September 24, 2026
Union Package Proposal C1

The Union presents the following counter-proposal as a package only, which means that the parties have to agree upon all the provisions of the package:

1. The parties shall agree that the following articles shall be amended as set forth in the text below:
    a. IV. Appointment Terms
    b. XII. Distribution of Information
    c. XXII. Health and Safety
2. The parties agree that the article numbers listed may change after an agreement has been reached on the entirety of the agreement.
3. It is understood that agreement on this package does not entail commitment to items not included in this package.

IV. Appointment Terms

A. Eligibility for Assistantship Appointments

1. An assistant ~~TA or GA~~ must be enrolled as a student and in good academic standing in a graduate program at UIUC and meet other applicable requirements.

2. Campus policy does not require students who hold summer assistantships to be registered during the summer if they were registered for the immediately preceding spring semester or are registered for the immediately following fall semester. However, campus policy permits individual departments to require their students who hold summer assistantships to register for a specified minimum number of units during the summer as part of the students' academic programs.

3. If an individual, who has accepted an assistantship ~~TA or GA~~ appointment, fails to enroll, withdraws, or otherwise fails to maintain academic eligibility in a graduate program, the University may, in its sole discretion, cancel the assistantship appointment. Cancellation under this section shall not be subject to appeal under the Grievance Procedure.

B. Information about Assistantships

1. In order to make information available to graduate students about assistantship opportunities, the Graduate College maintains an Assistantship Clearinghouse website: https://www.grad.illinois.edu/funding/assistantships/assistantship-clearinghouse ~~http:/www.grad.illinois.edu/clearinghouse/~~. This website may include (or provide a link to) the information stipulated in B.2.

2. Units employing or anticipating the employment of assistants ~~TAs or GAs~~ are encouraged to maintain posted information about openings, such as information about the:

a. Name or location of an office where inquiries or applications may be made.
b. Types of assistant ~~TA or GA~~ positions that typically are available.
c. Procedure(s) to apply for assistant ~~TA and GA~~ positions, including (if applicable) deadlines for submission of application.

3. Units will allow applicants to submit, in writing, course placement preferences.

C. Required Documentation

All appointments are contingent upon the student's compliance with documentation requirements for employment. Currently these requirements include (for students who have never held an assistantship or other appointment at the University, or have not held an appointment in the last 90 days) completion of the I-9 and employee information forms as soon as possible after the offer of appointment is made and, in every case, before the assistant performs any services associated with the appointment.

The University *shall make reasonable efforts to provide* assistants with clear, timely, and accurate **information regarding** ~~***notification of required***~~ employment-related documentation *and applicable deadlines for completion of these documents.* The University shall maintain secure processes for the collection and transmission of sensitive personal information. When appointments or in-person meetings are required as part of the employment process, the University shall make reasonable efforts to provide sufficient appointment availability and alternative arrangements where practicable to assist assistants in completing required documentation.

As related to appointment purposes covered by this Agreement, the University shall continue to provide assistants the opportunity, where **supported by University systems and** consistent with applicable law, to indicate a preferred or chosen name, ***personal*** *pronouns, and gender designation* ~~***in its HR systems***~~. **When permitted by law and supported by University systems and business processes,** ~~***To the greatest extent permitted by law,***~~ the University *shall* ***make a good-faith effort*** **to** utilize an assistant's preferred or chosen name, **if provided, in University formal employment communications and record where a legal name is not required** ~~**where a legal name is not required*, pronouns, and gender in all matters***~~. If **the University determines that** additional preferred-name, pronoun, gender designation, self-describe, or "prefer not to answer" options are **feasible,** *lawful,* **and operationally practicable,** the University shall **make good-faith efforts to** implement such employment changes on a reasonable timeline. Nothing in this provision shall require the University to alter employment records or reporting practices mandated by federal or state law, accreditation requirements, reporting obligations, payroll requirements, or other legal or operational obligations. ***The University shall not adopt systems or business processes which reduce the options for an assistant to indicate a preferred or chosen name, pronouns, or gender designation.***

~~The University shall continue to explore the feasibility and legality of including a self-describe option or prefer not to say option on demographic fields for required forms. The University will provide the Union a summary upon request regarding the procedures and actions taken related to implementing a self-describe or prefer not to say option on demographic fields according to the applicable federal, state and University guidelines. If a determination is made that the self-describe option is both feasible and legal, the University shall make a good faith effort to implement these changes.~~

