

GESO PLATFORM

Endorsed by the GESO Membership on December 6, 2006

Yale University should negotiate with a democratically elected negotiating team of graduate teachers and researchers, to reach a contract that is enforceable through an impartial and fair grievance procedure. Although a contract would address many of the issues presented here, this platform is intended broadly to represent the views of GESO's membership.

Yale should assume a leadership role in ending casualization:

- Establish university-wide staffing ratios to reduce the percentage of teaching performed by non-ladder faculty
- Hire more tenured and ladder faculty
- Provide better information about academic careers for graduate students by appointing a job search advisor for each department, maintaining an alumni list and placement data, and conducting research on actual determinants of success on the job market

Yale should provide funding and benefits that allow all graduate students to create exceptional scholarship, guided by the principle of equal access to higher education:

- Fund all graduate teachers and researchers for twelve months at or above the cost of living and equally across years
- Expand funding for research and writing, including two years of dissertation fellowship where appropriate
- Create more transparency in the allocation of departmental fellowships
- Increase funding for conference travel and research resources
- Create a retirement plan
- Provide better local transportation (parking, shuttle system, etc.)

Yale should set the standard for healthcare in higher education by providing:

- Better access to specialists
- Free prescription drug coverage
- Fully subsidized healthcare for all dependents and domestic partners
- Expanded access to professional mental health services
- Consistent and comprehensive health coverage during parental leave and research trips
- New areas of coverage: dental and vision

Yale should improve graduate education and mentorship:

- Register students beyond their sixth year to ensure completion of their dissertation
- Increase the number and variety of graduate courses offered and limit size of graduate seminars
- Ensure that graduate students are involved in shaping graduate curricula
- Improve quality and quantity of feedback on academic work and standing
- Establish formal mentorship expectations and incentives
- Consider exceptional mentoring and teaching in the tenure review process
- Expand access to academic support, tutoring, and language courses for credit
- Recognize that University policies have a differential impact on international students
- Work to protect international students from unfair and arbitrary treatment under federal law

Yale should be a democratic institution with transparent decision-making:

- Make Yale's financial investments more transparent; create proactive rather than reactive measures for socially responsible investment; and codify a nuanced and rigorous definition of social harm that incorporates the perspectives of community members, scholars, university employees, and students from diverse perspectives
- Evaluate graduate students' academic progress on a case-by-case basis
- Create a transparent decision-making process for faculty hiring and tenure review for all scholars and allow for graduate student input on hiring and tenure committees
- Ensure that Yale's ongoing process of global expansion is transparent globally and locally
- Ensure that workers at all Yale-affiliated sites worldwide be treated fairly and have a voice in the conditions of their work
- Recognize all academic workers' right to form a union – including graduate students, adjuncts, lecturers, post-docs, and full-time faculty

GESO PLATFORM *continued . . .*

Yale should support graduate teachers and the work they perform for the university:

- Provide equal pay for equal work
- Create open, well publicized, and transparent departmental processes for allocating TAs
- Provide paid teacher training
- Publicize accurate job descriptions to both graduate students and faculty
- Preserve and expand access to teaching positions beyond the sixth year
- Allow for flexibility in existing teaching requirements and teaching semesters
- Provide more opportunities for TAs to teach seminars
- Reduce section/class size
- Reduce teaching load for language instructors and provide opportunities to teach literature courses
- Provide more institutional support for teachers (offices, desk copies, photocopies, printing, etc.)
- Give departments autonomy in determining the number of TAs assigned to lecture courses

Yale should invest in improving its relationship with New Haven:

- Make a fair-share contribution to New Haven's public schools to hire teachers, increase scholarships, and improve the quality and availability of high school educational, after-school, and summer programs
- Increase voluntary annual contributions to compensate for Yale's tax-exemptions
- Continue to work with Local 34 & 35 to train and hire New Haven's residents
- Use its influence to lobby the federal government for funding for education
- Make the university and its resources more accessible to the New Haven community
- Encourage and expand opportunities for members of the Yale community to participate in the civic life of the city of New Haven

Yale should hire and promote a diverse faculty, and recruit and retain a diverse graduate student body:

- Provide substantial financial resources for the Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity, especially for recruitment, retention, and placement programs
- Hire more women and people of color into tenured and ladder positions across all departments and fields
- Disclose comprehensive statistics that annually assess Yale's progress in building a more diverse faculty and student body, both university-wide and on a departmental level
- Close the pay gap between male and female professors
- Create an impartial, fair, third-party grievance procedure for all scholars

Yale should lead in providing support to families:

- Provide affordable, accessible, flexible child care
- Set a national standard by establishing a parental leave policy that pauses the tenure clock
- Create a parental leave policy that adds greater flexibility in coursework and teaching, and allows extensions on registration
- Establish a permanent work-life committee that includes graduate students and faculty to inform and oversee policy initiatives regarding family issues

As a global university Yale should support foreign scholars:

- Create fair alternatives to the SPEAK test
- Establish a hardship fund for people prevented from reentering the US due to visa delays
- Improve English language training, including summer courses before classes begin (with full room and board), writing tutors, expanded one-on-one tutoring program

This platform is a living document, subject to amendment according to the bylaws of the union.

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