

**The proposed grievance procedure below will allow all IGWC-UE members access to a process whereby they may address grievances they would like to see brought to bargaining negotiations between Indiana University administration, faculty, and staff and the Indiana Graduate Workers Coalition - United Electrical Workers, as well as concerns or complaints they would like to see addressed regarding internal procedures within the IGWC-UE and IGWC-UE members. The function of the committee will be to evaluate and address external grievances and internal complaints, communicate graduate workers' rights at the University, state, and federal level to IGWC-UE members, and oversee responses to retaliation incidents against graduate workers across the University. External grievances include concerns regarding Indiana University administration, faculty, or staff. Internal complaints include concerns regarding other IGWC-UE members, IGWC-UE policies, and IGWC-UE practices. The committee will consist of at least seven (7) IGWC-UE members, three (3) of whom will be elected, and at least four (4) of whom will consist of volunteers whose duties are outlined below. This committee and the duties outlined below will be established upon the next election cycle in September, 2022.**

#### **Function of a Grievance Committee**

- Facilitates external grievance procedures regarding Indiana University administration, faculty, and staff
- Researches grievance procedures within university unions and their applicability to IGWC-UE to share with all members
- Facilitates internal complaint procedures regarding IGWC-UE members, policies, procedures, or practices
- Coordinates and disperses information on labor rights within the university/state of Indiana
- Coordinates with the Coordinating and Bargaining Committees to ensure that grievances are addressed in negotiations with Indiana University and within internal IGWC-UE procedures.
- Works with Social Committee to organize events focused on the history of labor rights
- Three members from Grievance Committee shall be appointed by general membership to the Coordinating Committee
  - These three members shall consist of a Rights Officer, an Internal Grievance Officer, and an External Grievance Officer

#### **Members of the Grievance Committee**

- 1 Rights Coordinator
  - The Rights Coordinator shall be responsible for researching and keeping members up to date on graduate workers' rights at Indiana University within the state of Indiana
- 2 External Grievance Coordinators

- The External Grievance Coordinators will be responsible for collecting grievance information that IGWC-UE general members wish to address between themselves and the faculty, staff, and/or administration of Indiana University within bargaining conversations conducted by the Bargaining Committee
- 2 Retaliation Representative Coordinators
  - The Retaliation Representative Coordinators will be responsible for collecting information about department- and administrative-level retaliation acts against IGWC-UE general members
- 2 Internal Complaints Coordinators
  - The Internal Complaints Coordinators shall be responsible for reviewing the internal complaints form and implementing the appropriate procedures to address the complaints [see more info under function of complaints procedure]

**Note:** *Each coordinator position will be responsible for assisting the other coordinator positions when necessary.*

### **Function of Grievance Committee Representatives on Coordinating and Bargaining Committee**

- Oversee collection of external grievance needs within union membership through procedure forms below
- Represent external grievances within Bargaining Committee to ensure (1) the entire committee is brought up to speed on members' needs, and (2) the committee can begin strategic discussions around these issues
- Ensure all IGWC-UE members are informed on current internal and external concerns the Bargaining Committee is undertaking through regular communication with General Membership

### **Grievance Committee Members on Bargaining and Coordinating Committees**

The Rights Officer shall

1. Serve as an elected member of the Bargaining Committee
2. Jointly lead the Grievance Committee with the other Grievance Coordinators
3. Lead the research into IU, state, and federal policy regarding workers' rights
4. Create, maintain, and make available resources for the education of the coalition on workers' rights
5. Assist the other Grievance Coordinators when appropriate

The External Grievance Officer shall

1. Serve as an elected member of the Bargaining Committee
2. Jointly lead the Grievance Committee with the other Grievance Coordinators
3. Serve as a resource to the Department Organizers, the Coordinating Committee, and the Membership, on addressing external grievances or retaliation from Indiana University

4. Assist the other Grievance Coordinators as appropriate.

The Internal Grievance Officer shall

1. Serve as an elected member of the Coordinating Committee
2. Jointly lead the Grievance Committee with the other Grievance Coordinators
3. Seek input from and be available to the membership regarding issues which may arise internally in the Coalition
4. Seek measures towards resolution of internal issues as appropriate
5. Report internal issues to the Coordinating Committee as appropriate
6. Assist the other Grievance Officers as appropriate

**External Grievance Procedure** (External grievance reporting [form](#))

The External Grievance Coordinators, and External Grievance Representative on the Bargaining Committee, shall be responsible for reviewing external grievance concerns from the IGWC-UE general membership via the external grievance form (linked above). The External Grievance Coordinators shall be responsible for being in communication with the Bargaining Committee about bargaining concerns the IGWC-UE membership wish to see addressed beyond our official platform in bargaining conversations with Indiana University administration once official union recognition takes place.