D. Offers of Employment ~~Notice of Appointment~~

1. All newly appointed and re-appointed assistants ~~TAs and GAs~~ shall be notified in writing of their appointment title, the major components of their assignments, wages amount, dates (duration) of service (including any mandatory or optional orientation sessions), the supervising official in the department, and the full time equivalency (FTE) of the appointment, ~~*as soon as practicable, preferably*~~ at least thirty (30) days before the start of the Fall or Spring appointment. The term "offer letter" shall be understood throughout this Agreement to refer to such notification. Such offer *letter* ~~notification~~ shall include a statement that the position is subject to a collective bargaining agreement between the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois and the Graduate Employees Organization

covering benefits and wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment which may be found at the following web address: http://humanresources.illinois.edu/ or http://www.uigeo.org/join.

Additionally, information shall be provided regarding accessing work accommodations. An ~~graduate~~ assistant who does not receive an offer letter ~~notice of appointment~~ from the employing department within the timeframe set forth above may request an explanation from the Illinois Human Resources Labor and Employee Relations (LER) as to why the notice was delayed. Such request shall be made within **twenty-five (25)** ***~~thirty (30)~~*** business days of the start of the applicable semester, start of the appointment, or receipt of the offer letter, whichever is later. Upon receiving such a request, LER will review the request to determine the underlying circumstances for the delay. ***Except as provided for below,*** if ~~*the underlying circumstances warrant a remedy, then the sole remedy for a*~~ an assistant ~~*who*~~ does not receive an offer letter ~~notice of appointment~~ within the timeframe set forth above ~~beginning in the Spring Semester 2019 and subsequent years of the contract~~, ***the sole remedy shall be*** that ***the*** assistant will receive a gross payment of ***~~two~~ one*** hundred ***twenty-five*** dollars (***$125*** ***~~$200~~*** ~~*$100*~~) during the appointment term, upon request by the *assistant* ~~*graduate employee*~~. ***An assistant who received their offer letter less than thirty (30) calendar days before the start of the appointment would only be deemed ineligible for such payment if their offer letter was issued as soon as possible and one of the following occurred:***

i. the appointment was an additional assistantship offered as a result of a significant increase in enrollment for a particular course, which the employing unit could not have reasonably anticipated sixty (60) calendar days prior to the start of the appointment period, and resulted in the unit hiring more TAs than in the same semester in the prior year; ~~Assistantship appointments that are not extended within the timeframe set forth above that are due to a change in course offerings and result in additional appointment being offered will not warrant remedy.~~

ii. the appointment was previously offered to another individual who declined the offer and the first offer was made at least thirty (30) calendar days before the start of the appointment period;

iii. the assistant received an offer letter at least thirty (30) calendar days before the start of the appointment period which was later reissued to make corrections; or

iv. the delay of the offer letter was a result of the assistant not responding to a timely request for information needed by the University to issue the offer letter.

Additional information about tuition and fees applicable to all graduate students may be obtained from the following websites:

a. Office of the Registrar: http://www.registrar.illinois.edu/
b. Graduate College: http://grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook

Because tuition and fee waivers may vary between units and programs, employing units shall ~~*are encouraged to*~~ explain their tuition and fee waiver policies as part of their websites by Fall 2027, and make information available to incoming students. Assistants are encouraged to seek information regarding the tuition and fee waiver policies that are specific to them from their academic unit and/or the Graduate College.

2. For those assistants whose tuition waiver may be subject to tax withholdings, additional information regarding the waiver shall be contained in the offer ~~Notice of Appointment~~ letter provided to them. If a unit or department fails to include this information in the offer ~~Notice of Appointment~~ letter, and if the union files a grievance pursuant to Article XXI ~~XVIII~~ of this collective bargaining agreement

because of that omission, the sole remedy for the grievance shall be that the unit or department will issue a new offer ~~Notice of Appointment~~ letter that includes the omitted information.

In some cases, tax withholdings may result in the assistant receiving substantially reduced or even no take-home pay for one or more pay periods. To plan for this possibility, assistants may want to consider consulting a financial and/or tax advisor.

Illinois Human Resources (IHR) will communicate each Fall, Spring, and Summer semester with affected bargaining unit members the impact of tuition waiver taxation on net pay. Communications for each Fall semester will include gross and net pay for the September and October paychecks, communications for each Spring semester will include gross and net pay for the February and March paychecks, and communications for each Summer semester will include gross and net pay for the June and July paychecks. The method of communication will be at the discretion of IHR, however every effort will be made to communicate directly with affected bargaining unit members. Communications will be sent as soon as practicable.

