

## **Documentation of UCSC Graduate Students' Attempts to Engage Administration Through Official Channels**

December 12, 2019

The purpose of this document is to detail the recent history of graduate student attempts to engage both UC and UCSC administrators through official channels, in an effort to address graduate student costs of living amidst skyrocketing costs of housing and the unavailability of housing itself for UCSC graduate students. We maintain that responses by administrators have been utterly inadequate toward providing any meaningful remedy for these issues of graduate student precariousness. Even when events and reports have been initiated by administrators themselves (detailed in Sections V and VI) to hear the concerns of graduate students and undergrads, adequate support toward supporting graduate student overall well-being has not materialized. Thus, with growing feelings of collective anger, 385 graduate students [voted yes in a straw poll](#) on December 6, 2019 (80% of all graduate students who responded to the poll) to go on a wildcat strike in order to win a COLA (cost of living adjustment). Hundreds of graduate students decided to go on this wildcat strike, using the leverage that we have, to force administrators to act beyond paying facile lip-service to our concerns because we strongly believe that *all other options, including advocating through official channels of communication, have been exhausted.*

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## SECTION I

### Summary Report by Visual Studies (HAVC) PhD Students (December 2019)

#### I. History of Bargaining through Official Channels:

Four years ago, the current Graduate Student Association's External Vice President\*, Rebecca Ora, outlined the cost of living in Santa Cruz. This was done using the MIT Cost of Living Calculator (MIT COLC) and she presented the results at a UCOP meeting after Janet Napolitano asked why it takes grad students "so long" to finish their degrees. It featured a chart with the amount of disparity between the stipend and MIT COLC per UC campus. It was met with dismissal. In her capacity as a student representative, Ora lobbied the UC to gather data on the actual cost of attendance for grads, which it did, and its findings unequivocally support the case for a COLA. The average annual cost of attending for 2016-2017 in Santa Cruz was **\$31, 710**. (These surveys can be found [here](#) and [here](#), and show two things: **1.** our cost of living exceeds what we are paid, and **2.** that we bear the impact of this scarcity in drastic ways. The Well-Being Survey report very plainly and matter-of-factly summarizes horrendously painful aspects of our lived experiences as grad students, including uneven impacts upon already vulnerable groups.)

And yet there has been no effective change -- the most recent contract was ratified last year with the UAW (United Automobile Workers), **in spite of an overwhelming [82.89%] of graduate students at UCSC opposing it. TA salaries are determined by UAW2865 contract negotiations that are UC-system wide and TAs are paid equally in every UC, regardless of the cost of living.** Because a majority of other UCs voted in favor of accepting this contract the UAW2865 voted in favor as well.

About three years ago, graduate student and then External Vice President of the GSA Whitney DeVos created a complex spreadsheet using the MIT calculator that details the different costs of living associated with each campus. The spreadsheet, of course, demonstrated vast inequities across the system. Whitney brought the information to Janet Napolitano who dismissed it by stating we needed a spreadsheet that details the "total cost of education per student" instead. President Napolitano refused to acknowledge our complex position as student-workers, obfuscating the labor we perform and the unfairness of its compensation. The cost of education per student attempts to homogenize the "un-homogenizable."

Two years ago UAW began bargaining for new contracts for graduate student workers. During bargaining, students repeatedly asked UCOP how they calculate graduate student wages, and they repeatedly refused to reveal this information. Their initial offer was a meager 1% wage increase, a number they based on "a lot of factors," declining further explanation.

The following is a chart that was used during bargaining [2017-2018] to illustrate how UCSC grad student wages compare to other universities:

# Gap Between Pay and Cost of Living

UC Campuses

|                |                 |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Berkeley       | \$20,050        | \$34,278        |
| Davis          | \$20,653        | \$26,561        |
| Irvine         | \$20,051        | \$31,844        |
| Los Angeles    | \$20,653        | \$28,163        |
| Merced         | \$19,279        | \$21,777        |
| Riverside      | \$20,653        | \$25,584        |
| San Diego      | \$20,653        | \$31,220        |
| Santa Barbara  | \$20,653        | \$30,118        |
| Santa Cruz     | \$20,051        | \$30,513        |
| <b>AVERAGE</b> | <b>\$20,255</b> | <b>\$28,895</b> |

Competitor Institutions

|                                   |                 |                 |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Stanford                          | \$30,114        | \$35,256        |
| University of Washington          | \$22,950        | \$28,870        |
| University of Michigan            | \$20,400        | \$25,771        |
| University of Southern California | \$30,000        | \$28,163        |
| Duke                              | \$30,550        | \$24,606        |
| Northwestern                      | \$23,787        | \$27,664        |
| <b>AVERAGE</b>                    | <b>\$26,300</b> | <b>\$28,388</b> |

Graduate student, Kyle Galindez, former UCSC chapter Secretary, who bargained on behalf of UCSC's UAW members at UCOP, recently stated:

“We shared with the administration a torrent of data on the skyrocketing cost of living, the housing crisis, and more. We even showed them data on what grads are paid at other universities (grads in all competitor institutions make more, sometimes much more, than we do). We brought in local experts on the housing crisis to present their research. How did they respond?

A UCOP representative literally said, "Let's be honest, you are not underpaid for the work you do." When we pressed them about the high cost of housing, they laughed and said, "Well, Santa Cruz *is* a nice place to live!" When it finally came time to talk numbers, they proposed the measly wage increase of *1% per year*.”

Ana McTaggart, representing UCSC as our UAW unit chair, was told during bargaining “focus on your studies.”\*\* We find these types of responses from our administration to be both dismissive and out of touch with the expectations/realities of UCSC graduate students.

The ultimate outcome was that we were offered a 3% pay increase (as opposed to the UCOP's proposed 1%) *that barely covers the cost of inflation for living in Santa Cruz*. **There was a 54% increase in the cost of rent in Santa Cruz over the period of the last contract (June 20, 2014 through June 30, 2018) , and a 15% increase in rent over the first year of the new contract (June 31, 2018 to present).** This current contract lasts for three years.

