

KEY UNION CONTRACT DEFINITIONS

APRIL 17, 2024

Please refer to these key union contract definitions as needed:

Bargaining unit members are those Northwestern graduate students enrolled in degree programs who are performing instructional or research services for the University and not otherwise subject to an exclusion under the collective bargaining agreement (CBA). Exclusions include “graduate students who are not seeking Northwestern degrees, including visiting students; graduate student graders, tutors and proctors who are not otherwise providing instructional or research services for the University; assistant chairs in residential colleges; residential assistants; students enrolled in the Pritzker School of Law; MD seeking students in the Feinberg School of Medicine (including MD/PhD students in Feinberg who are in their MD phase of studies); students enrolled in the Medill School of Journalism; office clericals; managers; guards and supervisors as defined in the National Labor Relations Act.”

Full-funding programs pay every student in their program a stipend and provide a full Northwestern tuition grant. Most PhD and some MFA programs fund students for a full year/four quarters and require a full-time academic commitment (recorded via full-time registration in CAESAR) throughout the year. DMA and some MFA programs fund students for nine months/three quarters and do not require a full-time academic commitment for the term in which they are not funded. The Master of Music (MM) program is not a full funding program.

Fully funded students receive tuition grants and stipends from full funding programs. Such funding may originate from Northwestern or from external grants or any combination. Their funding may be for three or four quarters per year. (See the full funding programs definition.) MM students are not fully funded.

The **period of guaranteed funding** was described in each student’s offer of admission. For example, most PhD students are guaranteed 20 quarters of full funding. DMA students are guaranteed two years of full funding.

Unfunded students are those in stand-alone master’s degree programs and PhD, MFA and DMA students who have exhausted their guaranteed funding, any banked funding terms, extended student quarters, and any additional funding commitments they have procured from their school, program or grants/fellowships. This may happen in full-funded programs if an individual student’s progress toward the degree has exceeded the expected timeline, at which time they are no longer full-time students and pay a small fee to continue affiliation with Northwestern until degree completion or reaching the maximum time to degree. In The Graduate School (TGS), such students will be registered in TGS 512-0. Processes vary by school and program.

Continued on page 2

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Direct dealing is an inappropriate labor management approach in which an employer engages directly with a union-represented individual regarding terms and conditions of employment (e.g., to resolve material questions regarding terms of the CBA). To avoid this, Northwestern will work with NUGW-UE via the Labor Management Collaboration Committee to resolve questions like bargaining unit status. Moving from a direct student-to-University relationship to one where NUGW-UE serves as an intermediary between the student employee and Northwestern requires a mindset adjustment for both student employees and for University staff and faculty.