External grievances can pertain to anything relating to equitable pay, benefits, working conditions, and more for graduate workers at Indiana University.

**Retaliation Response Procedure** (Retaliation reporting [form](#))

The Retaliation Response Coordinators within the Grievance Committee shall be responsible for the review of retaliation activities against IGWC-UE members conducted by Indiana University faculty, staff, or administration via the retaliation report form (linked above). This report is intended to be a centralized place for reports to be collected so that the Retaliation Response Coordinators can keep track of retaliation against our members and coordinate an official response with the appropriate channels.

In the case of department-level faculty retaliation reports, the Retaliation Response Coordinators will meet with that department's union representatives and work together to coordinate an appropriate response to the event.

In the case of administrative-level and Indiana University staff retaliation reports, the Retaliation Response Coordinators will meet with the Bargaining Committee to discuss the event and coordinate an appropriate IGWC-UE response to the event.

For example, Retaliation Reps (RR) would coordinate with Union Representatives (UR) (or other related committees) to develop a response to specific retaliation incidents. This retaliation may involve a larger, more strategic approach with departments or a smaller, more interpersonal approach with Chairs or membership. For instance, RR may prep UR to be able to go into a 1-1

meeting with their members and Department Chair. Depending on the breadth of retaliation, RR may bring issues to the GA. The process by which issues are brought to GA will be in the form of a committee report.

### **Internal Complaints Procedure** (Internal complaint reporting [form](#))

The IGWC-UE is dedicated to forming a harassment-free space for everyone, regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity, age, religion, or class. We do not tolerate harassment of members in any form. This includes harassment in physical and digital spaces.

This procedure is meant to address incidents of harassment and conflict resolution between internal disputes and arguments between IGWC-UE members, and serve as an accountability measure for our membership. It is also meant as a mechanism for members to identify structural inadequacies. Each of the grievance committee members will receive training on restorative justice techniques and practices at the start of their term\* [see 'On Restorative Justice Techniques' at the end of this document.]

Given that we are not a formal organization, the IGWC-UE is not prepared to navigate egregious instances of harm such as assault. For these types of incidents, we recommend seeking help with external resources given that our organization is not currently equipped with the training to assist adequately, productively, and healthily those who experience that level of harm.

However, it is our additional recommendation that if you have experienced assault or severe incidents of harassment from another member of the IGWC-UE, please reach out to your Internal Complaints Coordinators, either by email, slack, or the reporting form, and we will work with you to ensure that the organization is not unintentionally endorsing or enabling assault and harassment. This may look like barring member engagement from IGWC-UE events, hosting events at alternative locations, or creating a members' statement denouncing such behavior, decided upon on a case-by-case basis, in conjunction with the reporter, if possible.

We want to make it abundantly clear to all members that harassment, assault, bigotry, and other forms of violence, whether seen as minor or severe, are unacceptable and will not be tolerated within our organization. We are accountable to each other and tasked with caring for each other through this work.

This policy is a living document, and your feedback is encouraged. Please reach out to the Grievance Committee or specific Internal Complaints Coordinators on the grievance committee with comments or questions.

### **Unacceptable Behaviors**

Harassment includes but is not limited to:

- Making offensive comments related to any personal characteristic(s) or identity. No personal disrespectful comments related to a person's gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity, age, religion, or class will be tolerated.
- Disrespecting the physical, mental, and emotional space of others.
- Deliberate violation of clearly stated boundaries.
- Unwelcome, deliberate physical contact or attention (including touching a person's hair without consent).
- Physical and/or verbal threats to any person or group.
- Deliberate intimidation, stalking, following.
- Harassing photography or recording.
- Continued disruption of presentations, talks, or performances.
- Doxing a person's identity online.
- Sharing unsolicited sexually explicit content.

Members asked to stop any harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately.

If you notice someone being harassed, please bring it to the attention of the Internal Complaints Coordinators.

Bias incidents may vary in severity; neither overt harassment nor microaggressions have a place in the IGWC-UE.

