

College of Engineering New Graduate Student Orientation Fall 2025

UConn
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Welcome from



Ji-Cheng 'JC' Zhao, Ph.D.
Dean of College of Engineering



Julia Valla, Ph.D.
Director of Graduate Studies

COE Graduate Council Introduction

Julia Valla, Ph.D.

**Director of Graduate Studies,
Associate Professor, Chemical &
Biomolecular Engineering**

[https://kaltura.uconn.edu/media/First+Orientationv+video.
mov/1_581lm3cr](https://kaltura.uconn.edu/media/First+Orientationv+video.mov/1_581lm3cr)



Meet the Graduate Programs Team



Aida Ghiaei

Director of Graduate Recruitment,
Support & Engagement



Fayekah Assanah

Director of Engineering
Education Initiative



Jodie LaRosa

Program Assistant

FIND US IN THE CASTLEMAN BUILDING



Agenda

STUDENT RESOURCES

STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

GRAD SCHOOL GAME PLAN

GRADUATE STUDENT UNION PRESENTATION

QNA Session

Student Resources

ENGINEERING TECHNICAL
SERVICES: PETE MENARD



*COE GRADUATE COUNCIL
INTRODUCTION: AIDA*



Graduate Student Resource
and Support: AIDA



CAREER SERVICES : AIDA



*PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
COURSES: FAYE ASSANAH*





Engineering Technical Services

Grad Student support offerings

UConn
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

How do i?

- Get lab experiment help?

<https://ets.engr.uconn.edu/innovation-shop/>

- Support designing and building fixtures
- Electronics support
- Learn to use the shop equipment
- Get computer tech support?
 - Email to engr-help@uconn.edu
 - Support with lab network setup
 - Solving software issues – install and running
 - Computer hardware support
 - Server support

Experiment or EHS support

- Start a new experiment
 - UConn EHS
 - Chemical waste handling
 - New gas lines
 - Furnace setups
- Facility modifications for lab challenges
 - Get Pete Menard involved pete@uconn.edu
 - Toxic gases
 - Exhaust issues
 - Facility problems (i.e. broken ventilation)
 - Don't know how to manage a problem? Contact Pete.



Graduate Student Resource and Support

Aida Ghiaei

**Director of Graduate Recruitment,
Support & Engagement**



Graduate Directors



Monty Escabi, Ph.D.
Biomedical Engineering



Jeongho Kim, Ph.D.
Civil Engineering



Julian Norato, Ph.D.
School of Mechanical,
Aerospace, and
Manufacturing
Engineering



Helena Silva, Ph.D.
Electrical & Computer
Engineering

Graduate Directors



Tim Vadas, Ph.D.
Environmental
Engineering



**Xueju (Sophie) Wang,
Ph.D.**
Materials Science &
Engineering

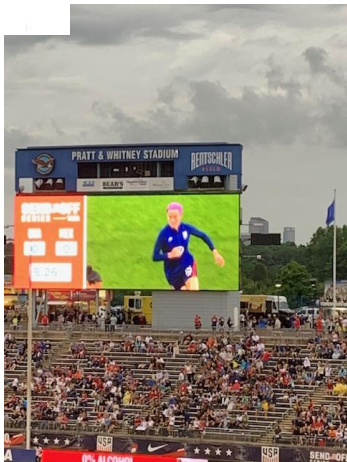
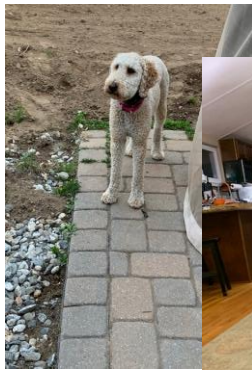


Alexander Russell, Ph.D.
School of Computing



Matthew Stuber, Ph.D.
Chemical & Biomolecular
Engineering







#1

Advocator

Mentor

Connector

My Door is Always Open (Castleman bldg. 222)

#2

Recruit for Engineering Graduate programs

- National Engineering Conferences
- Colleges in CT, MA, RI, NH
- Hold Open houses
- Presentation to UConn STEM undergrads

#3

Professional Skills Development

- Courses
- Workshops
- Seminars
- Webinars
- Competitions
- Net working events

#4

**Everything Else that would help
our Graduate Students**

ENGR 5450: *First Year Experience*





Just Ask Us:
aida@uconn.edu



Engineering Career Services

UConn
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Center for Career Readiness and Life Skills



Kay Gruder, M.Ed., Certified Career Services Provider™
Associate Director, Graduate Student and Postdoc
Career Services and Programs | Career Liaison to ISSS

Wilbur Cross Building - Storrs Campus
Career.uconn.edu | Kay.gruder@UConn.edu

The screenshot displays the UConn Career Center website. At the top, the UConn logo and navigation links are visible. The main header features the 'Center for Career Readiness and Life Skills' title, a search bar, and buttons for 'Schedule an Appointment', '12twenty', 'Request a Presentation', and 'Career Champions'. Below this is a horizontal menu with various categories like 'How Do I...', 'Partners', 'Career & Affinity Communities', 'Events', 'Outcomes', 'Life Skills', 'Work+ UConn', 'Regional Campuses', and 'About Us'. The main content area is dominated by the '12twenty' logo, which is described as 'The Career Center's new one stop shop!'. To the right, a section titled 'Upcoming Events' lists two events: 'What's Your Job Offer Negotiation Game Plan?' on September 17 and 'Prepare for the Fair Mixer' on September 25.

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Center for Career Readiness and Life Skills

Schedule an Appointment 12twenty Request a Presentation Career Champions

How Do I... Partners Career & Affinity Communities Events Outcomes Life Skills Work+ UConn Regional Campuses About Us

12twenty
The Career Center's new one stop shop!

Upcoming Events

- SEP 17 What's Your Job Offer Negotiation Game Plan? (Do you even have one?)
Wed, Sep 17 from 11am - 12pm
- SEP 25 Prepare for the Fair Mixer
Thu, Sep 25 from 5:30pm - 7pm

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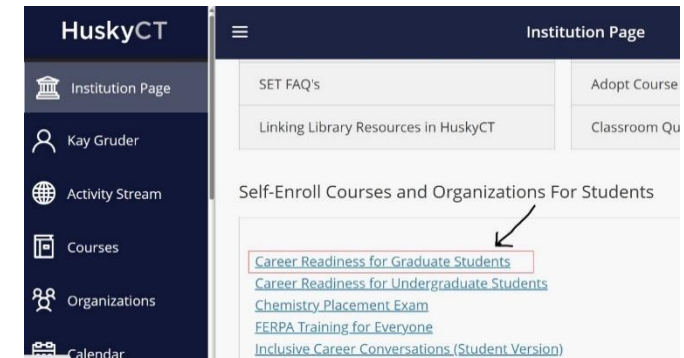
Your Career by Design – Don't Leave it to Chance!

Your degree should be just one of your many qualifications.

Five First Year Action Items:

- **Become familiar** with the resources at career.uconn.edu
- **Regularly update** your CV or résumé using the resources provided at: <https://career.uconn.edu/resources/graduate-student-resume-cover-letter-guide/> and <https://career.uconn.edu/resources/writing-your-curriculum-vitae-cv/>
- **Enroll in the self-paced Graduate Student Career Readiness Modules** on Husky CT via UConn's HuskyCT landing page [**Topics include:** Becoming Career Ready, Résumé Writing, Informational Interviewing, Job/Internship Search, LinkedIn, Interviewing, Academic Job Search and Application (includes CV), Finding a Workplace that Aligns with Your Values]
- **Schedule an appointment with a career coach** at the Center for Career Readiness and Life Skills to explore and chat about all things of interest! <https://career.uconn.edu/meet-with-a-career-coach/>
- **Seek to engage in growth opportunities** inside and beyond your department (professional society, student org., leadership, internship, career-related courses, employer visits, informational interviews, etc.)

Data point: 85% of jobs are filled through networking with personal and professional connections.