Much of this has to do with “rebenching.” Rebenching, as you may be aware, caused UCSC to move towards accepting a higher number of graduate students annually in exchange for a temporary cash influx that did not amount to supporting, in any sustainable way, the graduate

growth required to receive the funds in the first place. Nor did UCSC campus achieve the graduate growth it desired within the timeline allotted.\*\*\*

It is also worth thinking about the ways in which UCSC met system-wide demands of budget cuts when the effects of 2008 rolled around; UC Berkeley, on the other hand, positioned itself as “too big to fail” and refused to make the cuts the system said it required, the costs of which were, of course, likely absorbed by other campuses, many of which, like UCSC, are under-funded to begin with.

The historically-underfunded campus of UCSC is in a unique position vis-à-vis the other UCs, not only within the system itself but also due to external factors like the skyrocketing living costs (as a new Silicon Valley commuter town), the power of local NIMBYism to control and resist affordable high-density housing projects, astronomical construction costs, and certain geographic and environmental limitations with respect to residential zoning.

## **II. Strike and Faculty Support:**

Once this contract went into effect students at UCSC began the COLA campaign in order to more immediately address our rent burden. Because all TAs are paid the same UC-wide\*\*\*\*, yet the disproportionately exorbitant costs of living in Santa Cruz exacerbate the burden UCSC grad students experience, organizers ask that we receive a COLA that would put us on parity with students at UC Riverside (essentially we want the same % of our income to go toward rent).

We recently got a new Chancellor (this essentially wiped institutional memory of our efforts through “appropriate channels” to receive fairer wages) and COLA organizers presented Chancellor Larive with a list of demands. In November, about two hundred students marched from Quarry Plaza to Kerr Hall, delivering these demands; Larive and Kletzer were both present for this action. There was an official response in which she asked students to come and speak with her. Unfortunately, a very short window was presented and organizers were given very short notice, making it virtually impossible for anyone within the organizing committee or GSA to attend.

Correspondence from Chancellor Larive and Lori Kletzer has been vague. They mention they are working towards solutions, both long and short term, but will not outline what those are. One solution they have provided is the building of new on-campus housing. However, graduate student housing takes up 60% of graduate student wages and amounts to “paying company money at the company store.”

The history of going through administrative channels and union bargaining is long and depressing, and our situation has repeatedly been actively disregarded. We have only been able to provide a brief and incomplete account, but we hope it is unambiguously evident that graduate students have repeatedly spoken with and advocated before officials up and down the ranking list. After speaking with our fellow students, and including statements given here by graduate students who held positions within the UAW and the GSA, in an effort to provide you with more information, it is clear that we HAVE attempted to bargain with the President directly, with UCOP, with past Chancellors, with Regents, and with the Union. **Lack of institutional memory has been used against students to pretend that these issues are new territory, including now**

**when we are ridiculed for our perceived lack of willingness to work with Chancellor Larive. Perhaps after bargaining with her for another 2-4+ years we will have another new Chancellor and need to start over. However, our situation is well-known. These “appropriate” means of trying to make change have been tried for a very long time, and have failed.**

We hope that you will acknowledge the bargaining history of graduate students on this campus. Many of us have worked diligently through “sanctioned” channels and actions to change our financial situation. We hope that you will acknowledge that these methods have not, and likely will not, work.

\*Acts as a liaison between GSA and systemwide student organizations, administration and Regents, statewide and national legislative affairs. Advocates for graduate needs on the UC wide level and reports back on important UC wide issues. Attends a variety of systemwide meetings across the state.

\*\* All statements attributed to Rebecca Ora, Whitney DeVos, Kyle Galindez, and Ana McTaggart were via email correspondence dated December 6-9, 2019.

\*\*\* (For more information see:

- <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/01/31/university-california-rethinks-how-it-funds-campuses>
- <https://www.cft.org/california-teacher/university-california-fails-solve-campus-funding-inequities>
- <https://senate.ucsc.edu/archives/Past%20Issues/rebenching-funding-streams/index.html>
- <https://legaudit.assembly.ca.gov/sites/legaudit.assembly.ca.gov/files/Rebenching%20%284%29.pdf>

\*\*\*\* See: <https://apo.ucsc.edu/docs/scales-crnt.pdf>. Note that the numbers are based on 100% time and that currently TAs are only allowed to work 50% time unless otherwise given permission, please divide numbers by half. You will also see that there are different tiers for GSRs ranking from 1-10. The arts division starts at the lowest tier among graduate students, at a 4%. While this ranking shifts over time, arts graduate students may expect to receive, on average, \$500 less than their peers in the sciences.

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## SECTION II

### Email from Whitney De Vos in Response to Graduate Student Housing Survey (May 1, 2014)

**From:** Whitney De Vos <[wdevos@ucsc.edu](mailto:wdevos@ucsc.edu)>

**Date:** May 1, 2014 at 10:55:32 AM PDT

**To:** [delaney@ucsc.edu](mailto:delaney@ucsc.edu), [gallow@ucsc.edu](mailto:gallow@ucsc.edu)

**Cc:** [shouser@ucsc.edu](mailto:shouser@ucsc.edu), Matthew Mednick <[mmednick@ucsc.edu](mailto:mmednick@ucsc.edu)>, [sacarter@cats.ucsc.edu](mailto:sacarter@cats.ucsc.edu)

**Subject:** two examples of desired graduate housing options: UCI and UCSD

hello,

Thank you for taking time to consider graduate concerns regarding the recent housing survey; we feel the plans include "more of the same" undignified, unaffordable housing options we currently have *and that sit unoccupied*.

I would like to emphasize that the TA salary in my division is \$1,700. The current and proposed future rates of over \$1,100/month are not affordable on this budget.

Per administrative request, I've included floor plans and pricing for more dignified and appropriate graduate high-density student housing available at UCI and UCSD.

UC Irvine has several examples of *affordable* graduate housing that resemble the privacy of well-planned residential apartments instead of University dorm life:

See <http://housing.uci.edu/rates/Rates.html>; scroll down to graduate options, where there are several different floor plans. Here is a floor plan of Campus Village (\$710/month), which most resembles the floor plan of Redwood

Grove: [http://housing.uci.edu/docs/floorplans/floorplan\\_CV.pdf](http://housing.uci.edu/docs/floorplans/floorplan_CV.pdf). However, there are more nuanced options, such as Unit E in Palo

Verde: [http://housing.uci.edu/docs/floorplans/floorplan\\_PV\\_unitE.pdf](http://housing.uci.edu/docs/floorplans/floorplan_PV_unitE.pdf). This is what graduates are looking for, and is even more affordable at \$614/month.

