

GEOC Dues and Service Fee

Every GTA and GSA at Wayne State University is required to contribute to the financial support of GEOC, the union which represents us in collective bargaining, and to decide whether to join GEOC. You authorize this contribution and make this choice by submitting a Union Dues / Representation Service Fee Card to the union. We call it a gold card for short.

A Gold Card can be printed off from our website at www.gradunionwsu.org and submitted to the GEOC office:
5057 Woodward Ave, Suite 303
Detroit, Michigan, 48202.

Below we've provided answers to many of the common questions that we hear about dues and membership. If you have other questions, or if these answers seem unclear, please contact us at geocwsu@gmail.com.

Questions

You can click on a question to move directly to that answer.

1. [How much do I pay?](#)
2. [How do I pay? Can I pay my dues by check?](#)
3. [When will dues be deducted?](#)
4. [Will dues be deducted when I'm not a GTA or GSA?](#)
5. [Why does everybody pay?](#)
6. [Why do members pay more?](#)
7. [Why should I be a member?](#)
8. [What if I change my mind about membership?](#)
9. [Where does the money go?](#)
10. [Who decides where the money goes?](#)
11. [How can I have a voice in GEOC's financial decisions?](#)

Questions and Answers

1. How much do I pay?

GTA's and GSA's will be assessed either Union Dues or the Representation-Service Fee in any term in which they are employed. For the 2010-2011 academic year, Union Dues are set at 1.8% of gross pay. The Representation-Service Fee is 1.54%. The following chart is provided for reference:

Category	Bi-weekly Pay	Member Dues	Non-Member Fee	Difference
Physical/Life Science	\$849.20	\$15.29	\$13.08	\$2.21
Social Science	\$759.05	\$13.66	\$11.69	\$1.97
Humanities	\$731.00	\$13.16	\$11.26	\$1.90

[Back to Top](#)

2. How do I pay? Can I pay my dues by check?

Once you've submitted a Gold Card, the appropriate amount will automatically be deducted from your WSU pay check. If you wish to cancel this deduction and pay by personal check instead, email GEOC (geocwsu@gmail.com) to make the necessary arrangements.

[Back to Top](#)

3. When will dues be deducted?

Dues are automatically deducted from each of your paychecks. When corrections are necessary, pay will be adjusted by dividing the overage/underage by the remaining number of paychecks and changing the deduction by this increment over the range of remaining paychecks.

[Back to Top](#)

4. Will dues be deducted when I'm not a GTA or GSA?

No.

[Back to Top](#)

5. Why does everybody pay?

As a labor union representing GTAs and GSAs at Wayne State University, GEOC has a legal obligation to represent everyone in the bargaining unit, not just those who choose to join the organization. All of us, not just members, share the benefits of collective bargaining. There are no clauses of the contract which work only to the good of members, and the union does not consider an employee's membership status when assisting with an employment grievance.

Discharging GEOC's legal obligation of equal representation requires resources. The most important asset of the GEOC is the hours of work put in by members who take personal responsibility for running the union. However, GEOC needs funds so that it can maintain an office, employ staff, maintain institutional ties, purchase legal advice, and, operate as an effective voice for graduate employees in their employment relationship with Wayne State University.

Because GEOC represents all of us, and all of us benefit from that representation, all of us are required to contribute to the cost. The system isn't entirely fair – non-members pay less, and so might be considered by some to be free riders – but it is a compromise which allows GEOC to be a strong voice for graduate employees while respecting the wishes of those who choose not to participate.

[Back to Top](#)

6. Why do members pay more?

GEOC sometimes works on issues that aren't resolvable through collective bargaining, and we are not permitted to use fees paid by non-members to fund those kinds of projects. For example, in fall 2009, GEOC, in conjunction with various other campus organizations, staged rallies and phone banks to urge legislators to fund the Michigan Promise Scholarship, which rewards students for performing at a set level on state tests. While GEOC's participation in these activities was widely supported by the membership, it was not an activity that had direct bearing on GEOC's collective bargaining relationship with WSU. Accordingly, GEOC's costs for the activities were not paid for with funds obtained through the Representation-Service Fee. A yearly audit examines GEOC expenditures to confirm that non-member fees are used exclusively for the purposes of collective bargaining.

[Back to Top](#)

7. Why should I be a member?

The most important reason to join GEOC is because doing so is a public expression of your support for the union. By joining GEOC, you add your voice to a powerful chorus and contribute to GEOC's mission of improving the working conditions of graduate employees at WSU.

Membership in GEOC confers full rights to participate in the activities and governance of the union. All GEOC meetings, at all levels, are open to all members. For example, most GEOC business is conducted at regularly scheduled Steering Committee meetings. Any member may attend the meeting. The schedule is available online at: www.gradunionwsu.org.

In the 20010-2011 academic year, GEOC members will begin the process of setting priorities for the next round of contract negotiations. If you want to have a voice in the development of our bargaining platform, you have to be a member of GEOC!

[Back to Top](#)

8. What if I change my mind about membership?

In order to change your membership status, all you need to do is submit a new card.

[Back to Top](#)

9. Where does the money go?

Dues allow GEOC to employ staff, pay legal fees, pay office expenses, and cover overhead. In addition a portion of your dues go to our state and national affiliate unions.

[Back to Top](#)

10. Who decides where the money goes?

Ultimate authority for approving spending rests with the Steering Committee, but the GEOC Treasurer is responsible for day to day oversight of GEOC's finances. The shape of GEOC's spending each year is determined by the GEOC budget. Typically, a group of volunteers led by the GEOC Treasurer will develop a draft budget for the next year at the beginning of the fall term. The budget is subsequently submitted to the Steering Committee for review and approval. This approved budget is then voted on by the membership at the fall General Membership Meeting (GMM).

Periodically throughout the year the Steering Committee is consulted to approve extraordinary expenditures. This can occur when unanticipated events require the budget to be amended, but is more commonly the result of an anticipated expenditure with a discretionary component. For example, the GEOC budget reserves a significant amount of money for grievance arbitration, but even though the money is already budgeted the Steering Committee would be consulted prior to submission of a grievance for arbitration.

[Back to Top](#)

11. How can I have a voice in GEOC's financial decisions?

The best way to have your voice heard is to serve on the Finance Committee or the Steering Committee. Additionally, all GEOC meetings are open to all members, so as a member you can attend any Steering Committee meeting at which GEOC's finances are discussed. Lastly, if you have particular questions or concerns, you can email the treasurer at geocwsu@gmail.com to ask a question or even set up an appointment to come in and look over the books.

[Back to Top](#)