

Dec. 17, 2019

Dear Graduate Students,

Greetings from Mayor Justin Cummings and Councilmembers Sandy Brown and Chris Krohn. Two of us have been graduate students here at UC Santa Cruz, Councilmember Brown was a grad student at UC Berkeley. We understand that being a graduate student now in Santa Cruz has never been more difficult. We acknowledge that and we write in support graduate students, and specifically we support your campaign for a COLA4ALL!

In a recent letter to the campus community, EVC Kletzer wrote that the campus administration is “continuing to develop solutions...in the face of the severe housing crisis.” It is critical that she share those “solutions” with us and the timeline for implementation. The problem we face is that there is not only a housing shortage in Santa Cruz, but there are also some landlords who are charging too much, including the University. The rent-burden solution for students has to begin with the University. Graduate students along with UCSC staff are facing an extreme rent-burden and the City Council stands ready to work with UCSC to make housing more affordable.

We—Mayor Justin Cummings and councilmembers Sandy Brown and Chris Krohn—believe it is critical that the UCSC administration sit down with graduate student representatives and begin mediating this crisis as soon as possible. As we all said on the campaign trail, “not all housing is equal,” and there is not a “housing” crisis in Santa Cruz, there is an AFFORDABLE housing crisis. We urge the administration to resolve this issue as soon as possible.

Secondly, we need the UCSC administration to take a longer view and consider drastically lowering dorm fees. For example, an email just went out from the Summer Session office advertising dorm fees at HALF-off for summer session students. If you can do it for summer session students you can do it for all students.

As city councilmembers we stand with over 500 graduate students and over 400 faculty members in demanding an immediate resolution to this matter. **We support the COLA4ALL campaign.** As elected officials wanting to see the best outcome for all, we support a COLA increase and a speedy resolution to this matter. If you would like to call on the auspices of the Mayor and City Council we stand ready to assist in any mediation effort as the resolution to this issue moves forward.

Sincerely,

Justin Cummings  
Mayor,  
City of Santa Cruz

Sandy Brown  
Councilmember  
City of Santa Cruz

Chris Krohn  
Councilmember  
City of Santa Cruz