UCSD Coast Apartments: Coast Apartments consists of 106 unfurnished apartments, 21 studios, 54 one-bedroom and 31 two-bedroom units. Coast is located within walking distance to campus, the beach, and UC San Diego transportation. Many apartments have views of the Pacific Ocean. Coast offers free parking, outdoor leisure areas and a laundry facility. Each unit features a front and back patio or balcony, carpeting, blinds, range, refrigerator, cable television and Ethernet connection. The University pays for gas, water and trash removal. Residents pay for electricity, phone (optional) and cable TV (optional).

*Pets including birds, fish, and cats are permitted* (limit of 2 cats per apartment, please). A pet addendum to the housing agreement and a \$250 refundable pet deposit are required for cats. This is a non-smoking facility.

Rates (effective July 1, 2013 thru June 30, 2014)

Studio: \$609

1 BR: \$831

2 BR: \$1149

Half Rate (Shared Two Bedroom and One Bath)

2BR: \$574.50

Rates (effective July 1, 2014 thru June 30, 2015)

Studio: \$630

1 BR: \$858

2 BR: \$1188

Half Rate (Shared Two Bedroom and One Bath)

2BR: \$594

Rates (effective July 1, 2015 thru June 30, 2016)

Studio: \$651

1 BR: \$885

2 BR: \$1227

Half Rate (Shared Two Bedroom and One Bath)

2BR: \$613.50

Rates (effective July 1, 2016 thru June 30, 2017)

Studio: \$672

1 BR: \$918

2 BR: \$1269

Half Rate (Shared Two Bedroom and One Bath)

2BR: \$634.50

\* Rates include water, trash, gas, and parking. Residents pay for electricity. Refundable security deposit is \$100.

Contact Information

Phone: 858.822.7607

Email: [archinfo@ucsd.edu](mailto:archinfo@ucsd.edu)

Thank you for your time and consideration to this very important matter.

best,

Whitney DeVos

## SECTION III

### Position Paper on Graduate Living Wage Gap (March 2016)

Authored by Rebecca Ora (then-current Graduate Student Association's External Vice President), presented to Janet Napolitano in response to her question "Why does it take PhD's so darn long to finish?"

The University of California has campuses in ten disparate locations throughout the state of California, yet the vast majority of UC graduate students, particularly those in non-STEM fields, receive comparable University support regardless of their campus location. The salary Graduate Students receive can fall between \$2,000-11,000 below the minimum cost of living estimates published by MIT<sup>1</sup>. Due to local and statewide circumstances, the cost of living in many locations with UC campuses continues to increase astronomically year after year. Now, students are bracing for further cost of living increases as the UC expands its undergraduate enrollment numbers across the system, which will increase the demand for housing, driving costs higher, and making the availability of affordable housing even more scarce.

### Background

According to the 2015 UC Accountability report, nearly 50% of PhD students across the University of California System graduate with debt from their doctoral programs in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences<sup>2</sup>, despite expectations that PhD students receive funding for their research and academic work. Though they are working as Teaching Assistants, Graduate Student Instructors, and Graduate Student Researchers, many non-STEM graduate students fall far below the minimum living wage standards in the areas surrounding their UC campus. Further, the schedule for union bargaining is insufficient to keep up with the rate at which rent has risen around many UC campuses. The current average level of funding for students supporting their doctoral degrees through TAships is \$19,279.53 (before taxes), which is several thousands of dollars below the poverty line on all campuses.

Whereas the argument that Teaching Assistants are expected to work only twenty hours per week, academic work is ill-defined, and graduate students are seldom certain what is considered their compensated labor and what constitutes personal educational pursuits. The rigors of graduate study most often preclude the ability to work additional jobs while advancing within one's program, leaving the majority of these students living below the poverty line in their respective areas.

The stipend gaps among students in different disciplines has been discussed at some length.

Whereas students in some STEM fields may have access to supplemental funding on top of TAship and/or GSRship funding, those in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences are, by and large, living off the standard TAship stipend alone, which is, according to current estimates, grossly inadequate within many UC locations.

| Campus                                 | 1 Adult, required<br>income before taxes | Est. Annual Rent | Wage Gap |
|--|--|------------------|----------|
| San Francisco <sup>3</sup>             | \$29,896                                 | \$14,292         | \$10,616 |
| Irvine (Orange County) <sup>4</sup>    | \$29,229                                 | \$13,704         | \$9,949  |
| Berkeley (Alameda County) <sup>5</sup> | \$27,771                                 | \$12,420         | \$8,491  |
| Santa Cruz <sup>6</sup>                | \$26,968                                 | \$11,712         | \$7,688  |
| San Diego <sup>7</sup>                 | \$26,464                                 | \$11,268         | \$7,184  |
| Santa Barbara <sup>8</sup>             | \$26,259                                 | \$11,088         | \$6,979  |
| Los Angeles <sup>9</sup>               | \$25,878                                 | \$10,752         | \$6,598  |
| Riverside <sup>10</sup>                | \$24,107                                 | \$9,192          | \$4,827  |
| Davis (Yolo County) <sup>11</sup>      | \$23,984                                 | \$9,084          | \$4,704  |
| Merced <sup>12</sup>                   | \$20,783                                 | \$6,264          | \$1,503  |



## Solution

Recently, UC San Francisco's graduate division has announced a new pilot initiative wherein entering doctoral students will receive one time \$4000 housing stipends, intended to go toward first and last months' rent, to supplement their funding packages. The initiative will be assessed based upon its ability to improve the recruitment of new students. While this is an exciting prospect, UC Graduate Students firmly believe that the importance of more robust packages that attempt to close the cost of living gap extend far beyond the ability of a campus to recruit. Recently, student leadership has partnered with UC Office of the President to conduct institutional research around Graduate Student Well-being, based upon UC Berkeley's comprehensive survey and report in 2014<sup>13</sup>. It is the insistence of Graduate Students that, while we certainly hope this initiative improves recruitment, the increased well-being of students is sufficient justification for the allocation of matching funds from UC Office of the President and individual campuses. The increase in funding to defray the growing cost of living is necessary on ethical grounds as well as to further facilitate the successful completion of research and to reduce of time to degree.

