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## **TEMPLE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE TEACHERS AND RESEARCHERS CALL INDEFINITE STRIKE**

*The Temple University Graduate Students' Association (TUGSA) calls a strike in response to standstill contract negotiations and administration's refusal to negotiate a living wage*

PHILADELPHIA—TUGSA, the labor union representing nearly 750 graduate teaching assistants (TAs) and research assistants (RAs) at Temple University, is on strike as of Tuesday, January 31st. In addition to picketing throughout campus, a rally will be held at 2:30pm during today's Board of Trustees meeting outside of Charles Library at the intersection of 13th and Polett Walk.

“For over a year, our union has been trying to work with administration to negotiate a living wage, better benefits, and improved working conditions,” said **Bethany Kosmicki, TUGSA Past President and current member of the negotiation team**. “Temple’s administration has repeatedly ignored our demands, refusing us fair pay, affordable dependent healthcare, and increased parental leave. TAs and RAs are a core function of the University, teaching essential courses and conducting world class research. We deserve a contract that reflects our value to the University.”

The average TA and RA at Temple makes \$19,500/year, barely half the cost of living in Philadelphia, and the cost of healthcare coverage for dependents is prohibitively high. The annual cost for a family healthcare plan can amount to as much as 86% of the total average salary of a graduate employee. Additionally, TAs and RAs are only provided 5 days of parental leave. Temple administration’s current proposal increases the base salary for graduate employees to just \$22,500 by 2026.

Temple tasks TAs and RAs with teaching core curriculum, supporting students outside of the classroom, and conducting cutting-edge research that brings in millions of dollars in revenue. [Other universities](#) in Philadelphia have raised their graduate employee salaries to meet the demands of providing an adequate education to their students. Temple continues to disinvest from the classroom – simultaneously cutting budgets, raising tuition, and increasing class sizes, all while spending as little as possible on instruction.

To learn more about the strike and TUGSA’s goals, visit [tugsa.org](http://tugsa.org).

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*The Temple University Graduate Students' Association (TUGSA) is the labor union for teaching assistants, research assistants, and graduate assistants at Temple—the only recognized union of its kind in Pennsylvania. It works to protect and improve wages, healthcare, and working conditions.*