No member shall make disparaging remarks against another member in meetings, discussions, online interactions, or events.

These expectations apply to in-person and digital meetings, discussions, and events.

### **Suggested Behaviors**

Make no assumptions. While interacting with fellow union members, avoid assuming you know their sexual orientation, gender, or anything else related to their identity or experiences. Remember that every person is a complex individual with multiple, overlapping identities. Sometimes these identities result in experiences of oppression that interact in complex, inextricable ways, a concept often called intersectionality.

If you are not sure of someone's pronouns, ask. If you misgender someone, it is appropriate to promptly correct yourself. If you realize your mistake later, it is appropriate to apologize if the affected person asks for an apology, but emphasis is placed on correcting your use of pronouns in the future.

Be willing and active in engaging others on topics of bias, even if you are not personally the target of bias. Integrate accountability, accessibility, and antiracism perspectives into union work and interactions, such that members' intersectional lived experiences, informed by the complex social systems we are enmeshed in, are not separate or segmented from daily union activities.

However, do not put the burden of education on accountability, accessibility, and antiracism issues on marginalized groups/individuals unless they have explicitly consented.

Adopt consent as a guiding principle. Ask others before speaking on their behalf. When in doubt, ask. Use nicknames only with consent, and call people by the name they prefer.

Create space for other perspectives and opportunities for others to speak, particularly in discussion. Avoid calling on perspectives as tokens or taking up all the air in a conversation. Seek to meaningfully engage others' perspectives.

Assume union members are acting in good faith. Know that no one can know in advance how their behavior may affect others; you may cause harm without intending it, and others may as well. While we all want to see the IGWC-UE officially recognized at Indiana University, we are coming to this organization from various political, socio-economic, religious, ethnic, racial, geographic, and cultural backgrounds, and this informs how each member approaches the organizing work conducted within the IGWC-UE. All union members operate within a structurally flawed society and university and should work to avoid unintentionally replicating the biases inherent in these systems as we hope to make them better. Someone with good intentions should adhere willingly to the Accountability section below.

### **Note on Accountability**

We are all learning and unlearning. We will make mistakes. When we do, it's our responsibility to admit, correct, and repair the harm. Embracing mistakes cannot be done in a spirit of defensiveness. To confront our own biases requires the ability and willingness to listen to those impacted by our actions and accepting the fact that we all internalize harmful biases and stereotypes about marginalized communities and identities.

As we work to repair the harm in any given situation, it is critical to listen to and prioritize the needs of those who were harmed. Healthy, productive engagement with restoring relationships after harm has occurred requires that we 1. Acknowledge or own the harm that occurred, even if unintentionally, 2. Don't center ourselves if we commit the harm, even if unintentionally, 3. Don't make excuses for the behavior or actions that caused harm, even if unintentionally, 4. Change the behavior or actions that caused the harm in the future to prevent the further perpetuation of harm, and 5. Understand that members who have experienced harm are under no obligation to forgive as they heal from the harm they experienced.

For example, our recommendation for a healthy harm response, or apology, looks like the following: "I'm sorry I hurt you by doing X, I will learn from this and do better in the future."

Harm is not always universal and can occur in isolated incidents. Some behaviors that are okay with some members may not be okay with others, due to a range of different factors including but not limited to personal preference, cultural, geographic, racial, and ethnic background, gender identity, sexual orientation, body size, physical and mental ability, etc. Each member has their own needs. It is important that we listen to each other's needs as we engage in this work.

## **Experiencing Harm**

If you are being harassed, notice that someone else is being harassed, or have any other concerns, you are encouraged to engage in a conversation with those involved, if you are comfortable. If you do not feel safe doing so, or a conversation does not solve the issue, please contact one of the Internal Complaints Coordinators on the Grievance Committee immediately. Once safe, coordinators will ask you to explain what happened. This can be upsetting but will be handled as respectfully as possible. You can bring someone to support you. You won't be asked to confront anyone, and coordinators won't tell anyone who you are.

You are also encouraged to [fill out a report](#) if a situation makes you feel unsafe or uncomfortable. The report does not mandate that you share identifying information but encourages you to share enough that next steps may be taken. Internal Complaints Coordinators, with support from Grievance Committee members, will investigate all reports in a timely fashion.

## **Addressing Harm**

If a member harasses, assaults, or oppresses another member of the IGWC-UE, the Grievance Committee may take action they deem appropriate, including having a conversation with that person, setting up restorative justice procedures, or asking the member to refrain from participation in IGWC-UE events until the matter is resolved.