While more comprehensive data will be available through the Graduate Wellbeing Survey that is currently being conducted, and you will be further informed by the 2017 Graduate Cost of Living Survey, current students are facing increasing competition for housing and consequent increases in rental costs

that come with the enrollment growth of 5,000 undergraduates in the 2016-7 term and another 5,000 undergraduates in the following two years. The UC should feel compelled to retain its current Graduate Students by acting now to address their needs. It is imperative that this steadily widening gap between Graduate Student compensation and the cost of living be bridged immediately.

## Recommendation

It is the recommendation of UCSA and the Graduate members of the Council of Student Body Presidents that the University of California Office of the President make available matching funds to encourage the allocation of campus funds, likely to come from graduate divisions, to alleviate the poverty under which thousands of Graduate and Professional Students are currently living. While this is only a stopgap fix for an ongoing problem of funding inadequacy, the housing and food insecurity on many campuses is dire. It is recommended that the amounts offered by UC Office of the President be tethered to the relative costs of living in each location. Students at UC Berkeley, UC Irvine, UC Santa Cruz, UC San Diego, UC Santa Barbara, and UCLA (in addition to UCSF, which will soon be implementing this initiative in its own form), should be given priority for these moneys. We also hope the UC will open these funds to all Graduate and Professional students, not only those entering the first year of a program.

<sup>1</sup> <http://livingwage.mit.edu>

<sup>2</sup> <http://accountability.universityofcalifornia.edu/2015/documents/pdfs/Acct%20Report%202015%20Web.pdf> p. 71

<sup>3</sup> <http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06075>

<sup>4</sup> <http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06059>

<sup>5</sup> <http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06001>

<sup>6</sup> <http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06087>

<sup>7</sup> <http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06073>

<sup>8</sup> <http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06083>

<sup>9</sup> <http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06037>

<sup>10</sup> <http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06065>

<sup>11</sup> <http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06113>

<sup>12</sup> <http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06047>

<sup>13</sup> [http://ga.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/wellbeingreport\\_2014.pdf](http://ga.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/wellbeingreport_2014.pdf)

## SECTION IV

### **Joint Statement from the Boards of GSA, GSC, and UAW Union regarding graduate student needs for Housing West, sent to UCSC administrators in November 2017.**

We, the UC Santa Cruz Graduate Student Association, the UAW 2865 UC Student-Workers Union, and the Graduate Student Commons Governance Board, call for the improved accommodation of UCSC graduate students in Student Housing West. We are concerned that current Student Housing West proposals may displace families and couples, create unaffordable graduate student housing, and do little to rectify the housing crisis in Santa Cruz that UCSC exacerbates. Our organizations have met and discussed the unique needs of the graduate student population surrounding the Student Housing West project. We present these needs below. We request a response and updates on progress towards these needs by January 15th, 2018.

- **Increased transparency surrounding decision-making**
  - Requests for information and updates regarding the Student Housing West project for graduate students have been rejected with vague promises of future transparency. We need an active and open line of communication with both CHES and the developers.
- **Equivalent housing guarantees for current FSH renters displaced in transition process**
  - Verbal promises have been made that FSH renters will not be displaced. We need written guarantees that **all** FSH renters and their respective families will be housed equivalently in the transition process.
- **Space for 25% of projected graduate student enrollment on campus by Student Housing West opening date (in accordance with 2005 LRDP)**
  - External factors in the larger area and internal UCSC factors have created conditions in Santa Cruz that lead to graduate students being pushed into insecure and often dangerous housing conditions. The city's housing stock development is not keeping pace with our needs and students face extreme housing shortages and skyrocketing rental prices. UCSC is continually increasing graduate student enrollment and thus it is the university's responsibility to provide housing opportunities for these students, just as the university takes responsibility for housing its undergraduate population. Graduate students make up over 10% of UCSC's population and yet less than 1% of on-campus housing is designated solely for graduate students. Graduate students need availability for 25% of our projected 2022 (Student Housing West completion date) enrollment to be housed on campus.
- **Rental costs for FSH and graduate students rooms capped at 34% TA salary (HUD 30% guideline + allowance for utilities)**
  - Current on-campus housing rates for graduate students are classified as a "Severe Housing Burden" by US Department of Housing and Urban Development. Most graduate student salaries are fixed in our contract with the university and thus our needs must be provided for in accordance with our fixed salaries. Despite the university knowing graduate salaries, UCSC has nonetheless made graduate

student housing unaffordable. We demand a commitment to this price cap for all future and continued graduate housing.

- **Housing placements prioritized on a need-based system**
  - The new, affordable, on-campus graduate student housing should be allocated on a need-based system to graduate students in order to provide an equitable playing field for everyone undertaking graduate education.
- **Provision additional public transportation commensurate with increased on-campus population**
  - Increasing on-campus population will overload current public transportation options. The increased on-campus population has the potential to disproportionately impact graduate students who need flexible transportation options to attend meetings and appointments on and off-campus.
- **Guarantees that housing will be properly maintained**
  - We are concerned about the private partners delaying or avoiding long-term preventative maintenance and UCSC assuming ownership of neglected property. We need guarantees that this will not be the case; the constructed housing should be built and maintained in a way that it will last longer in UCSC's hands than the temporary private owners. We refuse to accept that new developments will last fewer than 50 years like current FSH.

We believe that effective collaboration is possible between ourselves, the UCSC administration, and Student Housing West Developers. However, we are prepared to escalate our response if timely and effective actions are not taken to meet our needs.

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## SECTION V

### **Let's Talk Event (May 17, 2018)**

[Editor's Note: The publicized event information is copied here. Several graduate students attended in order to make sure grad concerns were heard. Again, our contention is that UCSC administration's response to the serious student concerns they ask to hear about has been entirely inadequate].

