

# GRADUATE ASSISTANT RIGHTS & BENEFITS

## WELCOME TO THE PSC!

As an employee of CUNY in the title Graduate Assistant, your wages, benefits, and working conditions are negotiated and defended by your union, the Professional Staff Congress, which also represents faculty and most professional staff. We welcome you, and urge you to participate actively in our collective struggles. To become a member of the union you must [sign a membership authorization card](#).

## You Are Entitled and Encouraged to Participate in the GC Union Chapter

As a member, you will be entitled to vote in general and chapter elections and contract ratification (after four-months standing) and to run for office (after a year). Our union chapter has regular chapter meetings to discuss work- and student-related concerns. Many departments have a (student) union representative to answer and help address concerns and complaints. If you would like to be a department representative or become part of our chapter's organizing or decision-making efforts, contact one of the chapter's officers (listed on the right), preferably using a non-CUNY email address, or [sign up for a chapter working group](#)

## Your "Weingarten" Right to Union Representation

Before or during any meeting with a management representative (such as a department chairperson, supervisor or affirmative action officer) at the GC or your work campus that you believe may have disciplinary or negative consequences for your employment, you may request that a union representative join you. At that point, the meeting must be delayed and rescheduled until a union rep is available. You may consult with that union rep in private before or at any time during a meeting.

## Pay Raises

On January 1 of your 2nd through 7th year of work, to acknowledge your growing expertise, you advance to the next "step" in the salary schedule (read "down" the chart). On the dates indicated you, along with all PSC members, also receive contractual pay increases (read "across" the chart).

## Pay scales for Graduate Assistant B:

Current	11/15/2020	11/15/2021	11/1/2022
\$12,453	\$12,702	\$12,956	\$13,215
\$12,910	\$13,169	\$13,432	\$13,701
\$13,389	\$13,657	\$13,930	\$14,208
\$14,057	\$14,338	\$14,625	\$14,917
\$14,829	\$15,125	\$15,428	\$15,736
\$15,372	\$15,679	\$15,993	\$16,313
\$16,150	\$16,473	\$16,803	\$17,139

## Pay scales for Graduate Assistant D:

Current	11/15/2020	11/15/2021	11/1/2022
\$5,481	\$5,590	\$5,702	\$5,816
\$5,778	\$5,894	\$6,012	\$6,132
\$6,096	\$6,218	\$6,342	\$6,469
\$6,429	\$6,557	\$6,688	\$6,822

For other Grad Assistant titles, see pay rates [here](#).

## Stipends

Most GAs receive an annual stipend as part of their fellowship. Although the stipend is not currently a contractual entitlement, the PSC has often fought successfully to protect them. If your stipend is threatened or reduced at any time, contact a chapter officer.

## Tuition Reimbursement

While tuition reimbursement in years 1–5 is part of your admissions offer, tuition reimbursement in years 6–7 is contractually guaranteed, as long as you are working in a PSC-represented title.

## Health Care

PSC fought and won the right for Graduate Assistants to be eligible for New York State Student Employee Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP) coverage, including family coverage. For more information contact the Human Resources Office at the Graduate Center. If you later convert to any other PSC-represented position (such as Adjunct), you are immediately eligible for individual health coverage only, through the NYC Employee Benefits Program. Contact your college HR Office for more info, and tell them you are an enrolled graduate student.



## PSC-CUNY

212-354-1252

[psc-cuny.org](http://psc-cuny.org)

61 Broadway, New York

Union offices--15th floor

Union hall--16th floor

## Graduate Center Chapter

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PSCCUNYGC

[psccunygccommons.gc.cuny.edu](http://psccunygccommons.gc.cuny.edu)

## Teaching and Non-Teaching Workloads

Actual teaching loads and conditions of work often vary on different campuses and departments. If you believe you have been assigned an excessive workload or student load, unreasonable schedule, or inappropriate work, contact a chapter officer. The PSC contract specifies maximum workloads for GA work, and overall caps on hours you can work at CUNY every academic year. (In recent years, additional work has been allowed during the summer, subject to a separate agreement between the PSC and CUNY.)

GA(B)s may be assigned a maximum of 120 teaching hours\* or 225 non-teaching hours\*\*. If a GA(B) also works as an Adjunct or Non-Teaching Adjunct, the combined assignments may not exceed 270 teaching hours or 450 non-teaching hours.

