

Election Slate

COGS Coordinating Committee, 2020-2021

PRESIDENT

Nominees : Hadley Galbraith and John Jepsen

Hadley Galbraith

I am a fifth-year PhD student in French & Francophone World Studies. I've been a member of COGS for most of my time as a graduate student at the University of Iowa, getting more involved in 2017 when the Iowa legislature proposed changes to Chapter 20 that would make it harder COGS to exist (and which they eventually passed). This past year I have served on the Coordinating Committee as the Blue Area Steward, working to support students through grievances and other issues with TA contracts, build the stewards network, and contribute to COGS initiatives more broadly. I have been involved in other ways on campus that have given me experience and knowledge of university administration, organizing and leadership: I sat on GSS as a senator (2016-2017), served as President, Executive Officer, and Vice President of the World Languages Graduate Organization, (past 3 consecutive years), and was the graduate student representative to Department of French & Italian faculty for two years (2017-2018, 2018-2019).

The No Fees Campaign that COGS is currently running is close to my heart. I have been aware and concerned for several years of the amount of fees international students are required to pay, having several international-student friends and colleagues. This year our attention was raised to a required fee that all new graduate students must pay, and which is not covered by the 50% fee scholarship graduate students normally receive. The exorbitant fees for international students, and the possibility of more fees that are not covered by the fee scholarship, as well as the basic logic that we should not have to pay to work, are issues that concern all of us. I feel strong taking on this campaign with you and want to empower voices from across campus to bring about change.

One of the things I value most is getting to know students from diverse disciplines and learning about their experiences as graduate students and employees of the university. I would love the opportunity to lead COGS in our ongoing work to ensure those experience are the best they can be, particularly next year when we will be voting to recertify the union and bargaining with the Board of Regents.

John Jepsen

My name is John Jepsen (he/him/his). I like a good fight, and next year COGS is going to have a hell of a fight on its hands.

I'm a PhD candidate in History, I study the political-economy of settler-colonial energy systems in indigenous communities. I became involved in COGS when I first came to UIowa the Fall of 2017, after learning about the organization from former UIowa graduate students. At first I just helped with membership drives, attended meetings and socials, and paid my dues. I was encouraged to run for a position by former COGS president Laura Szech, and knew I wanted to help with bargaining, so I ran for Yellow Area Steward 2018-2019 and was elected. Under the leadership of Szech and VP Kenneth Elliott, I worked on COGS' successful recertification campaign, including increasing membership, and took part in the bargaining process with the Iowa Board of Regents for our 2019-2021 contract. I was reelected to be the Yellow Area Steward for 2019-2020, and under the leadership of President Michael Goldberg and Vice President Caleb Klipowicz, have helped with organizing efforts around building membership.

I was nominated for the 2020-2021 presidency and I take this nomination very seriously. This coming Fall, COGS is facing another recertification election which, if successful, will lead to COGS bargaining on behalf of graduate employees for a new, and better contract. The background to all of this will be local and national elections that could seriously affect the lives of all graduate employees, something COGS leadership must be prepared for. In addition, COGS must stay determined to campaign for 100% fees coverage. Fees disproportionately affect our members who are not financially stable as well as our international members.

If you elect me to be the president of COGS for the 2020-2021 year I promise to maintain the achievements of past administrations; to bring experience, compassion, and patience to the job of organizing; to work diligently to recertify COGS as the graduate worker union; and to fight for a better contract for graduate employees for 2021-2023.

I will work hard for COGS whether I am in a leadership role or as dues-paying member. But I believe I am well-positioned to help COGS best as a leader and representative on the Coordinating Committee and Bargaining Committee. I ask you for your vote and for your support this coming year. Together we can build on the long tradition of graduate worker and union activism to make a better life for all graduate students and the entire UIowa community.

VICE PRESIDENT

Nominees: Derick Delloro

Derick Delloro

Derick is a PhD student in Health and Human Physiology and the Green Area Steward. This past year he has been focused on bringing stewards into the Green Area, as well as supporting organizing effort in the campaign for 100% fee coverage. His goals as VP are to ramp up the fees campaign in the coming year through media outreach and direct action.