Quality Education in UCs would like to invite you to a special event happening at UCSC this Thursday at the Cowell Hay Barn from 4-6pm. The event is called Let's Talk and it will be a panel discussion featuring UC Office of the President VP of Student Affairs, Robin Holmes-Sullivan and UCSC administrators.

#### **Who is Robin?**

Robin works closely with President Napolitano and is responsible for reporting campus conditions back to the Office of the President. She oversees all UC undergraduate admissions, a five billion dollar budget for student assistance programs, and ensures that campus climates are positive at each of the UCs.

#### **Who will be on the panel?**

UCSC administrators like EVC Marlene Tromp, Associate Vice Chancellor Sue Mathews, and Vice Provost Jaye Padgett. These administrators oversee housing, education, and the quality of student life.

#### **What are we talking about?**

The panel will be discussing the effects of over-enrollment without the provision of basic student resources. Possible topics include:

- Housing and homelessness
- Food insecurity
- Transportation
- Accessibility and retention
- Sustainable development
- Budget allocation

#### **Why is it important?**

This discussion is necessary now, more than ever.

This is why QEUC is bringing together students, faculty, community members, administration, and elected officials to address these concerns. This event will also be live-streamed on our Facebook and Twitter pages, giving students from the other UCs a chance to join the conversation. The event will be available on our social media @QEUCUCSC if you can't attend in person.

#### **Get involved!**

We need you to join the talk on Thursday, May 17th, from 4-6pm at the Cowell Hay Barn. All students, professors, and the UCSC community are welcome.

Please RSVP now or find us on Facebook or Twitter for the livestream link @QEUCUCSC. Bring your questions, comments, and concerns! It's time for a Real Talk.

## SECTION VI

### **Workgroup on Graduate Student Welfare Report and Recommendations June 2018**

#### **Executive Summary:**

In Spring 2018, the EVC Marlene Tromp, established a Workgroup on Graduate Welfare with key stakeholder. EVC Tromp, charged the workgroup on graduate welfare to focus on pragmatic problem-solving, that is towards developing a limited set of actionable measures for mitigation of pressing problems and for incremental improvements in graduate student welfare. Focal areas might include: mental health; food security; graduate student safety; housing; graduate student community; support for professional development and career paths.

The work group met over the course of Spring Quarter to discuss focus areas related to graduate welfare, reviewed issues and concerns that had been identified by Graduate Student Success Advisory Group, [see Appendix 1](#), and discussed recommendations and prioritizations. The Division of Graduate Studies also compiled data on graduate student recruitment and retention by year, program, gender and ethnicity, [see Appendix 2](#).

Graduate students through a variety of mechanisms (e.g., surveys, focus groups, Meet the VPs town hall, Graduate Student Success Advisory group meetings) have expressed concerns about lack of support, financial and food insecurity, housing, and issues around retention. This report summarizes findings and makes key recommendations to help address these concern in eight core areas. [Appendix 3](#) further provides greater detail and a full complement of recommendations within the nine core focus areas. We feel there is urgency and believe these recommendations warrant immediate action.

#### **Focus Areas Identified:**

1. Recruitment vs. Retention
2. Financial Insecurity
3. Housing
4. Food Insecurity (Basic Needs)
5. Mental Health
6. Community
7. Professional Development/Mentorship
8. Writing Support

#### **Issues Identified & Recommendations:**

The workgroup identified several recommendations under each of the focus areas which are provided in [Appendix 3](#). We narrowed down these recommendations to eight core recommendations:

1. Develop better exit surveys of graduate students to understand why they are leaving and use these results to inform and set priorities for support structures needed to retain these students.

2. Utilize on-campus lecturer/GSI, temporary staff, and internship positions to provide financial support, professional development, and mentorship for graduate students.
3. Develop partnerships with the city of Santa Cruz and private sector to supply subsidized temporary and more permanent off-campus housing for graduate students.
4. Better advertise emergency food and housing services available to graduate students and evaluate how income of graduate students is calculated to determine eligibility for lower income food (CA Fresh) and housing services provided through the state.
5. Dedicate a mental health professional for graduate students and a space (separate from undergraduates) for graduate students to meet privately with a mental health professional.
6. Ensure ethnic resource centers and identity related community resource organizations (i.e., EOP, DRC, First Generation Initiative) on campus have GSR-level funded graduate student positions and include event budgets that can support graduate student-focused events and community building activities.
7. Promote a campus culture that supports professional development, networking events, training, internships, and mentorship of graduate students pursuing non-academic careers.
8. Develop a comprehensive curriculum to meet the many and varied graduate student writing needs (e.g., class papers, qualifying exam, dissertation), including meeting the specific needs of international students.

### **Prioritizations:**

While prioritizations may be best informed by graduate student exit surveys (recommendation 1), many graduate students have expressed a pressing need for financial security, affordable housing, and food security (recommendations 2 through 4) so these areas are immediate priorities. However, over the longer term mental health, sense of well-being and feeling engaged in the campus community as well as career coaching, mentoring, and professional development (recommendations 5 through 8) are critical to graduate student well-being and ultimately retaining them in the graduate program. The committee recommends that all 8 areas are addressed immediately and that the additional recommendations (contained in [Appendix 3](#)) are be considered over the longer term.

### **Summary and Background for Top Recommendations:**

#### *1. Recruitment vs. Retention: Graduate Student Exit Surveys*

Thinking beyond the recruitment of diverse and talented graduate students at UC Santa Cruz, there is a pressing need to take stock of factors that influence graduate student attrition and retention. Instead of placing emphasis only on adding numbers to departments, the conversation needs to shift toward ensuring that existing grad students are able to complete their programs. Detailed data on UCSC graduate student recruitment and retention by year, program, gender and ethnicity is provided in [Appendix III](#). Nationally, according to a 2013 article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, approximately half of graduate students leave their universities without completing their PhDs. UC Santa Cruz does not currently have robust metrics on the reasons for grad student attrition, but students across programs are regularly and quietly departing before earning their terminal degrees.

