

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT

between

Graduate Assistants United

(URIGAU/NEARI)

and the

University of Rhode Island Board of

Trustees

2022-2025

AGREEMENT This Agreement is entered into this 16th day of March, 2023 by and between the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees, hereinafter referred to as the Board, and Graduate Assistants United, a chapter of National Education Association Rhode Island (NEARI), hereinafter referred to as URIGAU.

PREAMBLE The intent and purpose of this Agreement is to promote the quality and effectiveness of education and research at the University of Rhode Island, hereinafter referred to as the University, and to maintain high standards of academic excellence in all phases of instruction and research at the University. The parties hereto concur that these objectives can best be achieved by means of amicable adjustment of matters of mutual interest. It is recognized by the parties that mutual benefits are to be derived from continual improvement in the position of the University as an institution of higher learning; that effective and harmonious working relationships between the Council and URIGAU are necessary in order that the cause of public higher education may best be served at the University; and that orderly, just, and expeditious resolution of issues which may arise as a result of the provisions of this Agreement are in the best interest of the members of URIGAU, the student body, the University, and the public which supports it. Now, therefore, the parties hereto agree as follows:

DEFINITIONS

1. The terms "Graduate Assistant" and "GA" shall refer to any graduate student who is appointed by a department, college, or division to a Graduate Assistant position.
2. The term "Bargaining unit" shall be defined as all those who are specified in the certification issued by the Rhode Island State Labor Relations Board.
3. The term "Board" shall refer to the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees.
4. The term "URIGAU" as used in this agreement shall refer to Graduate Assistants United, a University of Rhode Island chapter of National Education Association Rhode Island (NEARI).
5. The terms "University" and "URI" shall refer to the University of Rhode Island.
6. The term "President" refers to the chief executive officer or acting chief executive officer of the University.
7. The term "Administration" shall be defined as all managers of the University, including the President, Provost, and Deans.
8. The term "Department" as used in this Agreement refers to academic units as defined by the University.
9. Graduate program director is the member of the graduate faculty appointed by a department chair under §8.15 of the Graduate School Manual to assume some or all of the duties of the department chair with regard to all aspects of the department's graduate degree programs.
10. The academic year shall be defined as beginning five business days before advising day and ending on spring commencement.

11. Summer shall be defined as the period between spring commencement and the first day of the academic year as defined above.

12. The term "Graduate Hall Director" refers to a Graduate Administrative Assistant who is assigned to the Department of Housing and Residential Life in the Division of Student Affairs and who, as a condition of employment, resides in University housing.

ARTICLE I: RECOGNITION

1.1 Pursuant to and in accordance with all applicable provisions of Section 36-11-1 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, 1956, as amended, the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees does hereby recognize URIGAU/NEARI as the exclusive bargaining agent for all Graduate Assistants employed at the University of Rhode Island and that pursuant to the provisions of §28-7-16 of the Act, URIGAU is the exclusive bargaining representative of said employees for the purposes of collective bargaining with respect to rates of pay, hours of employment and other conditions of employment.

1.2 This Agreement shall be binding upon and is exclusively between URIGAU and the Board unless otherwise specified herein. All rights and privileges claimed under the terms of this Agreement shall be enforceable only by URIGAU and the Council unless otherwise specifically provided herein.

1.3 This Agreement shall not be construed to prevent the Board or any agent thereof from meeting with any individual to hear views on any matters, except that as to matters so presented which are proper subjects of collective bargaining. Any changes or modifications of this Agreement shall be made only through negotiations and Agreements with URIGAU.

1.4 No person or persons represented by the exclusive bargaining agent shall bargain individually or collectively with the Board concerning any terms or provisions of this Agreement except through the authorized representatives of URIGAU. Members of the bargaining unit will adhere to the provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

1.5 Maintenance of Bargaining Unit Status

Only graduate students who are eligible to be Graduate Assistants as defined in Article 3.1 shall be members of the bargaining unit.

1.6 Dues Deductions

1.6.1 Membership in any employee organization may be determined by each graduate assistant. Members of the Union shall pay dues, fees, and assessments as determined by URIGAU.

1.6.2 The Controller shall, upon certification of the exclusive organization, deduct biweekly from said Graduate Assistant's salary said amount and remit the same to the treasurer or designee of URIGAU. The Board shall not deduct dues, fees, or assessments for membership in any other Union.