Professional Development Courses

Dr. Fayekah Assanah
Assistant Professor in Residence, BME
Director of Engineering Education Initiatives, CoE



Professional Development Course Series

- Series of 1-credit courses for all CoE graduate students
- Develop interpersonal and professional skills
- Offered on a rotating basis during Fall and Spring
- No pre-requisites

Fall:

- **ENGR 5410: Scientific Communication**
- **ENGR 5420: Engineering Internships and Career in Industry**
- **ENGR 5450: First-Year Experience**
- **ENGR 5300-012: Scientific Writing**
- **ENGR 5300-011: Engineering Practicum**

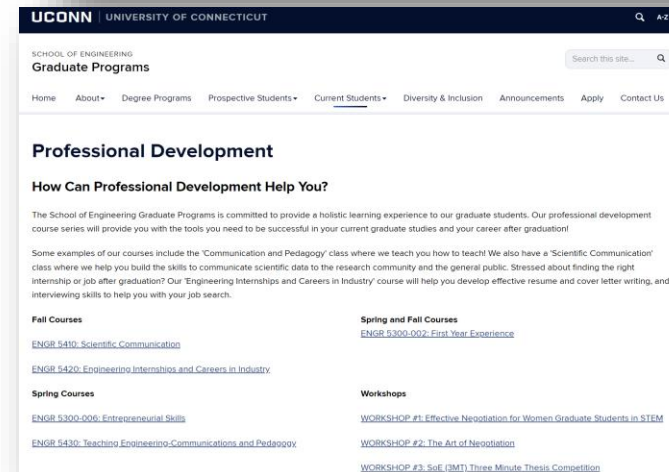
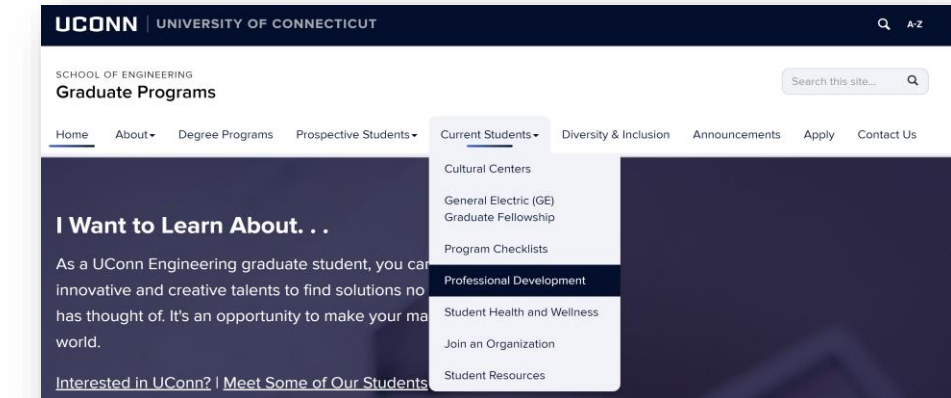
Spring:

- **ENGR 5300-002: First-Year Experience**
- **ENGR 5430: Teaching Engineering- Communication and Pedagogy**
- **ENGR 5300-011: Engineering Practicum**

Workshops:

- *The Art of Negotiation*
- *3MT Preparation*

Where to find more information?



Website:



Professional Development Course Series

UNCONN | COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING
GRADUATE PROGRAMS

UNLOCK YOUR POTENTIAL AND MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR GRADUATE JOURNEY
ENROLL IN ENGR 5450-001: FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE



BEFORE TAKING ENGR 5450 **AFTER TAKING ENGR 5450**

Scan the QR code to register today!

CLASS HIGHLIGHTS:

- Essential tools for graduate success
- Strategies to graduate on time
- Build a powerful network now
- Identify your advocates
- Find mentors who inspire

Credit: 1.0 | Prerequisite: None | Format: In-person
Wednesdays 12:20 PM - 1:10 PM | CAST 204
Questions? Email aida@uconn.edu

Link: <https://studentadmin.uconn.edu/>

Communicate Science with Clarity, Purpose, and Impact!

ENGR 5410: SCIENTIFIC COMMUNICATION

- Tell science as a story
- Craft an elevator speech
- Master conference talks
- Create templates for talks and posters
- Turn data into powerful visuals
- Learn to speak with purpose and present with power
- Discover the challenge: 3MT - three minutes, one thesis




WEDNESDAYS FALL 2025
12:20 - 1:10 PM
1 CREDIT
E2 321

REGISTER
<https://studentadmin.uconn.edu/>

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LAUNCH YOUR CAREER— ALL IN ONE PLACE



ENGR 5420: INTERNSHIPS AND CAREERS IN THE INDUSTRY

WEDNESDAYS, FALL 2025
3:35 - 4:35 PM,
1 CREDIT
E2 322

REGISTER
<https://studentadmin.uconn.edu/>

COMPETENCIES
Get familiar with what companies are looking for in UConn Career Competencies.

RESUME
Craft your resume. Learn the do's and the don'ts. Highlight skills.

LINKEDIN
Revise and design your LinkedIn profile effectively to be seen by recruiters. Make connections.

NETWORK
Meet with experts in the industry and learn tips on networking. Practice how to network.

INTERVIEW
Learn about the interview process and practice how to interview successfully.

CAREER COACHING
Make connections with career coaches at UConn. Learn about work permits for international students.

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Need help with your manuscript?
Start here, finish strong.

ENGR 5300 - 012: SCIENTIFIC WRITING

- Write to clarify complex ideas
- Draft of your manuscript with guidance
- Improve writing flow and effectiveness
- Understand manuscripts and publishing rules



THURSDAYS, FALL 2025
2:00 - 4:00 PM
2 CREDITS
GENT 140C

REGISTER
<https://studentadmin.uconn.edu/>

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Learn It. Live It. Practicum Starts Here!

Engr 5300 - 011 ENGINEERING PRACTICUM

What is it?

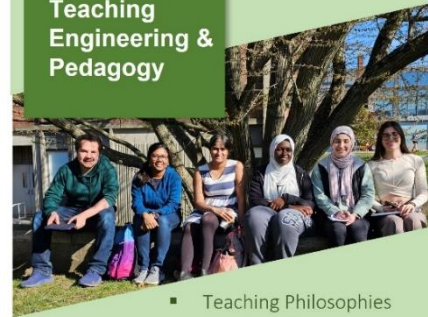
- A hands-on course for graduate students to experience designing and teaching engineering courses
- Engage in activities related to instructional design, and educational research within engineering
- Mentor students
- Receive credit towards GCCI

TBD, FALL 2025
TBD, 1 CREDIT
PWEB 180

REGISTER
<https://studentadmin.uconn.edu/>

UNCONN | COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ENGR 5430: Teaching Engineering & Pedagogy



- Teaching Philosophies
- Learning Objectives
- Instructional Design
- Student Motivation
- Assessments, Rubrics
- GCCI Approved

Website:



Contact: Faye Assanah, Fayekah.Assanah@uconn.edu
Aida Ghiaei, aida@uconn.edu

STUDENT RESOURCES



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graph TD; A[STUDENT RESOURCES] --> B[STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS]; B --> C[GRAD SCHOOL GAME PLAN]; C --> D[GRADUATE STUDENT UNION PRESENTATION]; D --> E[QNA Session];
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STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

GRAD SCHOOL GAME PLAN

GRADUATE STUDENT UNION PRESENTATION

QNA Session



Student Health and Wellness

Creating a Culture of Wellness

UConn
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Student Health and Wellness' Vision

Cultivate optimal health and lifelong
well-being
for every UConn student

UConn Student Health and Wellness

SHaW Service Lines:



Medical Care

Hilda May Williams Building
234 Glenbrook Road
860-486-4700



Pharmacy



Mental Health

Arjona Building
4th Floor
337 Mansfield Road
860-486-4700



Health Promotion

Wilson Building
South Campus
860-486-4700

Overview of SHaW Services

Medical Care and Pharmacy:

- *Primary Care*
- *Women's Health*
- *Orthopedics and Sports Medicine*
- *Nutrition Services*
- *Sexual Assault Services (SAFE)*
- *Gender Affirming Care*
- *24 Hour Advice Nurse Line*
- *Allergy and Travel Medicine*
- *Pharmacy*
- *Radiology*
- *Overnight Infirmary*

Mental Health:

- *Wellness Resources*
- *Let's Talk*
- *Consultation*
- *Group Therapy*
- *Individual Therapy*
- *Medication Management*
- *Crisis Support*
- *Clinical Case Management*

Health Promotion:

- *Wellness Coalition*
- *Collective Impact Approach*
- *Wellness Framework*
- *UConn Recovery House*

Graduate Student Well-being

- The past ten years have seen mounting evidence that graduate students are facing increasing levels of stress and anxiety.
- According to a recent study involving a survey of 3500 graduate students at twelve public institutions during the COVID-19 pandemic, 67% of survey respondents scored low on well-being factors ([CGS JED Grad-Student-Mental-Health-Report-1.pdf \(cgsnet.org\)](#))

Impact and opportunities

- Overall, rates of self-reported depression and anxiety are six times higher among graduate students compared to those of the general population and higher than their same-aged, college educated peers.
- Positive factors related to lower levels of depressive symptoms, include social support, climate of the department, and optimism about one's career prospects

Positive factors related to graduate student mental health (2020) [Full article: Positive factors related to graduate student mental health \(tandfonline.com\)](https://tandfonline.com)

SHaW Mental Health

Who we are: The right supports at the right time.