FINANCIAL OFFICER

Nominee: Erica Walker

I am a second-year student in the Sociology department and have been involved with COGS since I got to campus. The support our Union provides is one of the reasons I chose Iowa, and the friendships (and opportunities for collective action) COGS offers has been a highlight of grad school so far. This year, as Unity Chair, I've worked alongside our International Student Rep to revive the Unity Committee, which is responsible for strengthening relationships with student and community organizations, and ensuring that the voices of underrepresented groups of graduate workers are heard in the Union and by the University. While I've enjoyed my time in this position and plan to stay involved with the committee, I believe my skills are better suited to the role of Financial Officer. Before coming back to school, I spent several years helping to manage the finances of a small company. Because of this, I have experience with bookkeeping, taxes, and other administrative tasks that are crucial to keeping organizations like COGS healthy and in a position to grow.

CHIEF CAMPUS STEWARD

Nominees: Micki Burdick and Kezia Walker-Cecil

Micki Burdick

I am a PhD Student in the Communication and Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies Departments studying reproductive justice. My research is on access to reproductive healthcare and struggles with the grassroots pro-life movement in the United States. I was so grateful for COGS coming in as a new graduate student and became a department steward my first week on campus. I love that I was able to meet new people through COGS and feel supported, and I want to make sure that I have the ability to make others feel the same when they arrive on campus. As someone who has worked in the various communities I have lived in to organize for reproductive healthcare and housing, I can't wait to help organize our wonderful student body with COGS!

Kezia Walker-Cecil

Hi. I'm Kezia and I'm a fourth year PhD student in the Linguistics program. I've been a COGS member throughout my Master's and PhD studies, and I've volunteered as a departmental or area steward for about five years now. In the 2019-2020 academic year, I've worked as the chief campus steward and I'd love to continue the work of building the stewards network, training the next generation of grad student workers, and growing solidarity across campus. This last year has been full of growth for COGS, and it's been so amazing to see new members and stewards stepping up to advocate for themselves and their coworkers. I've been so inspired by all of my COGS siblings and I'm looking forward to advocating, educating, and organizing alongside you next year.

GREEN AREA STEWARD

Nominee: Eden Maack

I am a fourth-year graduate student in medicinal chemistry in the College of Pharmacy. I've been a member of COGS since I started graduate school because I was brought up to believe in the vital role of unions. I am currently the COGS steward for my department. Though I have been in my position for only a short time, I take my role seriously as an opportunity to build up good will between COGS and the graduate employees in the College of Pharmacy. As Green Area Steward, I would focus on increasing overall participation from the Green Area and on discovering and advocating for the issues that affect workers in the area.

YELLOW AREA STEWARD

Nominee: Ashley Dorn

I am a PhD candidate in History researching how residency, labor, and welfare policy governed migratory workers in the Midwest during the mid-twentieth century. I have been a member of COGS since I came to campus four years ago. I became more active in Iowa City labor politics after the Chapter 20 law change in 2017 and the attempt by the University administration to close the University of Iowa Labor Center. The University's attack on the Labor Center went against the needs and protest of workers and students across the state. Attending and speaking at events in support of the center showed me the callousness of administrative calculus and taught me how to prepare arguments in concert with other people and organizations in the fight. Last year I was elected to the CC as Labor and Solidarity chair. As Labor and Solidarity chair, I have worked most closely with Faculty Forward as well as meeting or speaking with graduate students from other universities in the midst of organizing or striking. Strategies and sources of power are often common between universities, and that means that strategies and sources of power for organizing are also shared.

I am running for Yellow Area Steward because I am eager to become more directly involved in the work lives of graduate students by serving as a steward, learning more about conditions of work across departments, problem solving together when possible, and helping workers navigate the grievance process when needed. I hope to bring what I have learned from unions and graduate students on other campuses to the task of organizing in the Yellow Area as we face recertification and the responsibility of bargaining a new contract in the coming year.