1.6.3 The Board recognizes URIGAU's ability to increase dues, fees, and assessments lawfully and in accordance with its Constitution and By-Laws, and upon written representation by URIGAU that dues, fees, and assessments have been lawfully increased and in accordance with its Constitution

and By-Laws, the Board agrees to adjust the amount of the deduction accordingly, provided that such an adjustment is consistent with the authorization of the Graduate Assistant that is required by law.

1.6.4 The appointing authority shall give written notice to URIGAU of all new Graduate Assistants within the bargaining unit who become eligible for membership in URIGAU. Said notice shall be given monthly and shall include the employee's name, student identification number, address, date of hire, department, FTE status, and email address.

1.6.5 The Board will discontinue such deductions if notified by URIGAU in writing. In the event the Board receives such notification by an employee, it shall refer the employee to URIGAU. URIGAU is fully responsible for addressing any objections by an employee regarding their dues, fees, and assessments deduction.

1.6.6 URIGAU shall indemnify and save the Council harmless against any and all claims, demands, suits, or other forms of liability that shall arise out of or by reason of action taken or not taken by the Council in reliance upon URIGAU's representation that its dues, fees, and assessments have been lawfully increased and in accordance with URIGAU's Constitution and By-Laws or for the purpose of complying with any of the provisions of this Article.

1.6.7 The Board agrees that it shall forward twice each year to URIGAU a list of bargaining unit members and their email addresses.

1.7 URIGAU shall have the right to meet with members of the bargaining unit free from intimidation.

ARTICLE II: MANAGEMENT'S RIGHTS

2.1 URIGAU recognizes that the Board and the Administration of the University have responsibility and authority to manage and direct, on behalf of the public, all the operations and activities of the University, to the full extent authorized by law.

ARTICLE III: TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

3.1 Only graduate students who are admitted as degree candidates in the Graduate School, and who remain in good academic standing shall be appointed to graduate assistantships.

3.1.1 Good academic standing shall be defined to include full or part time graduate work, a grade point average of 3.0 or above and progress toward the completion of the degree requirements. Graduate students appointed to a graduate assistantship must be registered for full-time graduate work, which requires a minimum of 6 credits each semester and should not register for more than 12 credits each semester without the approvals required by the Graduate School. Students who have completed all degree requirements but their dissertation (All But Dissertation/ABDs), and have been approved for ABD status, must be registered for at least 3 credits each semester to be appointed to a graduate assistantship. Progress towards completion of the degree requirements shall include, as applicable, course credits completed, submission of

the Program of Study, submission of the thesis or dissertation proposal, scheduling and successful completion of qualifying, oral and written exams, and submission of thesis or dissertation as determined by the major professor, dean of the Graduate School.

3.2 Term of Appointments

Graduate Assistant appointments shall be for a specified period of time, up to one academic year, as determined by the department offering the assistantship. Graduate Assistants may receive one or more subsequent appointments, not to exceed one year each. In no event shall a Graduate Assistant have an expectation of or right to continued employment beyond the time stated on the current appointment form.

3.3 Letter of Appointment

Whenever possible, a Graduate Assistant who is the instructor of record for a course shall receive their appointment letter at least three (3) months prior to the start of the semester that the teaching appointment begins. Whenever possible, all other Graduate Assistants should receive their appointment letter at least one (1) month prior to the start of the semester that the appointment begins.

3.3.1 Letters of Appointment shall include the following information: a. Appointment title(s) and department(s) b. Full time/part time status c. Effective dates of appointment and duration d. Stipend level and salary e. Reference to source of information on health and other applicable benefits f. Tuition and fee information g. Articulation that the position is covered by the terms of the collective bargaining agreement, along with a link to the agreement on URIGAU's website h. Department contact information for Graduate Assistant questions i. A description of duties and responsibilities

3.3.2 Information to be provided in the description of duties and responsibilities shall include but is not limited to: a. The assigned course, lab, research project, or position b. The name of the immediate supervisor c. The general tasks to be performed d. Work locations e. Possibilities for atypical scheduling and/or work on weekends or holidays

3.3.3. If the duties and responsibilities are unknown at the time of appointment, they should be defined as soon as possible thereafter but always prior to the start of duties. If duties and responsibilities change, a written notice detailing changes should be provided to the Graduate Assistant within two (2) weeks of said changes.

3.4 Only Graduate Assistants who have active appointments are covered under the terms and conditions of the collective bargaining agreement. Any benefits allowable under the collective bargaining agreement will be suspended if a Graduate Assistant is approved for an academic leave of absence.

