

**TEMPLATES for emailing Faculty, Directors of Graduate Study, Department Heads,
Chairs, Unit Executives**

Users: feel free to add additional templates or modular components thereof, accounting for different communication styles, status/power relationships, etcetera

VERY DIRECT VERSION (good for humanities/social sciences?)

Dear Professor X,

I'm writing to you as a student and employee in the Department of X.

Most UIUC graduate employees, myself included, lose their health insurance each summer despite being typically re-hired the following academic year. While this is normally a very stressful change, it is even more so in the midst of the global COVID-19 health crisis and concurrent economic fallout: the fee to stay covered under University Health Insurance is \$696 for the summer, and this summer many of us will not be able to work the jobs we normally count on.

In addition to this, the UIUC Board of Trustees has recently announced that all students, graduate and undergraduate, will face a 33% health insurance fee increase in Fall 2020. I am fearful for myself, and for other graduate employees and UIUC students, especially those students who are immunocompromised, international, and who do not have wealth independent of their assistantships.

As such, I am writing you this email to ask for your support. As faculty, your voice carries more weight with the university's administration. I am a student recruited by this department and, ideally, among the current generation of our field's future. This letter is currently circulating among representatives of non-tenure, tenured, and tenure-track faculty. I am asking for you to sign onto this letter of support and use whatever channels you have available to you to pressure the university to cover the summer health costs for all workers of UIUC and to revoke their plans to increase healthcare premiums for Fall 2020-2021.

The circumstances of graduate study and employment have changed; your students and future colleagues cannot sustain the risk of going without health insurance this summer or taking on additional debt.

In utmost sincerity,
XXX

SOMEWHAT LESS DIRECT VERSION FOR LESS SYMPATHETIC DEPARTMENTS

Dear Professor Name

I am writing to alert you to an issue related to the University's response to the COVID-19 crisis that stands to endanger many members of our community. In particular, I want to express my concern for the state of summer health insurance for graduate students and urge you to join me in looking into and speaking out on this matter.

The UIUC Board of Trustees recently announced that all students, graduate and undergraduate, will face a 33% health insurance fee increase in Fall 2020. At the same time, many departments are unable to provide summer funding to their graduate students, not even in terms of a 25% appointment. Most UIUC graduate employees do not have health insurance most summers due to financial distress. The global COVID-19 health crisis and concurrent economic fallout are certainly making this issue top of mind for many of them, especially those with families or dependants. The fee to stay covered under University Health Insurance is \$696 for this upcoming summer. Even for those of us lucky to be supported by our departments at quite a high level, this can amount to more than a third of our monthly earnings.

Alarming, as there is lots of variance across departments in terms of summer funding, affording summer health care during this unprecedented and precarious global situation has come to more and more depend on one's departmental affiliation. By not taking university-wide action, I fear that the University administration is allowing for growing disparity among its graduate workers. In some departments, individual faculty members are volunteering their own funds in order for their students to be able to afford healthcare coverage for the summer. It is inappropriate at best and harmful at worst to allow for a precedent to be set by this - we cannot expect individual faculty members to be solely responsible for the health of their students. This is a systemic issue and I urge you to join me in seeking a systemic response.

The Graduate Employee Organization has composed a letter demanding University-wide waiving of summer healthcare fees for the upcoming months as a part of its pandemic response. This letter is currently circulating among representatives of non-tenure, tenured, and tenure-track faculty. I am asking you to consider signing this letter. At the same time, I realize that some faculty members in our department may hesitate to sign a public letter due to personal or career circumstances. If you find yourself in such a circumstance, I want to encourage you to still in some way act on this issue. Contacting [Person With Power] in your own words or alerting your peers to this situation could both be strong acts of solidarity and contribute towards better and safer working conditions for all of us as we adjust to what has become a terrifying new normal. Please take part in this effort in any way you can.

With hope for a better future,
Your Name Here

POLITE AND COMPREHENSIVE VERSION CALLING ON BEST-SELVES OF AN ENTIRE DEPT'S FACULTY (*needs modification as this was sent by CoPrezs)

Dear Faculty of the Department of X,

Some of you may be aware that the GEO is circulating an [open letter to the UIUC Administration on student healthcare](#), issued jointly with the Campus Faculty Association (CFA) and the Non-Tenured Faculty Association (NTFC). We are circulating this to collect individual signatures from faculty, Department Heads, DGS's, Unit Executives and other stakeholders on campus, asking the University to:

- 1) cover summer health insurance for all grad students; and
- 2) revoke the [33% increase in healthcare premiums to be levied on all students](#) next academic year.

The GEO is very happy to see the commitment of departments such as anthropology to their grads' summer situation, but believes that the University must financially support departments and individual students to ensure that all grads have health insurance this summer. We are glad the University has made an Emergency Fund available, but likewise it does not assure health insurance to all grads. We take this stance after consulting with various faculty on campus to understand how departments are potentially affected by the needs graduate employees are voicing — i.e. a living wage and year-round health insurance. We are employees of the University who are consistently rehired in the following semester and we insist that the employer take responsibility and eliminate the break in coverage so that grads can take care of themselves over the summer and start the fall semester strong and healthy. This is an equity issue, and it is a basic request in the midst of a global epidemic and financial crisis.

As Co-Presidents, X and X have been actively pursuing [cooperation with other labor organizations on campus through the Campus Labor Coalition \(CLC\)](#), with faculty, and with undergraduates through the ISG ([see text of resolution that passed the ISG Senate unanimously earlier this week](#)). We want to keep building on this foundation in the future, because the future of higher education we want to be a part of requires critical and self-reflexive solidarity between undergraduate students, graduate student/scholar/workers, and faculty of all rank.

Our request to you, as graduate students and employees in this department and as your heirs in this discipline, is to [sign this letter \(as above-linked\)](#) and to share it with your colleagues widely across all departments and programs at this university.

Thank you for all your support and work on extending equity on campus,

(signed name/s)