Student Health and Wellness Mental Health works closely with University partners to offer a comprehensive range of options to meet students' needs.

Offering students access to a personalized approach that promotes wellbeing and meets their mental health needs by offering

- Rapid Success
- A solution focused, student centered approach
- Interventions with proven outcomes that meet the diverse needs of our students



24 Hour Services

These services are available to students on all UConn campuses











Advice Nurse
860-486-4700



Mental Health Support
Within the U.S., Canada and the Caribbean:
833-308-3040
All other international locations:
+1-984-268-2016



Togetherall
Peer to Peer Support

Tools	Overview	Audience	Access	Time to complete
Self-guided Screening				
	Online screening program that offers a simple, confidential way for students to check on their behavioral health and get connected to campus resources.	Students		Multiple screenings to choose from. Each takes between 3-5 minutes.
Mental Health Support				
	Clinically managed, online anonymous peer to peer community designed to improve mental health	Students		Real access to support network
	24/7/365 mental health support line 833-308-3040 (U.S., Canada and the Caribbean) Or +1-984-268-2016 for all other international locations	Students		Immediate contact with a licensed practitioner
Mental Health Training				
	Online suicide prevention training program to help recognize and respond to people at risk.	Students, Faculty & Staff		20 minutes

SHaW Mental Health Contact Information

- Phone: 860-486-4700
- Website: <https://studenthealth.uconn.edu/>
- Social Media: @uconnstudenthealth (*Instagram*)



Be well.

Feel well.

Do well.

UConn

STUDENT HEALTH
AND WELLNESS

Questions?

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CONNECTICUT

STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Be well. Feel well. Do well.

STUDENT RESOURCES



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STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

GRAD SCHOOL GAME PLAN

GRADUATE STUDENT UNION PRESENTATION

QNA Session

Grad School Game Plan

INTRODUCTION TO
STUDENT GROUPS

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GRADUATE STUDENT
PANEL

*Managing Multiple Roles
as a Graduate Student*

Graduate Student Leaders





Welcome
To
Student Association of Graduate Engineers (SAGE)

UConn
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING



Who are we?

An organization for the graduate students of all engineering programs

What do we do?

Host workshops, social events, & professional development programs

What are the benefits of SAGE membership?

We help students to develop professional skills, connect with professional networks, engage in fun-activities with peers and much more!

Follow us on Instagram and Facebook or email us to be added to our mailing list for the updates of future events!



@sage_uconn



UConn SAGE

SAGE E-Board 2025-2026

President



K M Abu Hurayra Lizu, MSE

Vice President



Chiamaka Nwabanne

Secretary

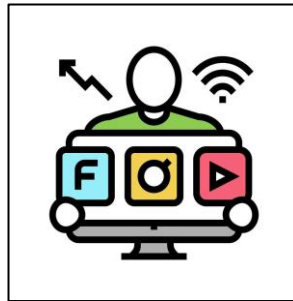


Kaitlyn Mahoney

Treasurer



Naeem Ahmed



Social Media Secretary



Join Us!!!

Activities and Workshops



**Workshop on Network Building,
Fall 2023**



Workshop on Data Science, 2024



BBQ Social Event, Spring 2023



John Lof Leadership Academy

JLLA

UConn
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

What does LEADERSHIP mean to you?



Welcome from JLLA!

- An organization *by students, for students* to foster leadership experience
- Student will organize workshops
 - Learn about a leadership topic
 - Invite speakers
 - Team-building activities



Why join JLLA?

- Learn leadership & communication skills
- Network with leaders from academia & industry
- Add professional leadership experience to your CV
- Earn funding for conference travel



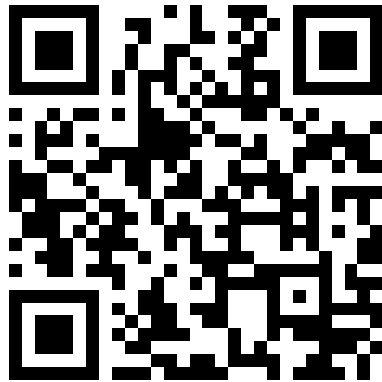
John Lof Leadership Academy

JLLA

UConn
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Application is open NOW!

- Join an **exclusive cohort** of COE grad students
- Commitment length: **2 years**
- **\$700 travel award** available for students*



Thanks for your attention!

Looking forward to see you at JLLA!



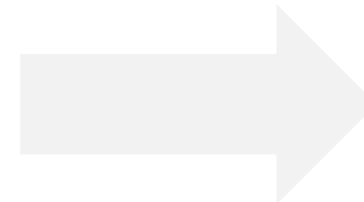
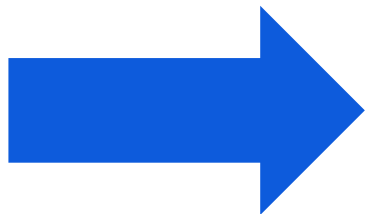


UConn Grad_BlackSTEM

John Ajayi/Seun Akinola/Confidence Francis-Edoziuno

UCONN
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

WHO ARE WE?



WHAT DO WE DO?



**Identifying Research
Gaps & Building
Research Roadmaps**



**ACHIEVING WORK-LIFE
BALANCE IN GRAD SCHOOL**

UCONN GRAD_BLACK STEM PRESENTS

Finances in Grad School

**09/28, 6:30pm
McHugh 202**

Come learn how to
navigate and make the
most of your finances in
grad school.



UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

**Panel Discussion
on Internships**

**JOIN THE CONVERSATION
WITH PREVIOUS STUDENT
INTERNS AND SCHOOL
LEADERS**

Listen and learn from peers on their internship experience. Students will share personal insights on landing industry roles that potentially lead to full time positions. This event is open to all graduate students, post graduates, and faculty of color in STEM disciplines.