ARTICLE IV: SALARY

4.1 Salary for Graduate Assistants will be listed in Appendix A of this Agreement.

4.2 Pay Level Advancement

4.2.1 Graduate students without a master's degree shall receive Level I pay.

4.2.2 Incoming Graduate Assistants will begin at Level II pay if they enter the university with a master's degree or have completed at least 30 graduate credit hours before their date of appointment as certified by the Dean of the Graduate School as creditable towards their program of study.

4.2.3 Graduate Assistants working towards their PhD shall advance from Level I to Level II pay after passing a qualifying examination, or departmental equivalent, in a doctoral program. The Graduate School will certify the result and submit a level change to the payroll office, with retroactive pay to the date of the qualifying examination.

4.2.4 Graduate Assistants who are PhD candidates shall advance from Level II to Level III pay at the start of the pay period following the certification of both written and oral comprehensive exam results by the Graduate School verifying the exams were passed, with retroactive pay to the date of the oral comprehensive exam.

ARTICLE V: BENEFITS

5.1 Health Care

5.1.1 The University agrees to pay the annual individual premiums for the Student Injury and Sickness Insurance Plan for all Graduate Assistants employed at the University from all sources of funds.

5.1.2 The University agrees to offer individual dental insurance to Graduate Assistants. The University shall pay 75% of the annual premium cost for such insurance. Graduate Assistants shall pay a 25% annual premium share for dental insurance benefits.

5.1.3 Effective September 1, 2024, the University agrees to offer an Individual Vision Plan to all Graduate Assistants.

5.2 Tuition Remission

All Graduate Assistants covered by this Agreement shall receive tuition remission, up to 12 credit hours per semester, which shall be pro-rated to the percentage of appointment.

5.3 Transportation

5.3.1 The University agrees to waive the commuter parking fee for all Graduate Assistants employed at least 20 hours per week and a pro-rata waiver of the parking fee for those Graduate Assistants employed at least 10 hours per week.

5.3.2 Graduate Assistants may park in all available lots from the hours of 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. during weekdays, and on weekends (except Commencement and fall move-in weekend) in order to pursue their research, administrative, and/or teaching responsibilities.

5.3.3 Mileage Reimbursement: When a Graduate Assistant is required to use their personal vehicle for University business they will be paid mileage in accordance with the mileage reimbursement policy and procedures established by the Controller's Office.

5.4 Student Fees Remission

All full-time twenty (20) hour per week Graduate Assistants covered by this Agreement shall receive a twenty (20) percent waiver of standard student fees.

Effective September 1, 2023, all full-time twenty (20) hour per week Graduate Assistants covered by this Agreement shall receive a twenty-five (25) percent waiver of standard student fees.

Effective September 1, 2024, all full-time twenty (20) hour per week Graduate Assistants covered by this Agreement shall receive a thirty (30) percent waiver of standard student fees.

5.5 Direct Deposit

All Graduate Assistants shall have access to direct deposit for their paychecks.

5.6 Access to Employee Benefits

The Graduate School will post graduate assistant total compensation on its website, including, but not limited to, pay scale, mandatory fees, tuition, and benefits.

5.7 Emergency Assistance Fund

The University will establish an Emergency Assistance Fund in the amount of \$30,000 annually to assist graduate student assistants with financial assistance caused by qualifying emergency events. The Dean of the Graduate School will be responsible for establishing the eligibility guidelines and approving requests for financial assistance. The allocation of funds will not carry-over from one fiscal year to another.

ARTICLE VI: WORKING CONDITIONS

6.1 Work Year

6.1.1 The academic work year for Graduate Assistants shall begin five (5) business days prior to Advising Day and shall end on Commencement Day. Graduate Assistants shall be required to work 36 out of 38 weeks during this period and shall receive stipends for 36 weeks. Two weeks agreed to in advance by the Graduate Assistant and their supervisor shall be unpaid leave.

6.1.2 Graduate Assistants may be required to work on holidays (as defined by RIGL 25- 1-1) if the Graduate Assistant is deemed essential by their supervisor. If a Graduate Assistant is not deemed to be essential, they will not be required to work on the holiday or to work replacement hours not worked on the holiday. Should a Graduate Assistant who is deemed essential be required to work on a holiday, they shall be granted commensurate time off within thirty (30) days. Such time off must be scheduled in consultation with their supervisor and may not fall on any other day when essential work (such as, but not limited to, teaching) is required.

6.2 Materials and Resources

Graduate Assistants will be provided appropriate resources relative to their teaching, research, or administrative assignment and shared space to complete their duties and responsibilities. Appropriate resources include but are not limited to printer/photocopier access; storage; course, research, or administration supplies; desk copies of teaching texts; software approved by the supervisor to conduct research and construct or grade assignments; and a mailbox. Graduate Assistants shall be reimbursed for the purchase of laboratory supplies and/or classroom materials approved by their supervisors for their assistantship.