GA(D)s may be assigned a maximum of 100 non-teaching hours\*\*. If a GA(D) also works as an Adjunct or Non-Teaching Adjunct, the combined assignments may not exceed 180 teaching hours\* or 225 non-teaching hours.

GA(A)s may be assigned a maximum of 240 teaching hours\* or 450 non-teaching hours\*\* in a work year with no additional work allowed. GA(C)s may be assigned a maximum of 180 teaching hours\*. If a

GA(C) also works as an Adjunct Lecturer, the combined teaching hours may not exceed 270\*\*.

\* A 3-credit course is considered 45 teaching hours.

\*\* Non-teaching hours should be calculated and paid based on actual hours of work.

## Teaching Observations

At least one observation should be conducted during the first ten weeks of a semester. You must have at least 24 hours' notice before an observation by a member of your department, as assigned by your department chair. The observer will submit a written observation report to the department chair within one week of the date of the observation. The chair must then schedule a post-observation conference (with you and the observer) within two weeks of receiving the written report. A memorandum is prepared of this conference. You should receive a written report of the observation and the post-observation conference for your signature before it is placed in your file. Your signature indicates only that you have seen the report. You may place a response to your evaluation in your file.

If the observation or the post-observation conference is not held within these timeframes, you must file a request with the chair within

10 work days or lose your rights to grieve non-compliance with these requirements. You should contact a chapter officer promptly if you are unhappy with any aspect of this process. For full details, refer to Article 18.2 of the [PSC-CUNY contract](#).

## Appointment and Reappointment to GA Work

Many Graduate Assistants have received a commitment from the Graduate Center to provide 5 years of annual GA appointments, as outlined in their original Financial Aid Award Letter, contingent only on good academic standing and satisfactory work performance. Other GAs may receive appointments for one year or less than one year. GA appointments cannot be made for more than seven total years of work. The employment, retention, evaluation or assignment of Graduate Assistants is not subject to the grievance procedure, to the extent that it is based upon their status, progress, and evaluation as graduate students. However, the PSC has often fought successfully on all these matters. If your reappointment is threatened, contact a chapter officer.

## WAC Fellowship

During their 5th year, most GAs in the humanities and social sciences are assigned to work on a new campus in the Writing Across the Curriculum program. If you have questions about your assignment or your workload, contact a chapter officer.

## Other Work

If you are teaching additional courses, you are paid on the [Adjunct pay scales](#). If you are grading tests or papers, or performing other non-teaching academic work, you must be paid on the [Non-Teaching Adjunct pay scale](#) (approximately \$45/hr in 2020). If you are offered work at less than this rate immediately contact a chapter officer.

## Sick Days - Workers' Compensation - Jury Duty

GAs are entitled to sick leave of twenty (20) calendar days per year. Immediately notify a GC union officer or contact the PSC office if you are denied paid sick leave. All GAs are covered by Workers' Compensation. If there is an accident, inform the human resources office to obtain a claim form, and a GC union officer or Grievance Rep. You must be paid your regular salary for jury duty and remit to CUNY any compensation received by NYS for serving.

## Complaints, Grievances, and Other Concerns

If you have questions or concerns about your wages, work assign

nments, or benefits, immediately\* contact the GC Grievance Rep, a chapter officer, or a grievance officer at the PSC office at 212-354-1252. Based on the circumstances, and always only with your approval, we can initiate an informal complaint procedure to address unfair, arbitrary or discriminatory treatment, which often entails a meeting of all the involved parties. Alternatively (and rarely), we can initiate a formal contractual grievance, a claim that there has been a violation, misinterpretation, or improper application of a term of the PSC-CUNY contract, the CUNY Bylaws, or GC Governance policies related to terms and conditions of work.

\* Grievances/complaints must be filed within 30 workdays from when you become aware of a problem.

### **Your Contract**

The full union contract is available [here](#).

### **Useful Links**

The [GC Chapter website](#) offers news, chapter working groups, and information on elected chapter leadership.

The [PSC website](#) offers union-wide news, rights, benefits, officer and staff contact info, and a link to the union newspaper. You can also [sign a union card online](#).