**Date: Oct. 11th 2023
Venue: room 108 MCHU
Time: 5- 7pm**

Contact us

7th, 2024

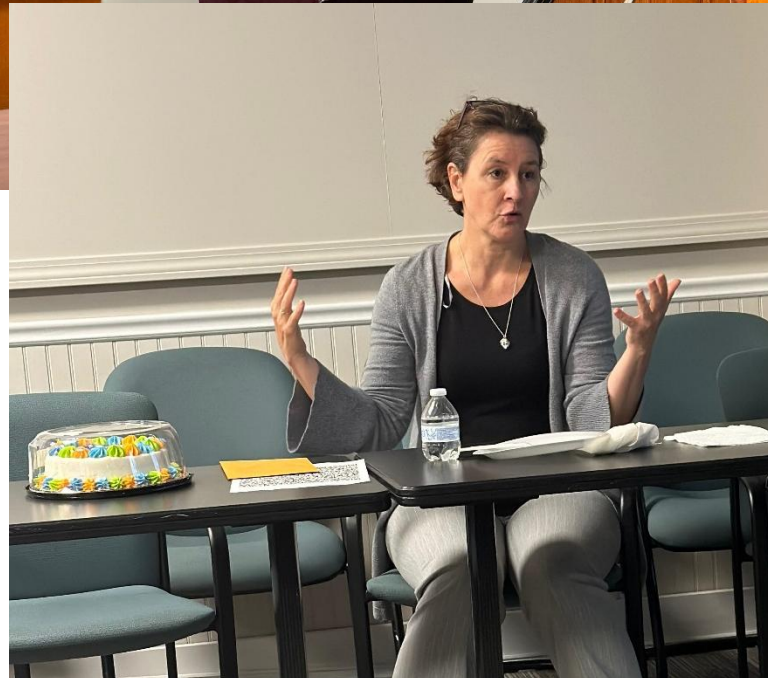
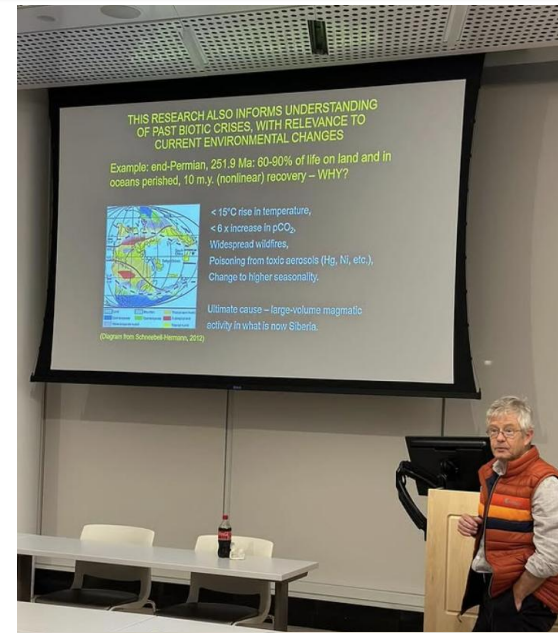
- Identify our struggles as graduate students.
- Organize and facilitate enriching seminars, workshops, and group conversations to achieve academic excellence as graduate students.



**GRAD_BLACKSTEM
UCONN**



WHY JOIN US?

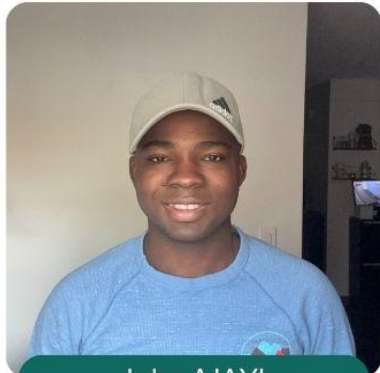


WHY JOIN US?



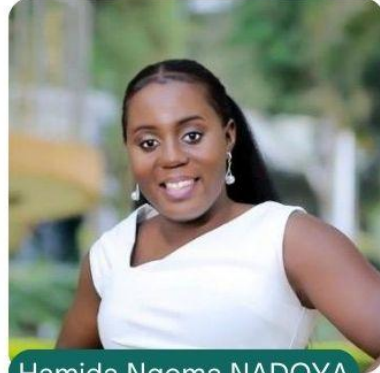
CONTACT US TO JOIN

Meet the 2025/2026 E-Board



John AJAYI

PRESIDENT
Earth Sciences
John.ajayi@uconn.edu



Hamida Ngoma NADOYA

VICE PRESIDENT
Earth Sciences
hamida.nadoya@uconn.edu



Nsikak-Abasi OTUNG

SECRETARY
Material Science Engineering
nsikak-abasi.otung@uconn.edu



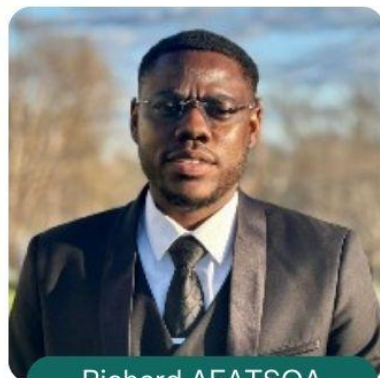
Confidence FRANCIS-EDOZIUNO

TREASURER
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Oluwaseun Moses AKINOLA

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@uconngrad_blackstem



uconngrad.blackstem@gmail.com



GRAD_BLACKSTEM
UConn

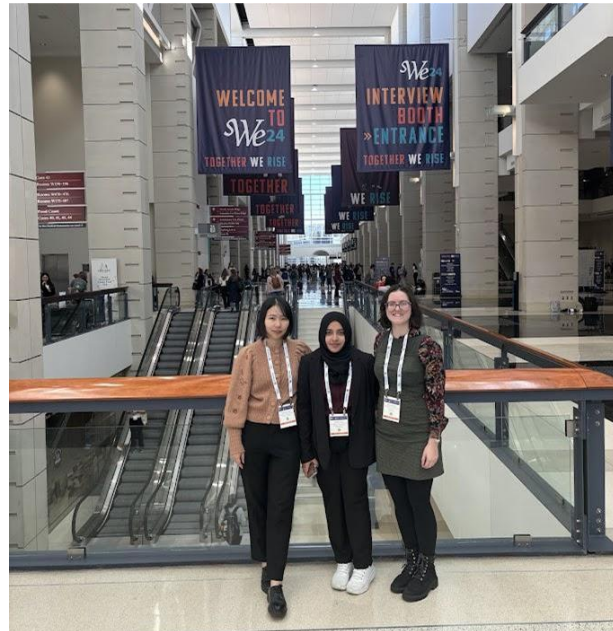
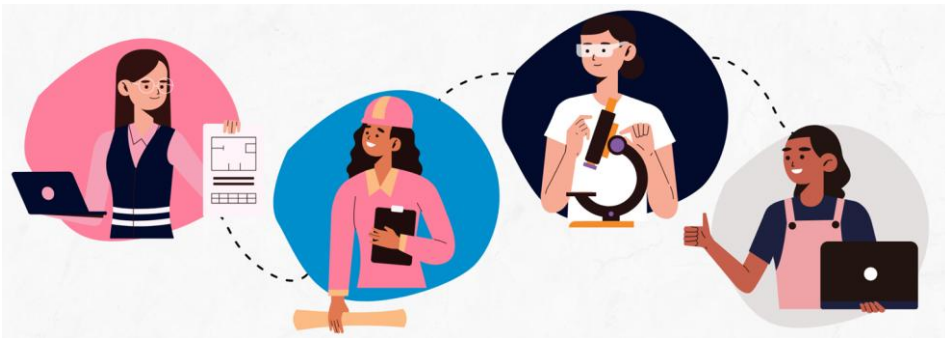


UConn
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Mission

Starting in 1950 SWE has been empowering women in engineering to *Aspire. Advance. Achieve.*

GradSWE is the graduate student chapter of the Society of Women Engineers at UCONN



UConn
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

VERGNANO INSTITUTE
FOR INCLUSION

Past Events



Conferences



Origami
Nights



Game
Nights



Painting
Coffee
Hours

Come & Connect With Us

At Future events

- Coffee Hours
- General Meetings
- Game Nights
- Professional Workshops



@gradswe_uconn



uconnswegrad@gmail.com



WhatsApp Group



Uconnect





Materials Research Society

UConn
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Who We Are

- Focus on connecting, developing and assisting materials researchers
- Event Types:
 - MSE Qualifier Prep Classes
 - Monthly Coffee Hours
 - Seasonal Hikes
- Reach out at: uconn.mse.mrs@gmail.com

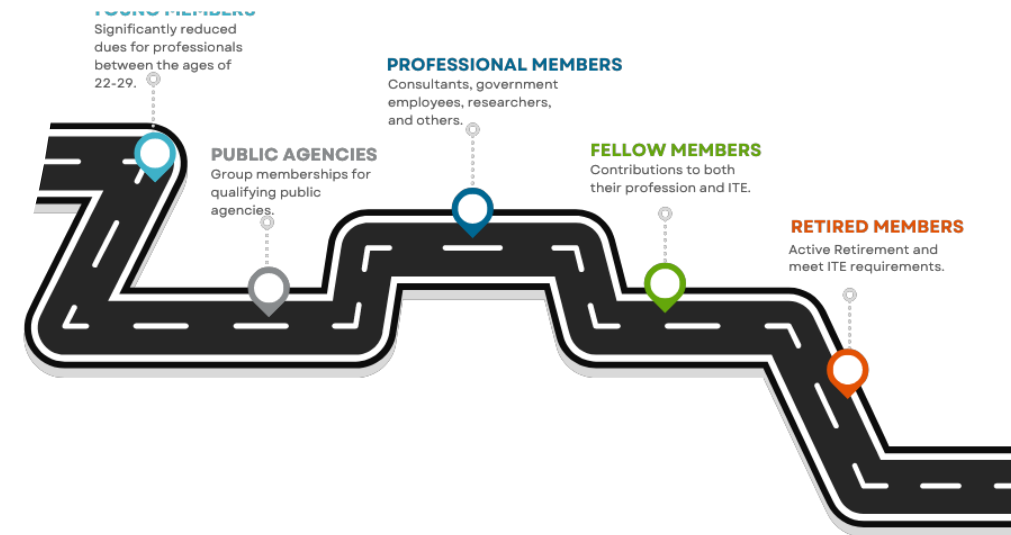


ITE – UConn Student Chapter

UConn
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

What is Uconn - ITE

- ITE = Institute of Transportation Engineers
- ITE student chapter aims to -
 - Build relationships
 - Expand knowledge through events, research, and field trips
 - Provide professional development opportunities for students
 - Workshops
 - Networking Opportunities



Why join?

