

17 December 2019

Dear ENVS Graduate Students --

The faculty of the Department of Environmental Studies are committed to supporting the well-being of our undergraduates, graduate students, and our staff. We support the quest of graduate students for greater economic security, without which academic success is not possible.

Many of us have signed the faculty [petition in solidarity](#) with graduate students to ask the administration to address the high cost of living in Santa Cruz for graduate students, to better allow you to pursue your studies and professional training. We know that you share our commitment to teaching quality, educational equity, and social justice.

Graduate students who participate in the wildcat strike are knowingly making themselves vulnerable, and they are understandably nervous about possible judgment, retaliation, and lack of support from faculty. Many decisions about graduate student hiring are controlled by the university administration and so it will not be entirely within the ability of the Environmental Studies department to protect our graduate students from retaliation. However, please be assured that there will be no repercussions or judgments from all who sign this letter for whatever course of action you decide to take in your pursuit of securing a sustainable living wage for the extremely valuable work you do to support undergraduate education at UCSC. Furthermore, participation in the strike will not be considered in departmental decisions on summer funding or awards, or for our recommended assignment to Teaching Assistant, Teaching Fellow, or Lecturer positions. There will also be no retaliation at the departmental level for faculty who refuse to take on additional grading duties as a result of the strike.

We hope that a resolution to this situation can be reached soon, and acknowledge the additional stress, uncertainty, compressed workloads, communication inundation, and conflicting sentiments we all are experiencing.

Please feel free to reach out to any of us regarding your concerns.

Sincerely,

Chris Benner
Jeffrey Bury
Elliott Campbell
Weixin Cheng
Madeleine Fairbairn
Gregory S. Gilbert
Brent Haddad

Karen Holl
Sikina Jinnah
Anne R. Kapuscinski
Michael Loik
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Adam Millard-Ball
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Stacy Philpott
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Carol Shennan
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