

December 15, 2019

Dear grads,

We are writing to express the faculty's support for your well-being, collective and individual. As our colleagues and advisees, we want you to have reasonably priced housing and to be paid appropriately for your work.

We recognize that the cost of housing in Santa Cruz, long quite high, is now prohibitive in a way that makes it difficult to live here. This makes it increasingly difficult for the university to recruit and retain at all levels — graduate students, staff, and faculty — and it threatens the Santa Cruz workforce in general.

In our various service and faculty governance roles, many of us advocate for proposals to increase on-campus housing for graduates and work to increase TAs' salaries. These are very long-term strategies which we have little authority over. Our faculty also try to find small ways that we can help in the short term: we teach summer courses, apply for grants, and perform administrative service, all of which lead to compensation to the department that we feed into summer and academic term funding.

At the same time, we recognize the ways in which these efforts are piecemeal, and that the recent rise in rents in Santa Cruz is making it difficult for you and your graduate colleagues to live here. With that in mind, we sympathize with the aims of the wildcat strike, since it is designed to help *you*, who we feel responsible for.

While the division appoints TAs and GSIs, not the department, we will, for our part, recommend that the division continue to employ TAs as originally scheduled, regardless of participation in this month's action.

Beyond this, we want to affirm our esteem, respect, and concern for you, and our continuing commitment to improving your lives in Santa Cruz.

On behalf of the faculty,

Pranav Anand, Chair
Maziar Toosarvandani, Graduate Director
Ivy Sichel, Undergraduate Director