

My name is Mike McCarthy. I'm a Ph.D. student in political science and I'm a member of the Executive Committee of the Indiana Graduate Workers Coalition—United Electrical Workers. IGWC-UE is the union representing a majority of graduate workers at IU-Bloomington. We have won significant gains for our members, including multiple raises and an end to mandatory fees. However, we have yet to be formally recognized by the administration. Indeed, administrators have denied us our rights under IU's own bylaw, rule HR 12-20, which guarantees a right to form a union and seek collective bargaining.

This denial of a guaranteed right is now, sadly, normal at IU. Free speech rights have been significantly abridged by the state's new tenure law, SEA202, which will subject graduate workers and other instructors to politically motivated harassment and malicious abuse of administrative review. Yet, our Provost has expressed enthusiasm for the so-called "intellectual diversity" this law will provide. Indeed, our administrators and our trustees have also been enthusiastic supporters of the new "free expression policy" that so drastically diminishes freedom of expression that a student leaving a blank Post-It Note on a door might be arrested and expelled for doing so.

IGWC-UE maintains that our working conditions are our students' learning conditions. Our students cannot learn in this atmosphere of fear. I study and teach political philosophy, but my students cannot discuss course subjects too close to campus buildings or else they will risk punishment, including the termination of their education. We fight against our administration to make sure that our students can engage in the expressive activity around which so much of university life is based. The fight for organized academic labor is also the fight to protect IU and its educational mission from its hostile administrators. IGWC-UE will keep fighting and I hope that others throughout the IU community will join us in the fight.