Dear [xxx],

Strike organizers have been gathering information since Wednesday’s emails from the Financial Aid Office, and they have found that the majority of undergrads listed in the Financial Aid emails are not at risk of having their financial aid impacted if their grades are not submitted. As a result, they have advised that graduate students continue to not submit grades unless a student specifically requests that they do so.

Although there has been no official clarification from the Financial Aid office, because they have been instructed by top-level admin not to talk to grads, here is what grad organizers have found out through many conversations with undergrads, staff, and faculty, as well as research into financial aid regulations and policies:

**This is not a list of students who have had their Winter aid delayed.** Many undergrads have reported that they were listed on the email, but they have not experienced any delays in their aid or received any contact from the Financial Aid office. Winter aid has already disbursed, so students would know by now if their aid had been delayed. Students whose aid may have been impacted by grade delays (e.g. students on financial aid probation) have already reached out to their TAs and had their grades submitted. Although we cannot know for sure that every student who needed their grades for financial aid purposes has asked for and received them, Slug Support has informed grad organizers that to their knowledge, **no undergraduates have sought financial assistance from Slug Support due to financial hardships resulting from grade delays.**

It appears that the reason for the email from Financial Aid is that the federal government requires UCSC to verify that students actually attended the term for which they received their financial aid (in this case, Fall quarter). This is typically verified by students’ grades - if they earned a grade, that is proof that they attended. With the grades left blank, the university cannot use grades to verify that students actually attended. The federal government will require that UCSC return the funds disbursed for each student for whom they cannot verify attendance. **The deadline of today for submitting grades is related to a reporting deadline for these federal regulations - it is NOT a deadline after which some negative consequence will befall the listed students.** If the UC is required to return aid funds to the federal government due to missing grades, **the UC has the power to decide whether to repay those funds out of the UC’s pocket or by billing undergrad students retroactively for Fall tuition.** The grads do not believe that administration would pass these costs on to students.This would be extremely risky and, of course, subject to appeal. If students were to be held financially responsible for events completely outside of their control, the UC would be subject to massive backlash, including lawsuits.

We cannot be 100% sure that this is the only reason students were listed in the email - due to the lack of answers from Financial Aid - but we trust the students to decide for themselves if they want their grades to be submitted. Students on financial aid probation are required to regularly submit progress plans to the Financial Aid Office, and thus are quite aware of their situation. Organizers have heard from many students who requested to have their grades withheld in support of the strike, and were confused and upset when they found out that their grades had been submitted against their will, even though their aid had not been impacted. We value and honor undergraduate solidarity, and will continue to leave it to our students to decide if they urgently need their grades. We will also continue to communicate openly with our students, to help them determine how they may actually be impacted.

Accordingly, I am not going to unilaterally submit grades for all the listed students; instead, I will communicate directly with the students listed for our class, and discuss this information with them to help them decide how they would like to proceed.I will submit grades for any student who requests it.

Thank you for your understanding.

Sincerely,

[xxx]