6.3 Workload

The average weekly workload for all full-time Graduate Assistants shall be twenty (20) hours. It is understood that Graduate Assistants are engaged in professional activities of such a nature that the output produced, or the results accomplished, cannot be precisely standardized or measured in relation to a given period of time and that the time necessary to accomplish an assignment may vary. No member of the bargaining unit shall be required to consistently work more hours than their contract stipulates. Examples of activities included in the workload of Graduate Assistants are:

- a. Teaching: Course and/or lab hours taught, reasonable time for course and/or lab preparation time, reasonable time for grading, and office hours, as applicable.
- b. Research, grant writing and administration, field studies, oceanographic research cruises, and laboratory experiments, as applicable.
- c. Administrative: Residential life activities and assistance in the day-to-day administration of the program or department where assigned, as applicable.
- d. Examples of activities in the workload of those on split appointments include a combination of duties enumerated above. Graduate Assistants on split appointments, however, may not be required to teach more than four (4) credits per semester as an instructor of record.

6.4 Additional Hours

6.4.1 Graduate Assistants may be authorized to work an additional five (5) hours per week (on the internal payroll) for a total of twenty-five (25) hours per week, with the approval of the Graduate Assistant's major professor and/or the Graduate Program Director, and the Dean of the Graduate School.

6.4.2 Level III Graduate Assistants may be authorized to work up to ten (10) additional hours per week (on the internal payroll) with the approval of the major professor and/or the Graduate Program Director, and the Dean of the Graduate School.

6.4.3 Graduate Assistants may teach no more than four (4) credits per semester as an instructor of record in addition to their assistantship. A twenty (20) hour per week Graduate Assistant and/or any Graduate Assistant below Level III must receive prior permission from their major professor and/or Graduate Program Director, and the Dean of the Graduate School for such teaching. Graduate Assistants below Level III will be permitted extra teaching only in unusual circumstances. For the life of this agreement, Graduate Assistants teaching a course beyond their assistantships shall be paid \$1,575 per course credit

hour for additional teaching. This section applies to courses taught both within and outside of the Graduate Assistant's home department, including those taught during Winter J-Term and through the College of Education and Professional Studies.

6.4.4 Additional work hours may be limited by law.

6.5 Excessive Workload

The leadership of the URI Graduate School and URIGAU agree to meet each semester to discuss complaints from Graduate Assistants on excessive workload should such a meeting be requested by URIGAU.

6.6 External Employment

A Graduate Assistant may seek employment off campus (not compensated by university funds). Such employment should not conflict with the duties and responsibilities of the assistantship and satisfactory progress toward degree completion. Graduate assistants may be required to disclose off-campus work commitments when bona fide concerns over conflicts of commitment, conflicts of interest, access to proprietary information, or access to sensitive information (including, but not limited to, national security information) are present.

6.7 Training

6.7.1 Departments and/or supervisors are expected to provide appropriate initial and continuing training for all Graduate Assistants as appropriate to their duties. Departments and/or supervisors are also expected to provide initial and continuing training on specialized equipment used by Graduate Assistants.

6.7.2 Should a graduate assistant, after hiring, be required to take a course as a prerequisite for their Graduate Assistantship, the course credit hours shall be considered working hours, not to exceed four (4) hours per week. For a zero (0) credit course, contact hours shall be used, not to exceed four (4) hours. A schedule that accounts for the working hours shall be worked out between the Graduate Assistant and their supervisor. Excluded are courses that count toward the Graduate Assistant's Program of Study.

ARTICLE VII: NON-DISCRIMINATION CLAUSE

7.1 The Council and URIGAU agree not to discriminate against Graduate Assistants covered by this Agreement on the basis of race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, gender (including, but not limited to, pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding), gender identification or expression, sexual orientation, religion, political affiliation or beliefs, disability, age, genetic information, marital status, citizenship status or status as a veteran in accordance with applicable State and Federal laws; nor will there be discrimination in respect to hiring and retention or any condition of employment because of membership in or activities on behalf of URIGAU.

7.2 If for any reason under this article, a Graduate Assistant requires additional support during their employment, then at the Graduate Assistant's request, the Graduate School will assist the Graduate Assistant in developing a plan of support to ensure a safe and productive work environment for the Graduate Assistant.