3. The University will make a "Net Pay Calculator" available on the internet for potential and current ~~Graduate A~~assistants to estimate their tax withholdings. The results from the "Net Pay Calculator" are estimates only and should not be relied upon as professional financial and/or tax advice. For such advice, an assistant may want to consider consulting a professional financial and/or tax advisor. Currently, this "Net Pay Calculator" is available at: https://www.busfin.uillinois.edu/paying_people/payroll__benefits/understanding_your_paycheck/net_pay_calculators ~~http://www.obfs.uillinois.edu/payroll/~~.

4. The Labor and Employee Relations Office will make available to departments information regarding the tax withholding issues related to ~~graduate~~ assistant appointments. The information may be in the form of a template letter of appointment for use by appointing units that employ ~~graduate~~ assistants, or some other document.

5. Teaching assistants shall be informed of the course they will be teaching, including the course number, course name, section(s) they will be teaching, and the times and dates of their sections and/or lectures *at least twenty~~-**five** (20 **25**)* calendar days before the start of the academic term.

Beginning Year 2 of this Agreement, *if an assistant does not receive this information within the timeframe set forth above, the sole remedy shall be the same payment for a late offer letter defined above**, subject to the same exclusions**. If an assistant does not receive either their offer letter or this information for the same appointment within their respective timeframes, the assistant shall only receive this payment once.*

6. For assistants whose tuition waiver may be subject to tax withholdings, the University shall pay a stipend to help offset this withholding. The stipend shall be paid each semester, divided evenly across the paychecks from which taxes are withheld from the assistant's pay for their tuition waiver. ***For the Fall and Spring appointment terms, the amount of this stipend shall be as specified in the table below, based on the assistant's residency status, credit load, and whether it is the first or second semester in the calendar year they are holding such an assistantship. ~~Each semester, the amount of this stipend shall be calculated as follows:~~***

~~a. The University shall estimate the assistant's taxable income excluding the current semester's tuition waiver, as the 12 month salary of their assistantships plus the amount of the tuition waivers received in any prior semesters during the same calendar year in excess of the~~

~~***maximum exclusion provided by 26 USC 127, minus the Standard Deduction for the current tax year established by the IRS.***~~

~~***b. The University shall estimate the assistant's taxable income including the current semester's tuition waiver, as the 12 month salary of their assistantship plus the amount of the tuition waivers received in the current and any prior semesters during the same calendar year in excess of the maximum exclusion provided by 26 USC 127, minus the Standard Deduction for the current tax year established by the IRS.***~~

~~***c. The University shall estimate the taxes owed by the assistant based on the taxable incomes estimated in (a) and (b) using the tax rates and brackets published by the IRS for the current tax year.***~~

~~***d. The amount of the stipend shall be equal to the difference in the estimated taxes owed using the taxable income estimated in (a) and (b).***~~

Residency Status	***Credit Load***	***Semester***	***Stipend***
Resident	***6-11***	***First***	***$0***
Resident	***6-11***	***Second***	***$800***
Resident	***12+***	***First***	***$375***
Resident	***12+***	***Second***	***$1,275***
Non-Resident	***6-11***	***First***	***$700***
Non-Resident	***6-11***	***Second***	***$1,675***
Non-Resident	***12+***	***First***	***$1,500***
Non-Resident	***12+***	***Second***	***$2,475***

For the Summer appointment term, the stipend shall be $90 for those with Resident status and $200 for those with Non-Resident status.

E. Acceptance

A student who has been offered an assistantship ~~TA or GA~~ appointment is required to confirm acceptance to the department in writing (including electronic mail), within the time period specified by the department*, which shall not be less than* ***five*** ~~***ten***~~ *(5* ~~***10***~~*) business days*. If an offer has been made to an assistant for one or more specific periods in an academic year and the assistant has accepted the offer and met the conditions of the offer and the position is later unavailable, the University shall provide written notice ~~will notify the assistant~~ of the reasons for the appointment being unavailable and the assistant shall ~~will~~ be placed in an appointment with equivalent compensation as the position originally offered and accepted. Once accepted, terms of the appointment (e.g., wages, percent-time, dates of appointment) may not be changed except by mutual agreement between the department and assistant or as otherwise provided for in this Agreement. Assignments and duties may be changed at the discretion of the department, with notice to the assistant.

