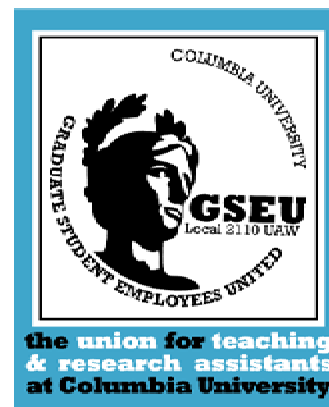




Frequently Asked Questions about Yale / Columbia Strike



1. *What's Happening?*

Graduate employees at Columbia and Yale Universities will be on strike from April 18-22, in the first multi-campus strike in the Ivy League's history.

2. *Why?*

Graduate teachers and researchers do much of the work that allows their universities to function effectively, yet they receive insufficient wages or benefits. To add insult to injury, the academic job market is so bad that many—especially women and people of color—face a future of continuing part-time or temporary teaching positions. They have decided that the fight to fix academic jobs begins now, as graduate employees.

3. *Do most Columbia and Yale graduate employees support unionization?*

In December 2004, majority support was certified on both campuses. At Columbia the majority was certified by Attorney General Eliot Spitzer; at Yale by Connecticut Secretary of State, Susan Bysiewicz. The university administrations have failed to respond.

4. *Do other graduate teachers have unions?*

Yes, approximately 40,000 graduate teachers have union representation today. Since 1969, when the first graduate employee union was recognized, public universities have had graduate teacher unions across the country. Graduate teachers have negotiated a union contract at one private university, NYU, whose contract expires in August 2005.

5. *Can graduate teachers form unions at private universities? What does the NLRB say?*

In 2000, the NLRB ruled in a unanimous decision that graduate teachers at NYU had the right to form and join unions under federal law. In 2004, Pres. Bush's NLRB issued a partisan 3-2 ruling stating that the protections of labor law no longer apply to graduate teachers at private universities. Graduate teacher can still legally form unions, but they no longer are protected by federal law.

6. *Which unions are supporting these graduate employees?*

Columbia graduate employees are organizing to join GSEU/UAW Local 2110.
Yale graduate employees are organizing to join GESO/UNITE HERE.

For more information about the working conditions on each campus, see the attached factsheets, or visit <http://www.geso.org> and <http://www.2110uaw.org/gseu/>

For even more information, contact:

GESO at Yale: **Rachel Sulkes** — (203)507-5739 rsulkes@hotmail.com

GSEU at Columbia: **Maida Rosenstein** — (917)495-8492 maidarosenstein@2110uaw.org
Office: (212)749-6703 **David Wolloch** — (248)298-9424 dwuaw@yahoo.com

Facts about Graduate Teachers at Yale:



Teacher Workload:

A study has found that graduate teachers provide **one-third of undergraduate contact hours**.

<http://www.geso.org>

<http://www.yaleunions.org/geso/reports/BlackboardBlues.pdf>

Graduate teachers: Work as sole instructor 5 days/week for language courses and seminars; Instruct small group sections associated with large lectures; Provide most undergraduate grades; Advise undergraduates.

Basic Pay:

Teachers are paid \$13,500 to \$17,000 a year.

- In the 3rd/4th years of a program, TA's are paid \$17,000.
- In 5th/6th/7th years of a program, TA pay is cut down to between \$13,500-\$15,800

Tuition:

One-fifth of teachers must pay tuition fees back to Yale, because they are not enrolled in a PhD program but in one of the following programs (tuition):

Art (\$24,000), **Architecture** (\$29,000), **Divinity** (\$16,000), **Forestry** (\$24,000),

These teachers owe Yale more money the more semesters they spend teaching Yale undergraduates.

Health Insurance:

One-fifth of teachers receive no health-care benefits (see above).

All teachers with families are charged \$3000-\$6000 annually for health insurance.

Many who cannot afford this charge use state-assistance (HUSKY) for their health care.

Grievance Procedure / Diversity:

Many people of color and women drop out of Graduate School because complaints are unresolved. Yale does not have an impartial grievance procedure for resolving complaints.

Last Spring, over 300 graduate assistants filed a grievance about Yale's treatment of minorities, but the administration failed to respond for 8 months, and then dismissed it.

Yale refuses to release its minority retention statistics for graduate students.

Other Facts about Yale University:

- This would be the 12th strike at Yale since 1968, and the 6th which involves graduate teachers.
- Yale University has an endowment valued at \$12.7 billion.
- Yale has only one black woman on the tenured faculty.
- The percent of tenured faculty who are black or Latino has not changed in 10 years.

GESO at Yale:

In December 2004, Connecticut Secretary of State Susan Bysiewicz certified 60% support for unionization among the teachers on Yale's Central Campus.

On April 6, 2005, GESO supporters published a public petition (available upon request) demonstrating the following support on Yale's Central Campus:

| | Teaching Assistants | Enrolled Students |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Union Members / GESO supporters | 300 | 700 |
| Total Size of Group | 500 | 1300 |

The scientists on Yale's Medical/Science campuses are organizing separately.