7.3 URIGAU shall not discriminate against, interfere with, restrain, nor coerce an employee from exercising the right not to join URIGAU. The council and University shall not discriminate against any Graduate Assistant by reason of membership or non-membership in URIGAU.

7.4 To the extent allowed by the law, Graduate Assistant have the right to be referred to by the names and pronouns they choose. Graduate Assistants may change their names as per the policies and procedures maintained by Enrollment Services.

7.5 The Administration and URIGAU shall adhere to federal and state laws and regulations as they apply to affirmative action.

7.6 Any incident of discrimination or discriminatory harassment (including sexual harassment and/or sexual violence) or unlawful retaliation by a faculty member, staff, or student and/or administrators towards a member of URIGAU should be reported to the office of Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity, and Diversity in accordance with the department's procedures. Reporting procedures can be found on the Office of Affirmative Action's website.

7.7 Disability Accommodations

The Administration and URIGAU shall adhere to Federal and State laws and regulations as they apply to treatment and accommodation of persons with disabilities. Requests for accommodations shall be submitted to the Office of Disabilities for Students.

ARTICLE VIII: INVOLVEMENT IN UNIVERSITY/DEPARTMENTAL AFFAIRS

8.1 The President or their designee shall meet with representatives of URIGAU once each academic year for the purpose of discussing proper subjects of collective negotiations that may arise during the life of this Agreement or subsequent Agreements and to discuss those matters necessary to the implementation of this Agreement which are local in nature, provided each party gives fifteen (15) days written notice to the other party advising of a date and time for meeting and provided each party submits a written agenda no less than five (5) days before the scheduled date of the meeting.

8.2 Nothing contained herein shall prevent URIGAU from consulting with the President at times other than those set forth above if matters of mutual concern arise of an urgent or emergency nature.

ARTICLE IX: PERSONNEL FILES

9.1 The Office of Human Resources shall maintain an official personnel file for each Graduate Assistant subject to this Agreement. Such file shall contain copies of personnel transactions, official correspondence with the employee, and the evaluation reports prepared by the University.

9.2 Graduate Assistants shall have the right to examine their official personnel file at any time during normal business hours and to file a statement in response to any item placed in their file, provided, however, any letters or recommendation solicited in connection with their employment shall not be available to that employee or to their representative.

9.3 A designated member of URIGAU, with written permission of the Graduate Assistant, may examine the official personnel file of that Graduate Assistant, if the examination relates to a filed grievance, a grievance in preparation, or written charges proffered against the Graduate Assistant by the University.

9.4 A Graduate Assistant shall have the right to reproduce at their cost all documents in their personnel file, except as noted in Article 9.2, above.

9.5 No anonymous material shall be placed in a Graduate Assistant's personnel file.

9.6 Materials shown to be false or unsubstantiated shall be removed from the Graduate Assistant's official personnel file. The burden of proof of false or unsubstantiated material shall rest with the Graduate Assistant.

9.7 Departmental Files

Each academic department may maintain a departmental file for Graduate Assistants. The same rights of access and the same provisions for use of materials as indicated in 9.2 above shall apply to departmental files. The Graduate Assistant shall be responsible for providing materials for these files.

9.8 The University Administration shall be responsible for maintaining a separate file on grievances under process arising from the provisions of this Agreement. Materials pertaining to completely processed grievances which are placed in the Graduate Assistant's personnel file shall be completed and shall contain a statement concerning the final disposition of the grievance.

9.9 Each Graduate Assistant shall be responsible for providing material for an up-to-date personnel file.

ARTICLE X: EVALUATIONS

10.1 The purposes of evaluation are to encourage the improvement of performance and to provide a rational basis for employment discussions between the Graduate Assistant and their supervisor. In the event of a less than satisfactory evaluation, the supervisor shall articulate the steps necessary to fulfill the expectations of their assistantship. One factor in the evaluation process should be a direct observation. The Graduate Assistant and/or their supervisor may request a direct observation during the department/college's regularly scheduled evaluation process or at a mutually agreed upon time. If the supervisor, as outlined in the appointment letter, is unable or unwilling to complete an evaluation, the Graduate Assistant may request an evaluation be performed by the Graduate Program Director or their designee.

10.2 An evaluation conference should take place annually between a Graduate Assistant and their supervisor to discuss job performance. The supervisor shall provide a written report summarizing the evaluation to the Graduate Assistant and Dean of the Graduate School no later than April 15th. Evaluations shall be retained in the Graduate Assistant's personnel file in the Office of Human Resource Administration. The Graduate Assistant may accept the evaluation as written or append their comments to it. If the performance evaluation is not completed by May 1st in accordance with this article, the Graduate Assistant's performance shall be deemed satisfactory for the covered period.