Acceptance of an appointment requires the assistant to be present and available to perform assigned duties during those dates. Failure to be present to perform assigned duties may result in dismissal.

F. Duration of Appointments

An assistant shall be appointed for a specific period of not less than one semester or for a special limited purpose. A "special limited purpose" appointment is employment that covers unforeseen needs that arise during a semester that may be for less than one semester. ~~***Any special limited purpose appointment shall be noted as such in an assistant's offer letter.***~~ In all cases, employment ends at the expiration of the specific period as specified in the appointment letter or when the special limited purpose is completed.

G. Resignation/Release

If an assistant wishes to resign after acceptance of an appointment, the assistant ~~***is encouraged, if practicable, to***~~ **must** provide a minimum of fourteen (14) calendar days' notice prior to the effective date of resignation, **unless notification cannot *be* provided due to *extenuating* circumstances or the *employing unit* agrees to a shorter duration**. In addition, a written release from the appointing unit is required if an assistant wishes to resign after acceptance of an appointment in order to accept another assistantship appointment. The University may not coerce, intimidate, or otherwise unfairly pressure an assistant to resign.

H. Renewal of Appointments

Assistants ~~TAs and GAs~~ whose academic progress and service record have been determined to be satisfactory are eligible for reappointment at the sole discretion of the department, based on the past performance of the assistant, availability of funds, and the University's determination of the need for services. Departments *shall, as soon as* ***practicable*** ~~***possible***~~, ~~*are encouraged to*~~ communicate with assistants concerning plans or prospects for new assistantship appointments after the term of their current appointments end. However, a new appointment is not guaranteed unless and until the department issues to the student the offer letter ~~notice of appointment~~ described in Section IV(D) above. In the event the assistant is not reappointed, the employing unit *shall* provide a written explanation, if requested within 90 days of the end of the appointment. ***If an assistant believes the explanation is false or defamatory, they*** ~~***An assistant***~~ *shall have the opportunity to comment in writing upon this explanation and such comments shall be placed in the assistant's personnel record.* Departments have differing policies on the length of time students may hold assistantships and sometimes limit the total number of semesters that an assistant may serve. In accord with the University's standard of excellence, assistants ~~TAs and GAs~~ must maintain a high standard of performance in their duties, as solely determined by the appointing unit, in order for their assistantships to be renewed.

XII. Distribution of Information

A. The University shall notify all new assistants hired to work in the categories covered by this contract that the Union is the exclusive representative for all employees described in Article II.

B. The University will notify the Union of the legal name, preferred first name (if indicated in the System HR profile), Net ID, local address and phone number, ~~***academic department and program,***~~ department of employment, job classification, appointment title, percentage assistantship, wages, office address and telephone number, and email address in electronic format of all new appointments in the classifications covered by this contract within five (5) working days after the first pay date in each semester. **Beginning Spring 2027, the University will review work addresses in order to codify the primary work location where the assistant would conduct regular work duties.** ~~***All information***~~

provided must be accurate to the best of the University's ability and office addresses must represent a single location where the assistant would be expected to conduct regular work duties, such as an office or lab space. An update in the same format shall be given to the Union on a monthly basis thereafter. The Union may request additional reports which will not unreasonably be denied.

C. The Union shall have the right to utilize campus mail under University policy. At the request of the union, but not more than once a semester, Illinois Human Resources shall ~~may~~ send a University approved email drafted by the Union ~~union~~ to assistants holding positions covered by the bargaining unit. Information may include links to the union's website, social media, upcoming events and activities; however, such email shall not directly seek membership~~,~~ or be political or defamatory in nature.

D. The Union shall furnish the University with a full list of elected officers within five working days of the first payroll. An update on any changes shall be given to the University on a semester basis thereafter.