If appropriate, and relevant personal information is given by the reporter, affected persons will be provided with information on external resources, such as the Title IX Office, so affected persons can make an informed decision about events that impacted them. This procedure is meant to address incidents of harassment and conflict resolution between internal disputes and arguments and serve as an accountability measure between our membership. For more egregious harm, such as assault, we recommend seeking help with external resources given that our organization is not currently equipped with the training to be able to address that level of harm equitably and safely.

However, it is our additional recommendation that if you have experienced assault or severe incidents of harassment from another member of the IGWC-UE, please reach out to your Internal Complaints Coordinators, either by email, slack, or the reporting form, and we will work with you to ensure that the organization is not unintentionally endorsing or enabling assault and harassment. This may look like barring member engagement from IGWC-UE events, hosting events at alternative locations, or creating a members' statement denouncing such behavior.

We want to make it abundantly clear to all members that harassment, assault, bigotry, and other forms of violence, whether seen as minor or severe, are unacceptable and will not be tolerated within our organization. We are accountable to each other and tasked with caring for each other through this work.

## **Addendum**

The grievance committee may also work with other committees, such as the social committee, to coordinate educational events for IGWC-UE membership, the University community as a whole, and the public on topics related to the history of the IGWC-UE, graduate student unions, and the labor movement. These events will work to facilitate some of the duties the committee will be required to conduct for the membership, such as education for the purposes of conflict prevention, organizing, and solidarity building.

### \* **On Restorative Justice Techniques**

Restorative justice is “a process whereby all the parties with a stake in a particular offense come together to resolve collectively how to deal with the aftermath of the offense and its implications for the future,” (Tony Marshall, 1996). It is a criminological theory that has been utilized across the globe by educators, correctional staff, police officers, and more. Despite its initial application to criminal offenders, restorative justice practices have been utilized in classrooms and churches to remedy harm incurred by various offenses, from verbal assaults to financial misconduct. Respectfully, IGWC-UE will utilize the terms “wrongdoer” and “harmed,” rather than “offender” and “victim.”

The goals of restorative justice theory are (1) restitution and healing for the harmed, (2) healing and reintegration for the wrongdoer, (3) healing of the relationship between the wrongdoer and the harmed, and (4) healing for the community. A stakeholder is any individual who has incurred harm in the aftermath of a transgression. This may include any IGWC-UE member. In accordance with restorative justice research and to ensure that all stakeholders are given the opportunity to be involved in the restoration of relationships, the Grievance Committee will be trained to participate in responsive, or peacekeeping, circles and formal conferences.

Responsive circles can be instances in which (1) a wrongdoing has occurred and those involved want to respond to the harm or (2) participants are responding to a general transgression not directed at a particular wrongdoing. The facilitator of a responsive circle does not need a script and serves to ensure that participants listen to one another. Often, a talking piece is used, such as a tangible object like a stick or a virtual object, like an emoticon. Responsive circles may occur in response to a specific incident, a general transgression, or in preparation for an event or experience. For example, if IGWC-UE is preparing to go on strike, a responsive circle may be called to discuss sentiments surrounding striking. Or, if a group or individual in IGWC-UE has experienced microaggressions in general during union participation and would like to discuss the harm incurred.

Formal conferences are more specific than responsive circles and require more planning. These conferences occur in response to a specific transgression and require a third-party facilitator. The facilitator will utilize a script and serve to ensure that an agreement plan is enacted at the conclusion of the session(s). The agreement plan will include steps for the wrongdoer to take in light of their reconciliation with the harmed. These steps will be agreed upon by the wrongdoer and the harmed first and foremost, although other stakeholders may propose steps to these individuals.

It is the goal of restorative justice practices to reconcile the relationship between the wrongdoer and the harmed. *However, reconciliation should never be forced.* Therefore, if the wrongdoer does not reconcile, the Grievance Committee, facilitator, and any other stakeholder who so wishes may decide upon a course of action that most addresses the harm incurred and ensures all parties feel safe and heard, including but not limited to barring member engagement from IGWC-UE events and creating a members' statement denouncing such behavior, decided upon on a case-by-case basis.

*Restorative Justice Resources:*

Formal Conference: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XPuajScuHa8>

Proactive Circles: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oc23H6RxWRo>