ARTICLE XI: DISCIPLINE AND DISCHARGE PROCEDURE

11.1 The Union recognizes the authority of the University and the Board to reprimand, suspend, dismiss, or take other appropriate action against a Graduate Assistant for just cause. Discipline shall be progressive, and dismissal shall result from serious and/or repeated incidents of misconduct. Dismissal shall be defined as the discharge of a Graduate Assistant prior to the end of the appointment period. Should a Graduate Assistant be dismissed, compensation, including tuition and fee remission, will be prorated to the date of termination. The Graduate Assistant will be provided a grace period of one (1) month (minimum) to begin repayment.

11.2 Upon the issuance of discipline, a Graduate Assistant shall receive a written statement of reasons for any disciplinary action. If the Graduate Assistant considers such disciplinary action to be improper, they may appeal the decision in accordance with the grievance procedure.

ARTICLE XII: GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

12.1 There shall be a grievance procedure as follows, but the parties encourage open communication between URIGAU and the administration to resolve issues before the initiation of a formal grievance. Nothing contained herein shall prevent the parties from engaging in informal discussion and resolution of any issue before it reaches a formal hearing. In addition, there is nothing contained herein that would prevent the informal resolution of any issue or dispute at any step of the grievance procedure.

(a) For the purpose of this Agreement, the term “grievance” means any difference or dispute between the Board and URIGAU and any Graduate Assistant with respect to the interpretation, application, or violation of any of the provisions of this Agreement.

(b) “Within a working day” shall mean prior to the end of the normal closing time of the working day following receipt of the grievance and shall be exclusive of weekends, vacations, and holidays.

(c) “Aggrieved” shall mean either the Graduate Assistant and/or URIGAU.

12.2 GRIEVANCE PROCESS

a) STEP 1 - Immediate Supervisor

A grievance shall be presented by the aggrieved to their immediate supervisor within fifteen (15) working days after the Graduate Assistant knew or “should have known” of the act, event, and/or commencement of the condition, which is the basis of the grievance. The supervisor shall attempt to settle the grievance within two (2) working days of its receipt. The Union shall be notified of the disposition of the grievance.

b) STEP 2 – Dean’s Level

If the grievance is not resolved in Step 1, it shall be submitted to the Dean of the Graduate School and the Dean of the College within three (3) working days of the immediate supervisor’s or administrative official’s decision. The Dean of the Graduate School and the Dean of the College, or their designees, shall grant a

hearing to the aggrieved within ten (10) working days of the receipt of the grievance. A written decision shall be rendered within seven (7) working days of the conclusion of the hearing.

b) STEP 3 – Presidential Level

If the grievance is not resolved in Step 2, it shall be submitted within three (3) working days of the Dean's level decision to the President or their designee, who shall grant a hearing to the aggrieved within ten (10) working days of the receipt of the written grievance. A written decision shall be rendered within seven (7) working days of the conclusion of the hearing.

12.2.1 The time limits specified herein shall be regarded as maximums and every effort shall be made to expedite the processing of grievances provided, however, that the parties may by mutual agreement extend any time limitation specified herein.

12.2.2 Either party to this Agreement shall be permitted to call witnesses as part of the grievance procedure. The Board, on request, will produce payroll and other records, as necessary. Witnesses who are University employees and grievants will receive their regular rate of pay for time spent processing grievances. Such time spent shall be subject to approval of the appropriate dean, which should not be unreasonably withheld.

12.2.3 In a group grievance only one (1) of the grievants and the appropriate union representative shall be in pay status as spokesman for the group. Group grievances are defined as, and limited to, those grievances which cover more than one (1) Graduate Assistant within an employing unit, and which involve like circumstances and facts for the grievance involved. A URIGAU representative shall have the right to assist the aggrieved at any step of the grievance procedure. Nothing contained herein deprives an individual employee of the right to process a grievance without URIGAU representation. If such grievance is processed without URIGAU representation, the facts of said grievance will be furnished to URIGAU.

12.2.4 It is also agreed that in all cases of dismissal or suspension the aggrieved may go immediately to Step 3 of the grievance procedure. It is further agreed that either party may submit a grievance to each other and proceed immediately to Step 3 above.

12.2.5 Decisions rendered shall be forwarded to URIGAU and to the aggrieved Graduate Assistant.

ARTICLE XIII: ARBITRATION

13.1 If a grievance is not settled under Article XII, such grievance shall, at the request of URIGAU or the Board, be referred to the American Arbitration Association in accordance with its rules then obtaining.