- To know recent developments made in
 - Pedestrian Safety
 - Traffic Fatalities
 - Roadway Infrastructure
- Access to state-of-the-art facilities
 - Latest Technology
 - Modern Equipment
- Career/Network opportunities
 - Collaboration
 - **Internships**
- Contributing to the society
 - Enhancing the accessibility
 - Equity



Multiple roles of graduate students

- Acknowledge All Your Roles
- Set Realistic Expectations
- Time Management and Boundaries
- Prioritize and Be Flexible
- Integrate Roles When Possible
- Self-Care and Personal Time
- Seek Support
- Stay Organized and Efficient
- Embrace Imperfection



STUDENT RESOURCES

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graph TD; A[STUDENT RESOURCES] --> B[STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS]; B --> C[GRAD SCHOOL GAME PLAN]; C --> D[GRADUATE STUDENT UNION PRESENTATION]; D --> E[QNA SESSION];
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STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

GRAD SCHOOL GAME PLAN

GRADUATE STUDENT UNION PRESENTATION

QNA SESSION



Graduate Employee and Postdoc Union

GEU-UAW Local 6950

Improving the Graduate Worker and Postdoc Experience at ucnngadunion.org
ucnngadunion@gmail.com

Overview

- What is a Labor Union?
- Why We Started the GEU
- Our Strong Contract
- Enforcing Our Rights
- Collective Bargaining
- Importance of Membership
- Q&A



Graduate Student Organizations @ UConn

Graduate Student Senate
(GSS)



Student life & activities, etc.

Graduate Employee Union
(GEU)



Employment-related matters
including

- Contract negotiations
- Fair working conditions
- Worker advocacy

**What is a labor
union and what
does a labor
union do?**



Creating Collective Power

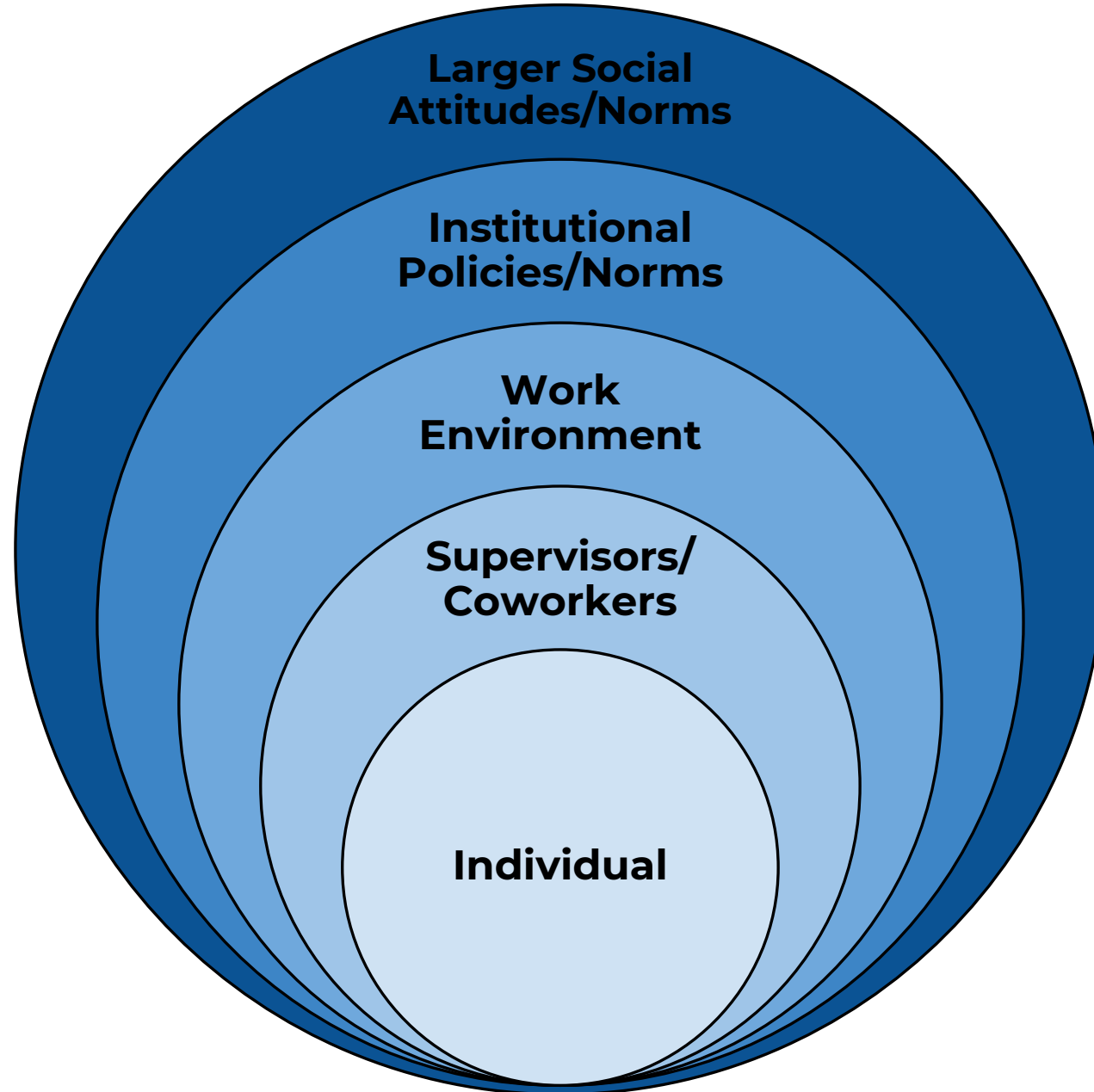
A Strong
Contract

Enforcing our
Contract

Supporting &
Engaging
Members

Advocating at
the Local &
State Levels

Addressing Systemic Challenges



Why we started the GEU

2013

UConn could change our conditions **unilaterally**. HR suddenly changed GA health insurance to a much worse student plan.

\$300+

just to walk in the door to see a doctor

**2013-
2015**

Collective Action & Victory

1000+ GAs organized across all departments. We held sit-ins, protests, and built solidarity. This collective power won our **first contract** in 2015.

1000+ GAs organized → Union recognition → First contract



**2015-
now**

One walk-in visit to the doctor with our union-won plan costs **\$15**

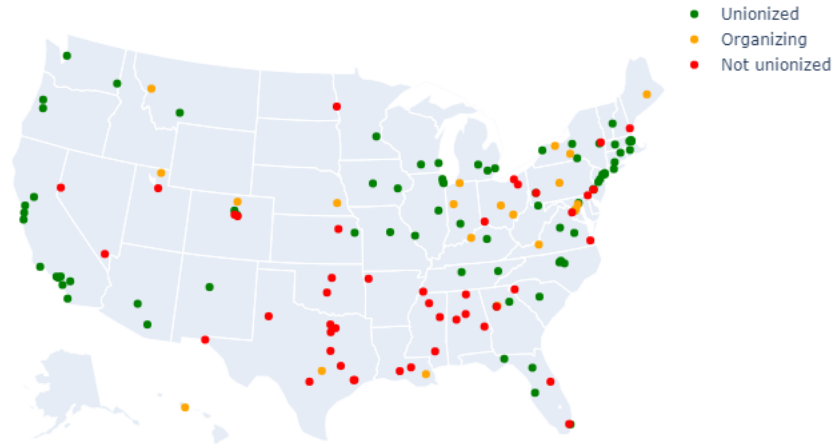
But the fight continues...