As such, we recommend that UC Santa Cruz develop a thorough exit survey, conducted at the level of the Division of Graduate Studies to protect student anonymity, to assess the factors that cause grad students to prematurely leave their programs without completing a terminal degree. Additionally, this work group advocates for the results of the exit surveys to be used alongside ongoing administrative and departmental conversations about retention to imagine and implement programs and resources to help prevent grad student attrition at UC Santa Cruz and to ensure that all who wish to complete a terminal degree feel supported in doing so.

## 2. *Financial Insecurity: Employing Graduate Students through on-campus jobs and internships*

A perpetual problem for both retaining and recruiting graduate students is to provide adequate funding for these students so that they can cover their living expenses while pursuing their graduate education. A method to do that is to provide greater opportunity for graduate students to fill temporary staffing positions within UCSC. While the campus has made strides to enable graduate student instructors (GSIs) to fill lecturer positions, hiring a GSI currently costs a department more than a lecturer due to the tuition/fees imposed on GSIs. *We recommend that UC Santa Cruz investigate how to offset tuition/fees for GSIs to make this hiring decision more equitable.*

Some campus temporary part-time staffing positions also provide opportunity for graduate students to get financial support with the added benefit of providing the graduate student additional professional development and mentorship. In addition, the business, administrative, and academic units on campus could provide internships to graduate students to fill in immediate one-time needs that the organization is facing as well as provide professional development opportunities for graduate students given that many will enter staffing positions, rather than faculty positions, at colleges and universities. *We recommend that the campus investigate what temporary staff positions and internship positions may be suitable for graduate students and make those positions readily available to qualified students.*

## 3. *Housing: Subsidized Off-campus Graduate Student Housing*

The high cost of housing in Santa Cruz has been a major issue for most graduate students given that over half of their stipend can easily be consumed by the costs of housing in one of the least affordable communities in the country. Building more on-campus housing for graduate students on campus is very expensive due to the lower density living requirements of graduate students in comparison to undergraduates. Moreover, graduate students also are more suitable to living off-campus as they typically don't require the access to dining halls and similar services that undergraduates who are learning to live on their own for the first time usually require. While graduate students with families may benefit living on campus to better access campus child care services, graduate students without families may be better served through subsidized off-campus housing. The subsidy is compensated for by the higher amount the campus can charge per square foot for an undergraduate versus graduate bed. Moreover, campus-city relationships may be improved by moving more undergraduates on-campus which will exceed the number of graduate students we would be moving off campus because we can building higher density beds on-campus for undergraduates.

The committee considered both emergency or transitional off-campus housing that could potentially be deployed immediately and more permanent off-campus housing that would



require substantial planning and investment. The emergency off-campus housing could take the form of leasing/renting out blocks of underutilized hotel space during off-peak tourist times (i.e. fall through spring) to provide lower cost options for graduate students when they first arrive to Santa Cruz, or during a transition period when they are between housing, in order to give them time to find more permanent housing. We envision international students being of particular need of this transitional housing, but it would benefit the larger graduate student community as well. *We recommend that the campus investigate using underutilized hotel space in Santa Cruz to provide transitional housing for graduate students.*

Over the longer term, the campus is already well aware that we need to work with the city and developers to build off-campus housing for our students. While the committee realizes this can be challenging, the developments of our coastal campus along the Delaware corridor opens up opportunities for the campus to engage the city and developers on how to develop this land to benefit all parties, with a focus on the graduate students who are primarily utilizing the Coastal Science Campus. This conversation gets diluted because the great needs of undergraduate housing often seem to consume the limited time of staff to address graduate housing issues. *We recommend that the campus prioritize developing a committee, with College, Housing and Educational Services (CHES) a unit within the Business and Administrative Service (BAS), Division of Graduate Studies, and City of Santa Cruz participation, that focuses solely on graduate student housing needs, with an emphasis on subsidized off-campus housing.*

#### 4. Food Insecurity & Emergency Housing

Graduate student food and housing insecurity became a major focus of concern for the UC and campus level UCSC Food Access and Basic Needs Working Group in response to the publication of the December 2017 UC Student Food and Housing Security Report. This report draws together the [UC Institutional Research and Academic Planning \(IRAP\)](#) Divisional data from the [2016 Graduate Well-Being Survey](#) and UC Costs of Attendance figures revealing that over 26% of graduate students are food insecure using USDA definitions combining low (i.e. quality of food) and very-low (i.e. quantity of food) food security. Data also reveals basic needs insecurity contributes to delayed degree completion rates.

In response to graduate student success concerns, UCSC is advancing efforts to better communicate resources available for graduate students through the Dean of Students Office Slug Support Program as well as Financial Aid and Departmental assistance. Support can include short-term financial assistance, food support through dining meal swipes, retail gift cards, and a choice-based pantry to access as well as crisis housing support. Emergency housing is provided to grad students; up to five days in one of Slug Support's contracted hotels. To enhance communication and information access a new central online website has been launched, [basicneeds.ucsc.edu](http://basicneeds.ucsc.edu), outlining resources and support for students; however, many graduate students do not know that these resources are available to them as they are generally offered through the undergraduate colleges. To better understand graduate student needs, graduate student researchers, working at [UCSC's Blum Center](#) as part of the the UCSC Food Access and Basic Needs Work Group, are analyzing campus level disaggregated data from IRAP's and completed an analysis of survey data from UCSC graduate students about their basic needs which will be disseminated in fall 2018. They are also conducting focus groups with graduate students to learn more about their experiences with food insecurity and identify effective strategies and interventions. *We recommend that the campus use this timely*



*information to raise awareness of challenges facing graduate students and to better inform graduate students of the campus resources available to them.*