E. The Union shall not redisclose an assistant's personal information obtained from the University to any other party without the prior written consent of the assistant. *The University shall not provide identifying or personal information of an assistant, including but not limited to personnel record, union affiliation, citizenship status, or record of statements or expressions protected by the First Amendment, to a local, state, or federal government agency* ***except as required by law or ~~without~~*** *a lawful order.*

F. Pursuant to the Illinois Education Labor Relations Act, the Union may request copies of documents in the possession of the employer for purposes of contract negotiations and administration. Any such request shall be in writing directed to the Labor and Employee Relations Section of Illinois Human Resources. Providing that the request is not overly burdensome and not protected by legal privilege, the University will respond to any such request by either: a) providing copies of relevant documents, or b) allowing the Union an opportunity to review the relevant documents on site and the right to have specific documents copied based on this review. ***The University shall both acknowledge the receipt of a request and respond to any requests for status updates ~~Except by mutual agreement, the University shall respond to such requests~~*** *within five (5) business days.*

G. The Union shall have the right to access and post on physical and electronic bulletin boards that permit other students, student organizations, community organizations, professional organizations, or vendors to post materials on them. ***~~The University shall not permit information posted by the Union on physical bulletin boards to be removed except by representatives of the Union; if the bulletin board is regularly cleared of all postings the University may remove the Union's postings during such removals.~~***

In the administration and moderation of departmental email lists, the University shall not deny requests to send emails solely on the basis that the contents are prepared by the Union or related to Union activities. ~~Representatives of the Union shall be permitted to send emails about union events and updates on departmental University email lists that permit other students, student organizations, community organizations, professional organizations, or vendors to send materials on them.~~

H. The University shall amend all digital versions of this Agreement it publishes to ensure all links to websites contained herein remain functional.

XXII. Health and Safety

A. Intention

The University is committed to the safety and well-being of its students, staff, and the public it serves. The administration, faculty, and staff have the responsibility to promote health and safety in their environment and operations and shall do so in accordance with any and all applicable federal and state laws. This contract is subject to the University's policies on health and safety enumerated in ~~Section V.(B)~~ RP-17, "Campus Environmental Health and Safety" https://cam.illinois.edu/policies/rp-17/, RP-04, "Chemical Safety" https://cam.illinois.edu/policies/rp-04/, RP-07, "Emergency Eyewashes and Showers" https://cam.illinois.edu/policies/rp-07/, RP-02, "Biological Safety" https://cam.illinois.edu/policies/rp-02/, RP-11, "Radiation and Laser Safety" https://cam.illinois.edu/policies/rp-11/ of the Campus Administrative Manual, as they exist on the effective date of this Agreement, or as amended *by mutual agreement*, and are incorporated herein by reference.

B. Compliance with Relevant Laboratory Standards

The University **is committed to providing and maintaining** ~~***must provide and maintain***~~ a safe ~~***and healthy***~~ work environment ***that is not detrimental to an assistant's physical health***. Assistants shall report any unhealthy or hazardous work conditions(s) to the supervisor or unit head. The University shall consult with the appropriate unit of the Division of Research Safety and/or Division of Safety & Compliance ~~Division of Environmental Health and Safety~~ to review the situation, determine whether the work or field environment is hazardous, and if so, attempt to resolve the matter.

Assistants shall not be required to work in environments ***they have honest concern are unsafe or detrimental to their physical health*** ~~***that are out of compliance with any applicable federal and state laws, or with relevant University policies enumerated in the Campus Administrative Manual***~~. Health and Safety issues may be raised and discussed during labor management meetings, provided there is no active grievance on the matter. *Assistants shall not be subject to adverse actions as a result of good faith reporting of a health and safety concern****, refusing work due to an honest concern for their safety or health, or*~~***. Assistants shall not be penalized for***~~ *being unable to complete assistantship duties* ***due to closure of*** ~~***if***~~ *their laboratory space* ***for remediation*** ~~***is out of compliance with any applicable federal and state laws or campus policies.***~~

~~***C. Non-laboratory and Fieldwork Safety Standards***~~

~~***Fieldwork or working in the field for the purpose of this contract refers to "a wide range of activities from short local day trips to extended international stays" outside of the class or laboratory environment, as defined by the Division of Research Safety. Assistants will report any unhealthy or hazardous fieldwork conditions, including but not limited to: inadequate field first aid materials and improper project-specific training. The University must consult with the appropriate unit of the Division of Research Safety to review the situation, determine whether the fieldwork environment is hazardous, and if so, attempt to resolve the matter.***~~

C. ~~***D.***~~ *Health and Safety Information Requests*

Upon written request from the Union, the University shall provide available reports from Facilities and Services' Safety and Compliance Division ~~of the most recent Division of *Health and Safety* inspection~~ for specified University buildings *and available Laboratory Audits from the Division of Research Safety for specified University laboratory spaces* in accordance with the Illinois Freedom of Information Act, 5 ILCS 140/1 et seq.