

Dr. Gloria Waters, University Provost and Chief Academic Officer

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August 30, 2024

Dear Members of the Boston University Graduate Student Community,

I am writing to provide an update on our contract negotiations with the Boston University Graduate Workers Union (BUGWU), as well as to reiterate my commitment to addressing your concerns thoughtfully, respectfully, and fairly.

Ensuring a high-quality graduate education and fostering a supportive environment for our graduate students is a top priority for me. I deeply value your contributions to our community, not only as BU's chief academic officer, but from my time as a faculty member and dean here.

That is why I was eager for our team to craft a reasonable and competitive wage and benefit [package](#) that would not only demonstrate that value, but bring the strike to an end, provide certainty to all parties, and allow our grad students to benefit from an enhanced contract in time for the fall semester.


As outlined in my [August 7 letter to the community](#), we carefully developed a robust and comprehensive proposal within the constraints of university resources, accounting for what we offer other employees and lining up with compensation structures at similar institutions. (For details, see [BU Today's coverage](#) of our offer). We made clear that it represented our best and final offer. Union negotiators initially presented a significant number of counter proposals and demands for more funding. However, we are very encouraged by our most recent meeting with the union that focused on the non-financial aspects of the contract.

We have continued to ask the union to present our offer to their full membership for a vote. However, we learned that discussion and a vote on our offer only occurred at BUGWU's General Membership meeting on August 13, which was attended by just 6% of their members. If our proposal is not ratified by the entire union membership, the strike will continue into the fall. In this scenario, our top priority will be to ensure the continuity of the University's educational mission, which will require continued adjustments and efforts from numerous faculty and staff. The ongoing disruption will also delay thousands of our graduate students from immediately benefiting from what we consider a fair and competitive contract.

Please know that the University, and I personally, are dedicated to resolving your concerns and making sure you feel supported, valued, and heard, not just now but in the long term.

For more information, I encourage you to visit the [BU Negotiations with BUGWU website](#).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gloria Waters".

Gloria Waters, PhD
University Provost and Chief Academic Officer