Part of a Movement

Graduate Worker Unionization is Booming Across the Country

US Graduate Student Unions in 2023



The number of unionized grad workers has risen 44% over the past two decades, winning higher stipends, better benefits, and more protections

UAW grad workers at the University of California



University of Maine grad workers recently unionized

The Healthcare Crisis We Avoided

How Our Union Protected Graduate Students from Financial Catastrophe

	UConn SHIP Plan (2025-2026)	Our Union- Won Plan	We Save
Annual Premium	\$3,214	\$280	\$2,934
Preventative Care	\$20 copay	\$0 copay	\$20 per visit
Hospital/Surgery	Deductible + costs	\$0 copay	Thousands
Annual Maximum	\$6,850	\$2,000	\$4,850

Total Annual Savings: \$2,934+

That's 10% of our entire graduate stipend saved on healthcare alone!

💡 Even if you're 100% healthy and never see a doctor, you still save \$2,934 in premiums EVERY YEAR.

This is the power of collective bargaining.

We secured world-class coverage at 90% less cost than alternatives.

Hospital stays & outpatient surgery: \$0 copay | Emergency room: \$35 copay
Sources: UConn SHIP 2025-26, Peterson-KFF Health System Tracker, CT Insurance Dept

What A Strong Contract Gets Us

BEFORE OUR UNION:

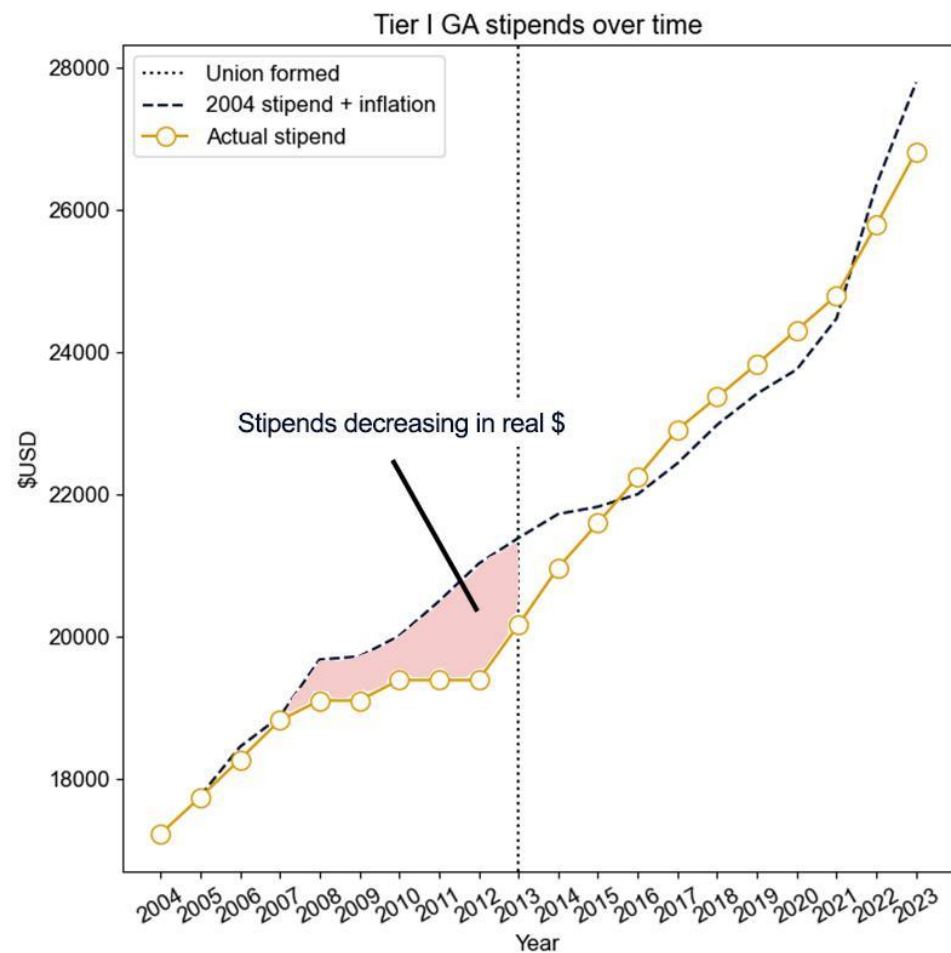
- Pay could be cut without notice
- Costly healthcare w/ poor coverage
- \$900 visa fee for international GA's
- No time off guaranteed
- No parental leave policy
- Nightmare parking rules for GA's
- No job security: GA's could be fired for any reason
- No neutral dispute resolution for harassment & discrimination
- No childcare cost reimbursement

WITH OUR UNION:

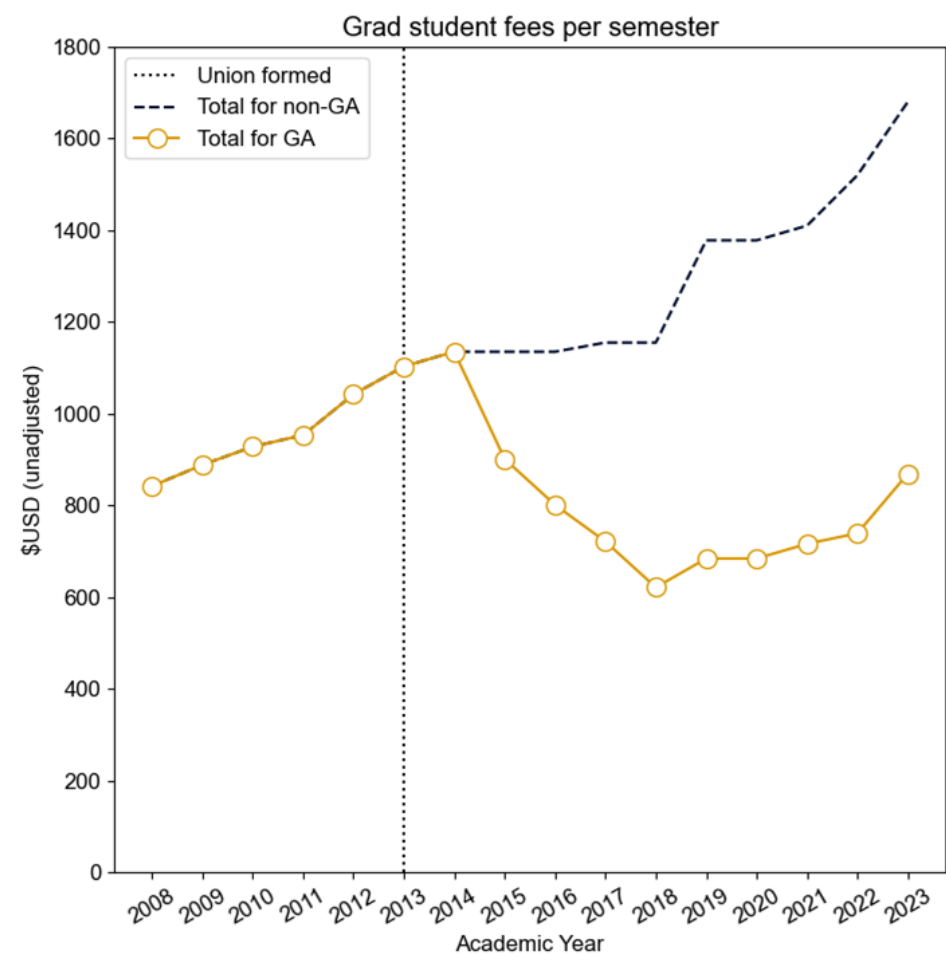
- Guaranteed annual raises of 3-4%
- Excellent & affordable healthcare
- No Visa Fee (\$900 saved)
- 20 days time off guaranteed
- 6-8 weeks paid parental leave
- Area 2 employee parking
- Job security w/ contract guarantees
- Grievance procedure for bullying, harassment & discrimination
- \$225,000 annual childcare reimbursement fund

The Value of a Union

Stipends



Fees



Members Power These Wins for Everyone!

We don't just make more money, we pay less too.

