Please find below an overview of the current bargaining process that the GSA is engaged with on behalf of the subset of its overall membership who are classified as academically-employed graduate students (AEGSs), defined as those students who currently hold Teaching Assistantships, Research Assistantships, and Graduate Research Assistant Fellowships. The bargaining process is governed by provisions in the current Graduate Student Assistantship Collective Agreement (CA), GSA Bylaw and Policy (Section Q), and Alberta’s Labour Relations Code.

**Overview of the Current Bargaining Process**

In compliance with the Labour Relations Code (Sec. 58(4)), the Graduate Students’ Association acts as the bargaining agent for all academically employed graduate students and has the exclusive authority to bargain collectively on behalf of the academically employed graduate students and to bind them by a collective agreement.

When a collective agreement is in effect, either party may, not less than 60 days and not more than 120 days preceding the expiry of the term of the collective agreement, by notice in writing, require the other party to the collective agreement to commence collective bargaining (Labour Relations Code, Sec. 59(1)).

As the current CA expires 31 August 2020, the GSA has been in direct consultation with graduate students to solicit feedback on the CA and what they would like to see in a new agreement. These consultations took the form of meetings of the GSA Labour Relations Committee (GSA LRC – a committee composed of AEGSs), a town hall held on 19 March 2020, a Labour 101 session held on 24 March 2020, and a Google Feedback Form open from 12 March to 30 March 2020. All of these consultations were advertised multiple times to all current AEGSs (those who held a current contract at the time of communication) in the AEGS newsletter. Information was also circulated via the GSA newsletter, the GSA’s social media platforms, and in updates to GSA Council.

Based on the feedback received, the GSA LRC then drafted a proposed bargaining mandate that was voted on electronically and approved by all current AEGSs on 20 April 2020. Using that approved mandate, the GSA Negotiating Team (which contains legal counsel with a specialization in labour and union matters) drafted the GSA’s opening position, which was submitted to the University to commence bargaining at the end of April 2020.

Bargaining itself, led by the GSA Negotiating Team, will occur over the summer and AEGSs will get updates as the process unfolds.* Once any agreement in principle is reached, further town halls and consultations with AEGSs will be undertaken, prior to an electronic ratification vote being circulated to all members of the bargaining unit.

If you have any questions, you can contact the Vice-President Labour at gsa.vplabour@ualberta.ca.

*Please note that only people who are members of the bargaining unit (i.e., hold a current appointment under the CA) at the time these communications are sent will receive them; if you are not receiving bargaining updates and believe this is an error, or if you do not hold a current appointment under the CA and would like more information, please contact the GSA Vice-President Labour at gsa.vplabour@ualberta.ca.