

Statement of Solidarity with Boldly G-AUB

In light of the events that took place at the American University of Beirut the week of November 20th, the Organizing Committee of the Graduate Workers of Columbia University – UAW Local 2110 stands in solidarity with Boldly G-AUB. We strongly condemn the actions taken by the AUB administration in response to Boldly G-AUB’s peaceful protests, specifically:

- The administration’s unjust revocation of Graduate Assistantships for 10 graduate students in Boldly G-AUB—a decision that was rescinded because of its clear violation of University policy and Code of Conduct—and issuing of Dean’s Warnings to 13 graduate students. The loss of the GAs would have meant that these students cannot complete their education. **We stress that the return of cancelled GAships is not enough.** Further, the issuing of 13 Dean’s Warnings to students was in itself an act of intimidation and harassment, and an abuse of power for which the administration should be held accountable.
- The physical violation of two students (shown in [this video](#)) at 12:30 am on Tuesday, November 21, and the decision to forcibly remove their protest tent, which had been up for over a week without any administrative warning.
- The administration’s recent attempt at excluding graduate students from negotiations concerning the Graduate Assistant policy, and therefore their livelihoods, after three months of negotiations, despite the fact that Boldly G-AUB is a key stakeholder and constituent in this process.

We represent the Graduate Workers of Columbia – UAW Local 2110, comprising over three thousand Research and Teaching Assistants at Columbia University. We are concerned to hear of the silencing of civil and labor rights at AUB as we demand recognition of those same rights from our own university administration, which continues to refuse to respect our 72% yes vote for a union and begin bargaining for a fair contract. The rights of graduate student workers at Columbia University and at the American University of Beirut must be respected.

We demand that the AUB administration immediately (1) revoke these Dean’s Warnings and (2) guarantee that Boldly G-AUB is allowed to continue negotiating for a fair and equitable GA policy. In addition, we (3) call on the administration to endorse Boldly G-AUB’s modest demands:

1. Monthly stipends indexed to the concrete cost of living in Beirut (a minimum of \$400, the lowest estimate available, far lower than the University’s own estimates);
2. Two-year GA contracts, rather than semester-to-semester (subject to the regular performance criteria); and
3. The waiver of University fees for GA students, amounting to almost \$400 every semester (including Technology, Health Insurance, and Social Activity fees).

Graduate Workers of Columbia – UAW Local 2110, Organizing Committee

