

On Friday, June 19, the NYU administration formally announced its intention to implement FAR 4 (Financial Aid Restructuring 4) in September 2009. Developed behind closed doors by an undisclosed group of NYU administrators, FAR 4 is a poorly conceived and hastily implemented attempt at union-busting that GSOC/UAW Local 2110 finds unconscionable, both in the circumstances of its development and its content.

THE BASICS OF FAR 4

Proposed to GSAS department chairs and directors of graduate study in early April 2009, FAR 4 allegedly removes the graduate teaching requirement from the MacCracken fellowship package. Graduate employees teaching while on fellowship will be paid as adjuncts and receive adjunct wages in addition to their stipends. Teaching after the fifth year of fellowship will also be compensated at the current adjunct rate of roughly \$4000 per course. The NYU administration claims that all graduate employees engaged in teaching would then be classified as adjuncts and able to join the adjunct union – ACT/UAW Local 7902. At this time, the NYU administration has yet to contact or consult with either GSOC/UAW or ACT/UAW 7902 about the possibility of graduate employees being represented by Local 7902.

FAR 4 CANNOT REPLACE A GSOC/UAW LOCAL 2110 CONTRACT

After years of pressure from our union, the NYU administration is reversing its stance of the past ten years and finally admitting that graduate teaching is work. Yet by asserting graduate employee membership in the adjunct union, the NYU administration is not benevolently looking out for our collective bargaining rights. No matter how attractive aspects of FAR 4 may seem, without a legally binding union contract ratified by GSOC/UAW Local 2110 members, the NYU administration maintains the unilateral power to decide our wages, benefits and working conditions. Only a GSOC/UAW Local 2110 contract can guarantee secure wages, benefits and working conditions for all NYU graduate employees. FAR 4 is an attempt to limit both what types of graduate employee jobs might receive protections AND what terms and conditions of graduate employment would be covered by a union contract.

FAR 4 WILL NOT PROTECT ALL OF OUR WORK

By enacting FAR 4 and proposing our membership in the adjunct union, the NYU administration is not seeking to acknowledge or protect all of the work that graduate employees perform on campus. The terms and conditions of a GSOC/UAW Local 2110 contract are specific to the situation of graduate employees and our work – which includes more than just teaching. Not all graduate employee positions will be eligible for protection under the adjunct contract.

FAR 4 LIMITS THE CONDITIONS OVER WHICH WE CAN BARGAIN

FAR 4 is also an attempt by the university to deny graduate employees our right to collectively bargain over all of the conditions that affect our work. Under FAR for example, we would have no ability to collectively bargain over our healthcare, which would be provided as part of a 5-year fellowship package and not as an employment benefit governed by a GSOC/UAW Local 2110 contract or even an ACT/UAW Local 7902 contract.

WE WILL STILL BE DOING THE WORK

While the administration claims that FAR-4 will reduce time to degree by eliminating the category of teaching assistant, there is no clear evidence that it will reduce the amount of teaching graduate students actually perform. The NYU administration's June 19 memorandum states that many graduate students admitted prior to 2009 will still be required to teach in order to meet department's "curricular staffing plans." Despite the promise of more time for graduate employees to engage in academic work, FAR-4 could for many of us intensify pressure to graduate without providing relief from teaching obligations. Most importantly, without a GSOC/UAW Local 2110 contract, any graduate teaching arrangements that individual departments offer could change at any time.

WE HAVE A RIGHT TO OUR OWN UNION: NYU NEGOTIATE NOW

FAR 4 is the latest effort by the NYU administration to deny us our internationally recognized right to organize and establish our own union. In 2008, the International Labor Organization, an agency of the United Nations, condemned the 2004 National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) decision that stripped graduate employees at private universities of our collective bargaining rights for violating international labor standards of freedom of association. The UAW and our labor allies in Congress also introduced federal legislation, the TA and RA Collective Bargaining Rights Act. Supported by President Barack Obama, the Act nullifies the 2004 NLRB decision. The Act amends the National Labor Relations Act to guarantee collective bargaining rights to graduate employees at private universities and colleges. TAs and RAs at public universities have enjoyed collective bargaining rights for decades. Collective bargaining has enhanced the quality of higher education at some of our country's best public universities, including the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, the University of Wisconsin, Madison and the University of California, Berkeley.

[PLEASE SIGN THE ONLINE PETITION TO SUPPORT THE TA AND RA COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RIGHTS ACT.](#)

In deference to the consistently demonstrated will of the majority of graduate employees on campus, we demand that the NYU administration negotiate with GSOC/UAW Local 2110 over the terms and conditions of all graduate employment at NYU.

For more information about GSOC/UAW Local 2110 and to read our official statement on FAR 4, please visit <http://www.2110uaw.org/gsoc/>.