



**Graduate Assistants United**  
YOUR UNION, YOUR VOICE.

224 Yon Hall, PO Box 112014  
Gainesville, Florida 32611  
(352) 575-0366  
organizing@ufgau.org  
ufgau.org

## **PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 1, 2019

### **GAU Calls For Thorough Investigation Into The Death of UF Graduate Assistant Huixiang Chen**

**GAINESVILLE, FL** – On the evening of June 13, 2019, friends of University of Florida (UF) graduate assistant (GA) Huixiang Chen contacted GAU expressing concern about his health and safety. We have spoken with the University of Florida Police Department (UFPD) about Chen, and after they searched campus and some off-site locations, Chen was found deceased in a building on campus on June 14, 2019. There were no signs of foul play.

We ask UF to confirm that it is conducting an investigation into the conditions leading to Chen's passing, including but not limited to alleged academic misconduct, unsafe mental working conditions, and the treatment of international graduate employees. GAU is keeping abreast of developments in this case. We will keep the graduate community apprised of any developments.

GAU believes Chen's final words in his letter that was recently published on Medium.com, and we encourage all GAs to come forward to GAU with accusations and information of abuse by faculty and administration. All information shared with GAU will remain confidential.

We are very sorry to hear of Chen's passing and offer our most sincere condolences. Chen was a valued member of the UF community.

You are not alone, there is always a way forward. If you or a friend need immediate support during this difficult time, please don't hesitate to call UF's Crisis Services at 352-392-1575.

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*GAU is the official labor union representing the approximately 4,000 teaching, research, and graduate assistants at the University of Florida. UFF, FEA, NEA, AFT, AFL-CIO. For additional information, contact GAU Communication Chair Stephen C. Phillips at [communications@ufgau.org](mailto:communications@ufgau.org) or 352-575-0366.*