Lastly, UCSC has also supported the application of over 1,400 students in the federal [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) (SNAP) program funded [CalFresh](#) benefits that provide up to \$192 per month to students in aid that does not conflict with campus financial aid packages. However, graduate student enrollment on CalFresh is currently difficult due to how aid disbursement occurs outside of work-study funding program per se. Through [AB1930](#) and a current legislative trailer bill CDSS will work with UC, CSU, and CCC Basic Needs appointed leads to maximize eligibility for undergraduate, graduate, and professional student populations. In the interim, CalFresh remains a difficult program for graduate students to successfully enroll in because of how graduate student income is calculated. In addition, other state resources, such as low income housing, may be available to graduate students depending on how their annual income is calculated (i.e. on a 9-month or 12-month basis). During the 2017-2018 academic year, Slug Support provided services to 102 graduate students. Services mostly included financial support including housing needs, food insecurity, and medical/mental health costs. *We recommend that the campus evaluate graduate student aid packages and income across the divisions and determine whether changes in how their income and aid is calculated could impact their eligibility for state services that that provide food stipends or reduced housing cost. Additionally, we recommend for the campus and the graduate division to explore the idea of housing a food pantry somewhere within the graduate division or Graduate Student Commons to provide better access and a safe and welcoming environment.*

#### *5. Mental Health: Dedicated CAPS Professional and Space for Graduate Students*

Graduate students have unique and specialized needs that are different than undergraduate students. They need targeted educational and wellness programs that are specific to graduate student issues, such as dissertation anxiety, managing conflicts with advisors, and financial and familial stress. Additionally, international graduate students have very specialized concerns and CAPS staff must have specific knowledge for working with international students.

There can be stigma for some graduate students seeking counseling as they may not want to seek help from CAPS therapists at the Student Health Center because they do not want to risk being seen by an undergraduate student who may be in the class they TA. Graduate students also report hesitation about participating in group therapy, as group therapy can be perceived as primarily undergraduate student focused and often they do not want to participate in group therapy with undergraduate students who they TA. This is why CAPS has developed graduate specific groups, and additional graduate focus groups could be beneficial. CAPS also offers the “Let’s Talk” program at the Graduate Student Commons where a CAPS therapist is available for advising at a confidential and safe place.

CAPS currently can identify a person to serve as a liaison for graduate students. However, CAPS does not have staffing resources for a specialty position focused on graduate students nor does CAPS have any satellite offices for this type of position, which would need to be identified and supported. *We recommend that CAPS works with the Division of Graduate Studies and Graduate Student Commons to identify a suitable location for both meeting with graduate students one-on-one and for graduate student support groups as well as to identify suitable staffing, including reviewing use of employing the CAPS residents, or other resources*

*needed for a staff position with a special focus on working with graduate students to support their mental health needs.*

#### *6. Community: Graduate Student Community through the Resource Centers*

Graduate student professionals play a pivotal role supporting undergraduate students on the UC Santa Cruz campus at the Resource Centers. They also play a critical role providing leadership in programming and developing initiatives that complement efforts by the Graduate Student Commons focused on identity, sense of belonging, campus climate, retention, academic success, and professional development. Graduate student professionals have served as GSRs or paid as student staff within a variety of units across the UC Santa Cruz campus within units in the Division of Student Success. They serve critical roles within the Resource Centers (i.e., African American Resource & Cultural Center, Asian American/Pacific Islander Resource Center), and also have supported research and analysis as well as programming for undocumented students, the Student Success Evaluation and Research Center (SSERC), First Generation Initiative, Disability Resource Center, and Educational Opportunity Programs (EOP).

Through their work, graduate students gain a greater sense of belonging and create inclusive spaces that are critical for graduate student retention. Testimonies from current graduate students working within these units confirms the importance to them of this work not only as it positively benefits undergraduates, but because it provides community and professional development opportunities for them (e.g., project and time management, facilitation, budgeting, and stakeholder engagement).

With a greater need to support the growing graduate student population and the realization that very little programming was offered to support the graduate students of color some of whom are undocumented and/or first-generation on campus, graduate students began conceptualizing, organizing, and launching programming specifically geared to supporting graduate students.

Specific programs administered in 2017-18 for graduate students included:

- Culture and communication in academia
- Imposter syndrome for first generation students
- Queer and trans grad lunches
- Diversity and wellness receptions
- Pedagogy working group for underrepresented graduate students
- Identity in the classroom
- Graduate student learning community on difficult conversations
- Wellness Week -- Write Eat Learn: Ergonomics and you, Write with slime, and Plan-a-terrarium
- Writing Together (weekly support for dissertation writing)
- First-Generation steering committee and workshops on pedagogy
- Pathways to Research (P2R) Graduate Mentor Professional Development on Multicultural Mentoring using a Community Cultural Wealth framework. Graduate students are trained on mentoring EOP students that participate in P2R and the EOP GSR leads a learning community of grad students to further develop their mentoring skills.

The benefits of employing graduate students are multi-fold. Security of employment, adequate compensation, and engaging in work that supports our diverse community will serve to improve not only undergraduate retention, but graduate student retention as well.

Historically, SFAC (student fee advisory committee) funding from student fees and Measure 7 monies were used to support 50% GSRs within the Resource Centers. A new interpretation of allowable costs for SFAC funds has resulted in the limited use of these SFAC funds to cover GSRships. *We recommend that the Division of Graduate Studies and Division of Student Success work together to identify funding at the level of a GSR to support graduate students continuing to work within the Ethnic Resource Centers and student success initiatives.* These could be conceived of as GSI's as described above.

#### *7. Professional Development: Campus Culture for Graduate Student Professional Development*

For many academic disciplines, the ideal outcome of a Ph.D. is often assumed to be a tenure track position at a major research university, an ideal conveyed to students not only explicitly via a focus on research output but implicitly as well, in terms of the kinds of coursework or internships deemed relevant. Students who come realize that this ideal is either unrealistic or personally undesirable face a pair of difficult dilemmas: What careers does their Ph.D. training afford them, if they elect to not become faculty? And how can they seek support from their community if they are not pursuing that ideal outcome? While the perceived stigma of alternative career aspirations makes it difficult to estimate the size of this cadre of students, initiatives in graduate growth, including concerted efforts to grow terminal M.A. and M.S. programs, are only likely to increase its size. This work group recommends a pair of initiatives designed to help change campus culture surrounding non-academic careers, initiatives that will increase the visibility, perceived value, and attainability of these careers.

