednesday 7-8:30pm), serving as liaison between the Council and their home program or department, and occasional tasks.

DEPARTMENT CONTACTS – They are assistants to their stewards. Department Contacts need not attend Stewards' Council meetings, but they help stewards organize the department by getting the word out about events, communicating with members, and doing other occasional tasks.

GEO Committee Members:

GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE – Works to enforce the GEO contract! Grievance Committee members serve as caseworkers for individuals filing complaints– usually one case per term. Great way to gain in-depth knowledge of the contract - no previous experience necessary; training provided. Ideal for individuals passionate about defending the rights of their fellow employees.

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE – A labor union derives its strength from the degree to which members are mobilized and ready to stand in solidarity with one another. The Organizing Committee works to ensure that this happens, by recruiting stewards, helping to plan department meetings and office visits and increase turnout at events. Ideal for people who believe in the power of collective action and democratic organization.

SOLIDARITY/POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE - Coordinates with other labor unions, both at UM and in the area, to give them support when they need it and request help when GEO needs it. Also works on political and grassroots campaigns that affect our members. Ideal for people passionate about social justice and interested in connecting to the larger labor movement.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE – Publishes the monthly GEO newsletter (“The Graduate Student Worker”), maintains the website and creates other materials such as posters and press releases. Ideal for creative, artistic individuals.

FINANCE COMMITTEE – Prepares GEO's budget every year and helps the Treasurer maintain the regular financial operations of the union. Ideal for detail-oriented individuals who like concrete, immediate tasks.

Departmental tasks:

FLYER DISTRIBUTOR – Picks up flyers for union events from the GEO office 3-4 times per semester and puts them up around the department, including in the departmental GEO bulletin board.

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTOR – Picks up copies of The Graduate Student Worker from GEO office once a month and puts them into GSI mailboxes in the department.

GEO is the Graduate Employees' Organization, Local 3550, AFT Michigan, AFL-CIO.

We are the union of graduate workers bargaining and defending a contract for approximately 1,650 Graduate Student Instructors and Graduate Student Staff Assistants at the University of Michigan.

527 E. Liberty Street, Suite 204, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
734.995.0221 • umgeo@umich.edu • www.umgeo.org

Other GEO tasks:

(these are mostly one-time things, but are necessary and a great way to help the union!)

OFFICE VISITOR – Agrees to do 2 office visit shifts per semester (at a date to be arranged), accompanied by an experienced organizer (approx. 4 hours total).

YELLOW CARD INPUT – Agree to enter 40-50 union membership cards (yellow cards) into GEO database (approx. 2 hours total) this semester.

GEO OFFICE HELP – There are a number of small things you can do to help keep the union office (527 E. Liberty St., No.204) running. E-mail volunteer@umgeo.org. Each one of these should take 5-10 minutes:

- take out trash
- prepare recycling for pick-up
- straighten up
- re-stock t-shirts
- make sure the fax machine and copier have paper.
- clean kitchenette (15-20 mins.)

MAKE BUTTONS! – Visibility makes our union stronger. You can contribute to our union's visibility by prominently displaying your GEO button and distributing some to your friends. Even better, you can stop by the office and make creative GEO buttons using the union's very own button press. It's easy! Use images available at the office or bring your own. Email buttons@umgeo.org.

GEO WEBSITE – There's lots to do around the GEO website, big tasks and small. If you'd like to be involved with any of the following, or see anything else that needs doing, drop us a line at volunteer@umgeo.org:

- contribute to the GEO Wiki
- post news on umgeo.org
- make topical pages on umgeo.org
- maintain mailing and discussion lists
- tweak the templates for umgeo.org or geo3550.org

GEO ARCHIVE - GEO generates a tremendous number of documents while going about its mission of representing Graduate Employees – membership lists, memoranda, research materials, meeting minutes. They eventually take up too much space at the office, but they constitute the primary source material from which the history of GEO can be written. We periodically go through our files and donate materials to the Bentley Historical Library. You can help by sorting through documents, deciding what to keep, etc. A half-hour training is necessary. E-mail volunteer@umgeo.org.

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