BLUE AREA STEWARD

Nominee: John Tappen

My name is John Tappen — I am a first year graduate student in the Department of American Studies, originally from New York. As area steward, I hope to bring grad workers from across disciplines in our area together in service of continuing to center grad worker concerns and best represent membership as a whole.

RED AREA STEWARD

Nominees: Michael Davis and Trent Olson

Michael Davis

I am in my second year of the math PhD program. Besides math I'm mostly interested in art, culture, politics. Books I'm currently reading include: *Making of the English Working Class*, *Candide*, *Blindness and Insight*, a biography on William Gladstone.

Trent Olson

I am currently pursuing my MS in geology with plans to continue afterwards with my PhD. I did my undergraduate studies at North Dakota State University in Fargo, ND, where I graduated with my BS in geosciences in 2018. My plan after my graduate studies involves becoming a tenured professor. I believe that the success of COGs will be integral to a smooth and successful time during my graduate studies. Therefore, I became the Earth and Environmental Sciences steward last fall and feel a need to help build a strong and robust steward's network to protect my fellow graduate assistants.

BARGAINING AND ORGANIZING AT LARGE**Nominee: Inga Popovaite**

Inga is a fifth year student in the department of Sociology & Criminology. She has been COGS member since her first day at the University. She has served on two Coordinating Committees, as an International Student Representative and as a Social Chair. She was on the Organizing committee during the last recertification campaign and thinks that this experience will be beneficial for successful recertification and contract negotiation upcoming school year. As an international student herself, Inga wants to make sure that international students, who are a sizeable part of the graduate workers population, are represented at the bargaining table and their voices heard during recertification process.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE**Nominee: Giulia Scialacqua**

Born and raised in Italy, I have been at the University of Iowa for two years now. Current International Student Representative, I'd love to continue following current projects and keep advocating for international graduate workers.

PRESS AND PUBLICITY CHAIR**Nominee: Lizzy Handschy**

For 2020-2021, Lizzy will be a 6th year Cultural Anthropology PhD Student. She served as the COGS Press and Publicity Committee Chair for the 2019-2020 academic year, and as the Anthropology Department Steward during the 2016-2017 academic year. She is excited for the opportunity to continue to learn and share skills to engage press, use social media and other publicity forms to strengthen the union and graduate workers solidarity!

POLITICAL ACTION CHAIR

Nominee: Daniel Kipp

My name is Daniel Knipp, and I am a fourth-year graduate student in the Sociology Program. I have served as the COGS Correspondence and Recording Officer for the past two years. In this role, I have recorded the events of each Coordinating Committee and General Membership Meeting, while also taking part in substantive discussions about our goals as an organization and how to best accomplish them. I am of the opinion that, especially in this election year, we should define ourselves not just as a labor union, but by connecting with other political issues relevant to graduate workers as well. In doing so, we will gain new members by engaging them with a broader range of issues; and we will have the opportunity to establish footing as a local political organization. The goals of the coming year - recertification, bargaining, campaigning on fees, liaising with political campaigns, increasing our membership - will all be served by vigorously representing a greater number of graduate workers' interests. We should stand up for graduate students' rights and needs both as workers and as people.

LABOR AND SOLIDARITY CHAIR

Nominees: Manuel Albrizzio and Michael Goldberg

Manuel Albrizzio

My name is Manuel, but everyone calls me Manny. I am a Math PhD student with the university. Born in Peru, but raised in NJ where I did my undergrad and Master's. I've also held officer positions in clubs and organizations there.

Michael Goldberg

I am finishing my sixth year as a graduate student in the College of Education. I have been a member of COGS since the beginning, volunteering during blitzes and eventually sitting on the CC as Bargaining and Grievance at large for two years and president for the past year. I hope to continue building our relationships with sibling unions and supportive organizations around the campus and community to make our collective voice impossible to ignore.

TRUSTEES (You can pick up to 3)

Nominees: James Earl and Ed Keogh (no bio)

James Earl

I've been a trustee for two years now. I know what I'm doing and am ready to help train in any new trustees.

VACANT POSITIONS

Recording Officer

Social Chair

Unity Chair