WHAT MEMBERS MAKE POSSIBLE

Annual Savings:

- Fee waivers: \$1,702-\$2,402
- Health insurance savings: \$2,900+
- Visa fee waiver: \$900 (international students)

Total Annual Savings: \$5,000+

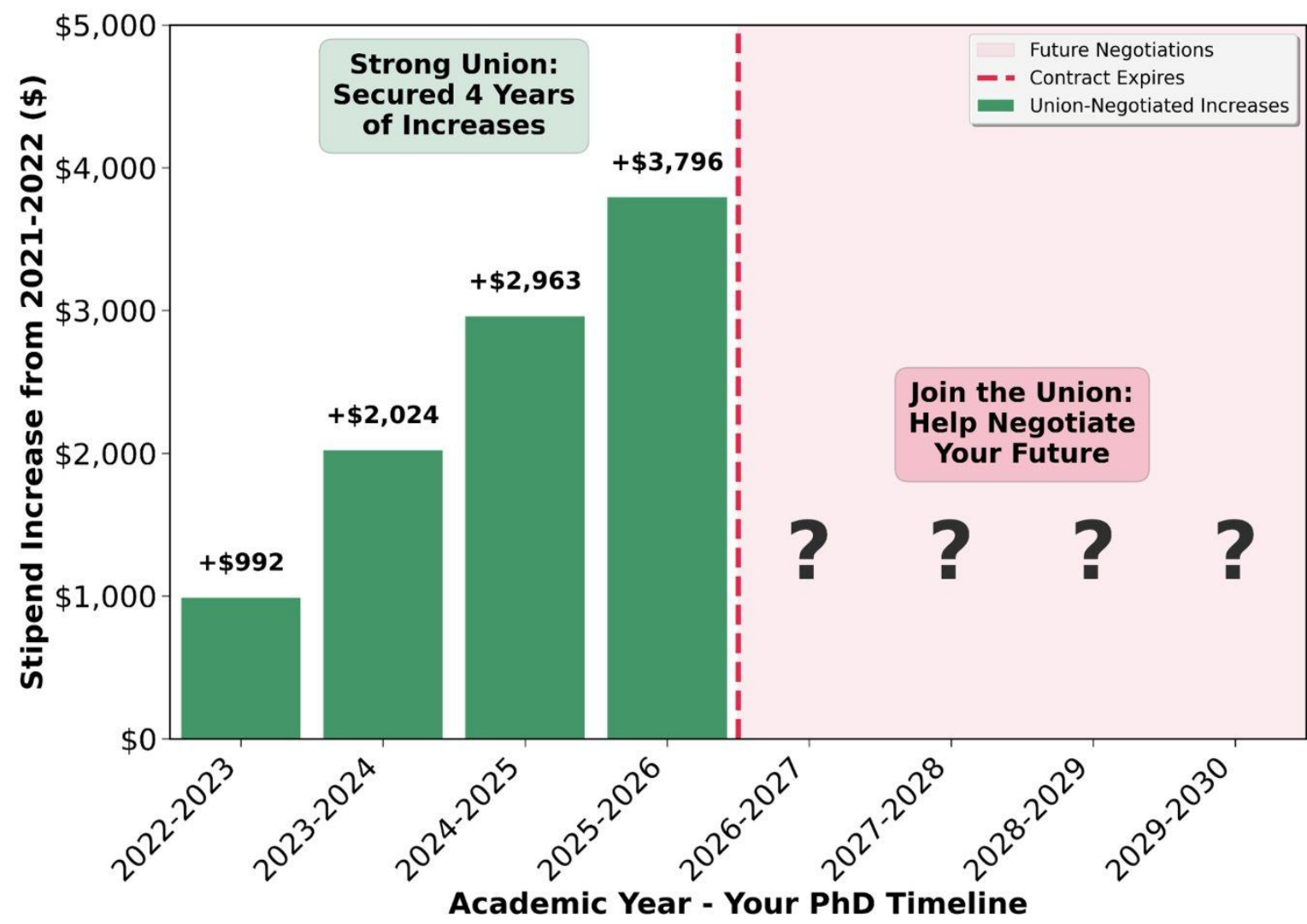
Annual Membership Dues: 1.095%, lowest among all grad unions

Small Dues, Big Wins!



Members don't just get benefits - they make benefits possible for everyone.
Strong membership = stronger future contracts.

The Future of Stipends



What is Collective Bargaining?

Going It Alone



When you negotiate by yourself with your employer, you have limited power. They can easily say "no" to your requests.

"Hi, can I get a raise?"

"Sorry, budget's tight."

Working Together



When hundreds of GAs speak with one voice through the union, it's much harder to ignore. There's power in numbers!

"We represent 2,400+ GAs who all need better pay and benefits."

"Let's sit down and negotiate."

How Does Collective Bargaining Work?

1

We Survey Our Members & Elect Our BC

What do we want? Better pay? Cheaper parking? We ask ourselves and elect representatives!

2

We Build Our Plan Together

Based on our collective input, we decide what to ask the university for. This plan is ratified by a vote.

3

We Organize & Negotiate

Our elected committee negotiates while we organize together to show our power.

4

We Vote Together

We bring the deal back to all of us - if we like it, it's our new contract!

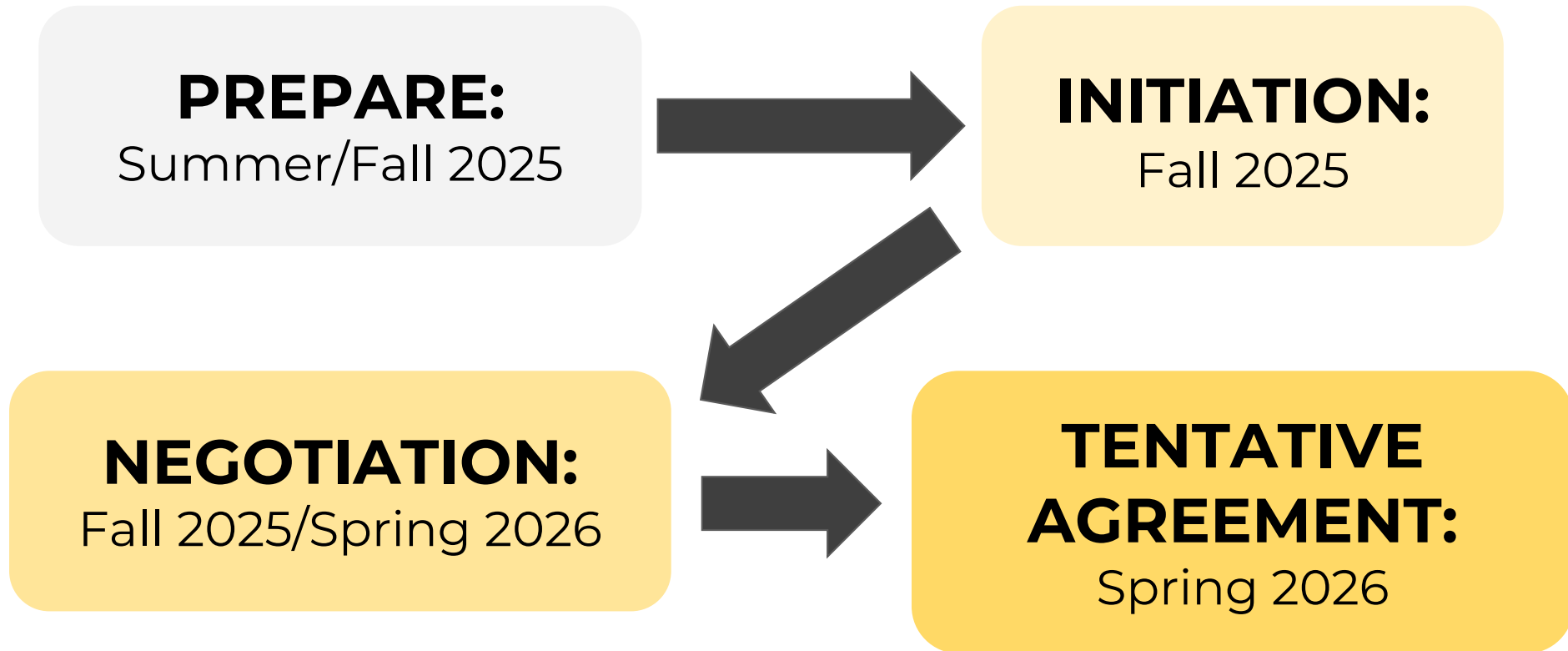
Why This Matters to You

With the current contract we won fee waivers, better health insurance, and guaranteed pay raises. The **next contract** (negotiated in 2025-2026) will determine your working conditions for **most of your time at UConn!**

The only wins we'll get are through organizing together - every improvement depends on our collective action and solidarity.

