Pledge to refuse TAships vacated by terminated graduate students
Inspired by and adapted from the pledge from the EEB department graduate students

Dear Astronomy & Astrophysics Department and Graduate Department Chairs,

As the COLA movement continues, we, the Astronomy & Astrophysics grads, would like to continue to keep avenues of communication open. We are grateful to be members of a community that values dialogue, respect, and commitment to education and research.

On Friday, February 14th, UC management further escalated their threats of retaliation against graduate students for participating in a labor action. UC President Janet Napolitano explicitly threatened “termination of existing employment at the University,” while UCSC Interim Executive Vice Chancellor Lori Kletzer further threatened that all TAs and GSIs who do not submit fall quarter grades by Friday, February 21st will not receive a spring quarter TA or GSI appointment.

To be clear, Napolitano and Kletzer are threatening to fire graduate student workers en masse for asking to be paid enough to live where they work. We reject the notion that our fellow workers at UCSC should be threatened with a loss of employment, ability to feed themselves and their families, and likely loss of ability to continue in a graduate program, for demanding to be relieved of extreme rent burden so that they can focus on the university’s academic missions of excellence in teaching and research.

Therefore, in order to protect our colleagues and our department, we the undersigned in the Astronomy & Astrophysics department pledge that:

1. If any astronomy graduate student worker is fired from their current winter quarter TA/GSI position or is prevented from taking a spring quarter TA/GSI position due to their participation in the COLA strike, we will refuse to accept any TAship, readership, or GSIship position that has been opened in their absence.
2. We also, in solidarity, will refuse to accept TAships, GSIships, or readerships in any other department in which TAs/GSIs have been fired as a result of participation in the COLA strike.

We ask that the university administration negotiates in good faith to bring this strike to an end.

The university faculty, staff, graduate students and undergrads work together toward a common mission of excellence in education and research. We hope to continue toward this goal together as a community.

Signed,
Astro Grads
*signatures on next page*