On one side of the coin, graduate students need concrete professional development for the non-academic workforce. While the natural home for academic development is the department, it is likely that non-academic support could be more centrally housed at the Career Center and the Division of Graduate Studies. *We recommend that the Career Center hire staff with graduate degree (ideally a Ph.D.) to support career advising for graduate students, including non-research internships, such as the [Graduate Internship and Job Fair](#) and job coaching (including translating graduate skills to the non-academic setting). In addition, we propose that the Division of Graduate Studies explore partnerships with divisions and the Graduate Student Commons to expand professional development programming to support non-academic career tracks/opportunities, including networking with divisional alumni in non-academic settings, refining the graduate leadership certificate program, and developing divisional GSR positions to support targeted programming.*

At the same time, students will not participate (at least openly) in the kinds of programming we envision if they feel pressure from their communities to conform to the ideal career trajectory. What is needed here is a cultural shift to one where students (and hence their advisors) see non-academic success as a value in its own right, and this can ultimately only occur on a field-specific level, something outside the scope of this work group. However, we do recommend that at the campus level such shifts can be supported by prominently celebrating and promoting graduate alumni. While awards recognizing graduate alumni exist in various forms (e.g., <https://graddiv.ucsc.edu/news-events/news-grad/grad-alumni-award-april->

[2017.html](#), <https://news.ucsc.edu/2018/04/pbsci-alumni-awards.html>), we propose that the Division of Graduate Studies consider a more comprehensive campaign, including more prominent and targeted advertising of these awards to graduate students. Similarly, we propose that the Division of Graduate Studies and University Relations collaborate to feature graduate alumni in non-academic careers via on campus signage and in Tuesday Newsday.

Graduate student training is a deeply complicated affair. Beyond facts and tools alone, students must be trained to both recognize the central questions of a discipline as well as to formulate new ways of addressing those questions. At the same time, they must learn how to pursue that research (including persuasively communicating it, both formally and in social circles), all the while teaching and advising with care and attention. Almost all of these are qualitatively different from the expectations for undergraduate excellent, and it is thus no wonder that graduate students frequently opine that they need further guidance across the board: with finding and developing a research topic, with abstract and paper writing, with choosing and working with advisors, with teaching, with work-life balance, etc. What makes this all the more vexing is that graduate mentorship must be individualized, making it difficult to effectively metricize (un)successful mentorship. However, we believe, nonetheless, that we can improve graduate training on campus by explicit programming for mentorship, both for graduate students and for their mentors.

*For students, we propose that Division of Graduate Studies, CITL and Departments collaboratively develop programming and worksheets designed to empower graduate students to effectively seek advice from mentors, such as individual development plans. Since workload under the direction of faculty is also a concern for students, we also propose that the Division of Graduate Studies develop a checklist for GSIs and GSRs so that student and faculty have common ground on expectations at the outset of the employment. Finally, for redress of graduate student issues, we propose that the Division of Graduate Studies designate an ombudsman that students can contact after contacting their departmental ombudsman (i.e., the graduate director or chair).*

*For faculty, we recommend that the Division of Graduate Studies and CITL collaboratively with departments develop a series of trainings for faculty focused on mentorship. In addition, we suggest consideration of an reward system that is proactive and engages mentors, perhaps via fellowships analogous to the [Davis Mentoring at Critical Transitions \(MCT\) Fellowships](#).*

## 8) Writing Support

An ad hoc task force was formed to comprehensively address the writing needs of students as a result of the changes to Core. A survey was conducted in April, which outlined a number of needs, including the lack of writing support currently provided to graduate students and, in particular, international graduate students. In addition, graduate students are using limited personal funds for editing assistance and are bounced around within a department as there is no designated support system in place. A working group was formed and is undertaking a needs assessment as well as reviewing existing programs offered campus-wide and evaluating various online tools (e.g., grammarly) that could potentially meet some of the identified needs. The Graduate Writing Support ad hoc working group membership includes representatives from the Writing Program, Division of Graduate Studies representatives, CITL, Global Engagement); Division of Student Success; and graduate students. Further analysis is underway, with a GSR working to support evaluation of program components this summer.

Recommendations are forthcoming, but likely will include: a) development of a peer-to-peer writing program, b) subscribing to online tools (e.g., <https://www.facultydiversity.org/>), c) continuing to fund existing programs such as Writing Together and writing workshops sponsored by Graduate Student Commons and the Division of Graduate Studies, including communications, presentation tips, etc., d) evaluating the potential to duplicate individual writing support models such as being used in the Department of Anthropology, e) establish department seminars to support graduate student discipline-specific writing, and f) holding writing retreats similar to other UCs (see [GradPathways](#) at UC Davis). *We recommend that the campus utilize the recommendations from this analysis and anticipated report, which will include a comprehensive approach to developing a “curriculum” to meet the many and varied graduate student writing needs (e.g., class papers, qualifying exam, dissertation), including meeting the specific needs of international students.*

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## **APPENDICES**

**#1:** [Workgroup on Graduate Student Welfare - Key Issues Identified during the Meet the VPs town hall \(spring, 2018\) and further revised by the newly launched Graduate Student Advisory group.](#)

**#2:** [Graduate Student Recruitment and Retention Statistics.](#)

**#3:** [Graduate Student Welfare Committee - full recommendations.](#)

## SECTION VII

**Results of Statewide Graduate Student Union Poll, for or against ratifying the new contract (August 23, 2018). 82.89% of UCSC respondents voted against ratification.**



Dear

By a margin of 58.6% to 41.4% (2,564 yes voters to 1,810 no voters), members have voted to ratify the contract. This was one of the largest turnouts for a contract ratification vote in our Union's history. You can find the full text of the final ratified proposals [here](#) and the breakdown of votes by campus below:

| Campus           | YES  | NO   |
|------------------|------|------|
| Davis            | 238  | 206  |
| Berkeley         | 751  | 540  |
| Merced           | 69   | 34   |
| Santa Cruz       | 72   | 349  |
| Santa Barbara    | 234  | 106  |
| Riverside        | 188  | 52   |
| Los Angeles      | 554  | 197  |
| Irvine           | 259  | 98   |
| San Diego        | 198  | 226  |
| San Francisco    | 1    | 2    |
| STATEWIDE TOTALS | 2564 | 1810 |

Please email the Elections Committee at [elections@uaw2885.org](mailto:elections@uaw2885.org) if you have any questions.

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