Our Timeline

Collective Bargaining is when a group of people work together through a union to use their combined power to negotiate a labor contract that defines their terms of employment.



Why Your Membership Matters for Bargaining

High membership creates the POWER to win raises and benefits!



Historically, we've had ~75% membership.
Let's maintain that strength and go even higher!

Numbers = Leverage

Organizing needs
leaders and collective
action

High membership
shows UConn we
represent graduate
workers

We can ask for more
and we'll get more!

Your Voice = Union Priorities

Only members vote on
contract ratification

Only members elect
the bargaining
committee

Members set our
priorities for bargaining

Resources = Results

Membership dues fund
legal support

High membership
enables us to organize
effectively during
negotiations

The Community and Benefits of Union Membership

Community and solidarity

Connect with grad students across all departments

Monthly social events, coffee hours, and solidarity actions

Find your support network of people who understand grad school life

Mentorship from experienced union members

Discounts on things like:

Discounts on things like:
Car rentals (save hundreds!)

Pet insurance

Phone plans

Legal services

And much more through UnionPlus



POLITICAL ACTION BEYOND UCONN: VCAP

Voluntary Contributions for UAW V-CAP

Political action played a key role in establishing our Union and securing a strong first contract for GAs at UConn. Our political voice will continue to have a critical effect on state and federal decisions regarding UConn's teaching and research budgets, which impact our daily lives as graduate assistants. By participating in the V-CAP program, I add my voice to support pro-worker and pro-education candidates and policies and to ensure our priorities are represented in our government.

Subject to the terms of the collective bargaining agreement, I hereby authorize the University of Connecticut to withhold each pay period from my earnings, **UAW Voluntary Community Action Program (V-CAP)** deductions in the following amount and to remit such contribution to UAW V-CAP in the manner agreed upon between the University and the Union at any time while this authorization is in effect.

(Applies to VCAP only): Are you legally allowed to make political contributions in the U.S.? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you selected "No" to the previous question, you cannot contribute to VCAP. Please do not select an amount below.

(Check an amount)

☐ \$2.50

☐ \$5.00

☐ \$12.50 (Directors Club)

Other \$ _____

This authorization is voluntarily made. I understand that the signing of this authorization and the making of payments to UAW V-CAP are not conditions of membership in the Union or of employment with the University of Connecticut, that I have the right to refuse to sign this authorization and contribute to UAW V-CAP without any reprisal, and that UAW V-CAP will use the money it receives to make political contributions and expenditures in connection with federal, state and local elections, that all UAW members may be eligible for V-CAP raffle drawings, regardless of whether they make a contribution to UAW V-CAP, and that monies contributed to UAW V-CAP constitute a voluntary contribution to a joint fundraising effort by the UAW and the AFL-CIO. This authorization shall remain in full force and effect until revoked in writing by me.

I also understand that the guidelines for contributions to UAW V-CAP set forth above are merely suggestions, that I can contribute more or less than the guidelines suggest, and that the Union will not favor or disadvantage me based on the amount of my contribution or my decision not to contribute.

Contributions or gifts to UAW V-CAP are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal tax purposes. All UAW members may be eligible for related raffle drawings, regardless of whether they make a contribution. UAW V-CAP is an independent political committee created by the UAW. This committee does not ask for or accept authorization from any candidate and no candidate is responsible for its activities.

Print Name

Signature

Date



If you can't vote or make political contributions in the U.S. (for example, if you are an international student), you can't contribute to VCAP. Leave that section blank!

How You Can Get Involved

Every member can participate in shaping our next contract!

Participate in the Bargaining Survey

- **Tell us what improvements** matter most to you
- **Share your experiences** with current working conditions

Attend Organizing Committee Meetings

- **Learn to be a leader**
- **Have one-on-one conversations** about why the union matters
- **Help turn out members** for the contract ratification vote

Show Solidarity

- **Attend rallies and actions** if needed during negotiations
- **Demonstrate our unity** to university administration

Vote on Contract Ratification

- **Have the final say** on whether to accept the negotiated contract
- **Only members get to vote!**

Join Our Committees

Make a difference in your union and community

Organizing Committee

BUILD UNION POWER

Connect with fellow graduate workers, grow our membership, and strengthen our collective voice on campus.

What we do:

- Department walkthroughs
- New member outreach
- Social events
- Campaign planning

Grievance Committee

PROTECT YOUR RIGHTS

Help fellow members navigate workplace issues and ensure our contract rights are respected and enforced.

What we do:

- Contract enforcement
- Member support
- Formal grievance process
- Case advocacy

Social Justice Committee

FIGHT FOR EQUITY

Work on broader social issues, promote equity and inclusion, and build solidarity with other movements.

What we do:

- Equity advocacy
- Community solidarity
- Educational events
- Coalition-building

International GAs & Postdocs

GLOBAL SOLIDARITY

Address the unique challenges facing international graduate workers and advocate for inclusive policies.

What we do:

- Community-building
- Policy reform
- Visa advocacy
- Cultural support

If you're interested, check 'I want to help make our Union stronger!' on your membership card.

Get Involved!



A Spring Coffee Hour at Fairfield Way (feat. Jonathan the Husky!)



GEU members at the CT state capitol join with higher-ed groups to demand state funding



GEU members protest student fee increases at the Board of Trustees meeting

UPCOMING EVENTS

ICE CREAM SOCIAL



Tuesday,
September 9



12:00-3:00 PM



Dairy Bar
Lawn

FIRST GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING



Tuesday,
September 16



5:00-7:00 PM



McHugh and
Zoom

IMPORTANT REMINDERS!

- Sign up for health insurance
- Sign up for payroll deduction for fee bills
- Parking/UPass
- Workload and Supplemental Description of Duties
- Health and safety measures
- Make sure your fee bill reflects the tuition and fee waivers
- Childcare reimbursement happens towards the end of every semester – **make sure you're getting our emails!**



New GA
onboardi
ng site



uconngradunion.org



uconngradunion@gmail.com



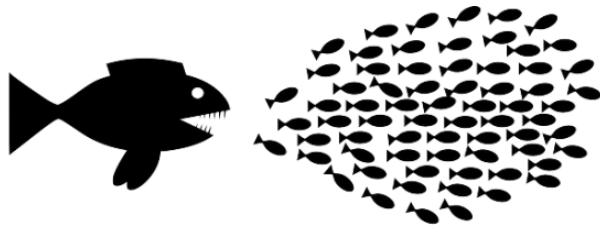
GEU-UAW UConn Graduate
Employee and Postdoc Union



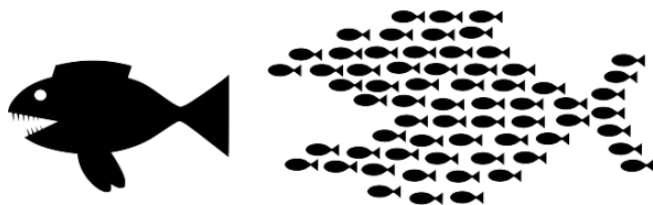
@uconngeu



@geuuaw



ORGANIZE!



Questions?

STUDENT RESOURCES



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graph TD; A[STUDENT RESOURCES] --> B[STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS]; B --> C[GRAD SCHOOL GAME PLAN]; C --> D[GRADUATE STUDENT UNION PRESENTATION]; D --> E[QNA SESSION];
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STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

GRAD SCHOOL GAME PLAN

GRADUATE STUDENT UNION PRESENTATION

QNA SESSION

QNA SESSION



Department Orientation Schedule

Department	Date	Time	Location
School of Mechanical, Aerospace and Manufacturing Engineering	September 8	3-5 PM	ESB 121
Civil and Environmental Engineering	August 22nd	2 PM	Castleman 212
Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering	August 22nd	1-3 PM	TBD
School of Computing	August 27th	1-5 PM	ITE Foyer

Connect with us on Social Media