13.2 The decision of the arbitrator shall be final and binding upon the parties except where the decision would require an enactment of legislation, in which case it shall be binding only if the legislation is enacted. The expense of such arbitration shall be borne equally by the parties.

13.3 Only grievances arising out of the provisions of this contract relating to the application or interpretation or violation thereof may be submitted to arbitration.

13.4 All submissions to arbitration must be made within fifteen (15) working days after the grievance procedure decision.

ARTICLE XIV: ACADEMIC FREEDOM

14.1 Institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interests of either the individual or the institution as a whole. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition. Academic Freedom is essential to these purposes and applies to both teaching and research.

14.2 URIGAU and the administration recognize that graduate assistants are employed by the University and work under the supervision, coordination, and guidance of the faculty of the department and college. Graduate Assistants will have reasonable latitude to exercise their judgment in deciding how best to accomplish their teaching and research in their discipline under the supervision of the faculty of the department and college. They also are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their discipline, subject to the supervision of the faculty of the department and college.

14.3 Graduate Assistants are employed as part-time teachers and researchers at an institution of higher education. When they write, or speak as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline. As scholars, they should strive to be accurate, exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinion of others, and should make every effort to indicate they are not speaking for the institution.

ARTICLE XV: EMPLOYMENT-RELATED LEAVES

15.1 Contractual benefits will remain in place through any utilization of the employment related leaves below but shall not exceed the appointment period. Any employment related leaves allowable under the collective bargaining agreement will be suspended if a Graduate Assistant is approved by the Graduate School for an academic leave of absence. Academic leave of absence information can be found in the URI Graduate Manual, found on the Graduate School's website.

15.2 All leaves greater than five (5) working days under Article 15.2 shall be initiated at and administrated by the University Human Resources office. Graduate Assistants are entitled to the following types of employment-related leaves:

15.2.1 Sick Leave

In the event of accident or illness that renders a Graduate Assistant temporarily incapable of performing their duties, they shall notify their immediate supervisor as soon as possible so that arrangements for the absence can be made by the University. The administration may require a physician's certificate or other satisfactory evidence for each sick leave with pay covering an absence of more than three (3) working days. Graduate Assistants will be allocated eight (8) sick leave days per academic year, up to a maximum accumulation of thirty-two (32) working days. The allocation will be prorated for assistantships of less than one (1) academic year or fewer than twenty (20) hours per week.

15.2.2 Parental Leave

Graduate Assistants with one (1) year or more of service shall be granted six (6) weeks of paid parental leave at the birth of a child or placement of an adopted child under the age of twelve (12) years. Graduate Assistants should provide at least one month's notice to the office of Human Resource Administration prior to the start of the leave, whenever possible.

15.2.3 Maternity Leave

In the event of the arrival of a child through childbirth, adoption, or foster care, or complications related to pregnancy, an unpaid leave of absence from job duties may be requested by a Graduate Assistant with six (6) months or more of service. The leave of absence may be granted for up to a period of six (6) months but shall not exceed the appointment period. Graduate Assistants may utilize allocated sick time for childbearing with appropriate medical documentation.

15.2.4 Bereavement Leave

Graduate Assistants shall be granted four (4) days leave with full pay for a death in the immediate family. Immediate family and will have an option of an additional two (2) weeks of unpaid leave, in consultation with their supervisor. Immediate family shall include father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife, son, daughter, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandmother, grandfather, grandchildren, and any person living in the employee's household including domestic partner and civil union partner.

15.2.5 Military Leave

Every Graduate Assistant covered by this Agreement who has left or shall leave their position by reason of entering the armed forces of the United States (whether through membership in the Reserve of the United States Military or Naval Forces, or in the National Guard, or by reason of enlistment, induction, commission, or otherwise) and who has been employed for 180 or more calendar days within the twelve (12) months preceding such entrance into the armed forces is entitled to and shall be granted military leave of absence from the said position commencing with the time of leaving said position for said purpose and continuing throughout the duration of said absence required by the continuance of service in the armed forces. Such leave of absence shall be deemed to have expired six (6) months after the date of discharge from or authorized separation from active duty as a member of the armed forces. Re-enlistment of other continued service in the armed forces resulting from a choice by the Graduate Assistant shall serve to cancel such leave.

