



THE **COGS** GUIDE TO GRADUATE UNION RIGHTS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

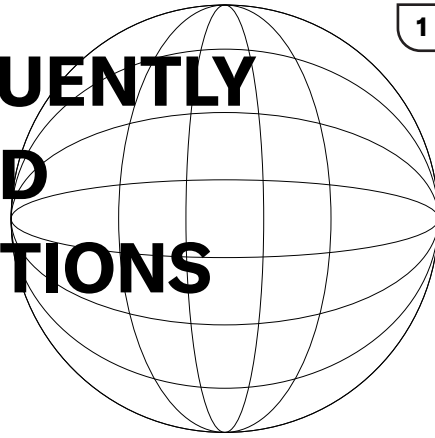
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Prepared by the COGS
Unity Committee



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



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WHAT IS COGS?

COGS is a union that represents graduate TAs and RAs at the University of Iowa, committed to improving the standard of living of all TAs and RAs. **COGS is not a political party and is not affiliated with any political party.**

COGS was established in 1996 and since then has fought hard to win the benefits we have today, including the tuition waiver, 50% reduction in mandatory fees, and GRADCARE.

WHAT DOES COGS DO?

- The University of Iowa and COGS negotiate a contract that

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determines **your pay, health care benefits, and other rights and benefits.** COGS members vote on what goes into our contract.

- COGS also helps TAs and RAs **file grievances** when their rights under university policy or our contract have been violated.
- COGS is also fighting everyday to secure more wins. The issues we are currently focused on are **winning an emergency wage increase and abolishing fees.**

CAN INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS JOIN COGS?

YES.

Every international graduate student, regardless of national origin or type of visa, has the right to join a union. Your right to belong to a union is protected by the right to freedom of association guaranteed in the United States Constitution.

And as a TA or RA, you are a public employee of the state of Iowa

and are protected by the Public Employee Relations Act of the State of Iowa, which states: “*Public employees shall have the right to:*

1. *Organize, or form, join, or assist any employee organization.*
2. *Negotiate collectively through representatives of their choosing.*
3. *Engage in other concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection. . . .”*

This means that you can join and participate in the union **without fear**. Under the law:

- No one can threaten your job or benefits
- No one can threaten your stay in the U.S. (e.g., you will not be deported, or have your immigration status changed or revoked)

- No one can threaten your standing in your academic program.

WHY SHOULD INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS JOIN COGS?

International students make up a **third of all TAs and RAs** and are a vital part of COGS. Domestic students and international students face many of the same kinds of issues: **not enough pay, workplace exploitation, overwork, etc.** But international students are faced with them more severely, making their perspectives critical.

Scan the QR code or visit **cogs.org** to become a member and join our campaign to End the Fees!