15.2.6 Military Training Leave

Graduate Assistants covered by this Agreement who by reason of membership in the United States Military, Naval or Air Reserve, or the National Guard, are required by the appropriate authorities to participate in training activities or in active duty as a part of the Federal military force, shall be granted military training leave with pay not to exceed fifteen (15) days in any one calendar year. Should the Graduate Assistant be required to participate in such training activities for a period greater than fifteen (15) days, they shall be granted an unpaid leave for this purpose.

15.3 Association Leave

Designated URIGAU officers shall be granted time with pay during working hours to investigate and seek to settle grievances. In addition, time with pay shall be granted to attend hearings and to attend other meetings and conferences on contract negotiations. Such time shall be with the approval of the immediate supervisor involved and such approval shall not be unreasonably withheld. It is understood that full accountability for the use of such leave is a legitimate management concern. URIGAU shall furnish the Administration with a written list of its officers immediately after their designation and shall promptly notify the Administration of any changes of officers. URIGAU members will be permitted to attend grievance hearings without loss of pay if called to serve as witnesses.

ARTICLE XVI: UNIVERSITY AND GRADUATE SCHOOL MANUAL

When items in the University manual and/or the Graduate School Manual are in conflict with this agreement, the provisions of the agreement shall take precedence. If no conflict exists, the University manual or Graduate School Manual remains in force. The University manual and Graduate School Manuals are not subject to the grievance or arbitration process.

APPENDIX A

With prior approval of the Graduate School and the Office of the Provost, a college, department, program, or unit may set a stipend rate higher than the minima indicated in the table below for each level of assistantship. Such rates may not be individually negotiated. Typically, any difference in stipend amount between the table below and the stipend rate set by the college, department, program, or unit, shall come from college, department, program, or unit, external, or donated funds.

Minimum academic year stipend rates:

Effective 9/1/2022	
Level I	\$20,750.00
Level II	\$21,500.00
Level III	\$22,500.00

Effective 9/1/2023	
Level I	\$21,480.00
Level II	\$22,255.00
Level III	\$23,290.00

Effective 9/1/2024	
Level I	\$22,370.00
Level II	\$23,030.00
Level III	\$24,105.00


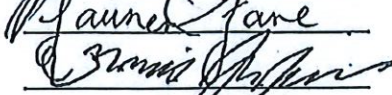
MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

A graduate assistant who receives a fellowship or grant that appears on the Graduate School's list of qualifying fellowships and grants shall receive a one-thousand-dollar (\$1,000) cash award. The Graduate School will publish a list of qualifying fellowships and grants, and rules for qualification, by the start of each academic year. The total number of awards available in a fiscal year is subject to available funding, and individual Graduate Assistant may receive only one such award per year.

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

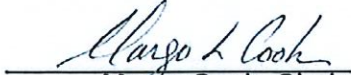
Summer Assistantship Appointments

1. The provisions of this Memorandum of Agreement section apply only to graduate assistants who were appointed per the provisions of Article III of the collective bargaining agreement to a graduate assistantship during the immediately preceding academic year and who are employed to teach or to assist in teaching or research during the summer.
2. Those meeting the provisions above shall be considered bargaining unit members during their period of employment if they are employed to teach at least one three (3) credit course during Summer Session or to assist in Summer Session teaching for a minimum of ten (10) hours per week for at least one term of summer session.
3. Those meeting the provisions above shall be considered bargaining unit members during their period of employment if they are employed to assist in research for at least ten (10) hours per week and for at least two (2) consecutive pay periods during the summer.
4. Such employees will receive no benefits beyond those of their academic year assistantships.
5. Such employees need not be registered for any credit-bearing activity during the summer.
6. Graduate assistants who are instructors of record shall be paid \$1,575 per credit hour taught from Summer Session funds.
7. Teaching assistants, meeting the conditions of section 1 and 2 above, who are not instructors of record shall be paid at least \$1,575 per term for a ten (10) hour workweek from college, department or other non-Summer Session funds. The rate of pay for hours in excess of ten (10) is to be prorated at \$1,575 per ten (10) hours, not to exceed \$6,300 per term at forty (40) hours per week.
8. Summer research assistants are to be paid the stipend amounts announced annually by the Graduate School, and which are to be based on the effective hourly rate of academic year stipends for the requisite number of hours [not to exceed forty (40)] and weeks.

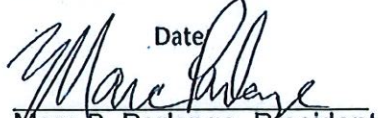

James J. Gave


Graduate Assistants United




Margo Cook, Chair
Board of Trustees

3/16/2023

Date: 
Marc B. Parlange, President
University of Rhode Island

Date: 3/15/2023