



March 4, 2020
Dr. Carol Christ
Office of the Chancellor, University of California, Berkeley
200 California Hall #1500
Berkeley, CA 94720

To Chancellor Christ:

On Monday, March 3, a general assembly of UC Berkeley graduate students voted by overwhelming majority to pass two resolutions in support of our courageous colleagues at UC Santa Cruz. This Thursday, March 5, we will join our peers across the UC system in a statewide day of action in solidarity with the growing movement ignited by UC Santa Cruz student workers. Graduate student workers at UC Santa Barbara and UC Davis are now also on strike. As of today, 82 graduate students at UC Santa Cruz have been fired for their labor actions, a measure that we, the graduate students in the Department of Anthropology at UC Berkeley, vehemently oppose. Over the past week, striking students have gained the support of not only other UC graduate students, but also the Associated Students Senate at UC Santa Barbara, the UC Academic Senate, numerous UC faculty (322 Berkeley faculty and counting), the Executive Council of the Modern Language Association, and Democratic primary front-runner Sen. Bernie Sanders, among others.

On Saturday, February 29, the graduate students in the UC Berkeley Department of African American Studies declared to you their readiness to strike. We, graduate students in the Department of Anthropology at UC Berkeley, echo their demands for the demilitarization of campus police and a cost of living adjustment (COLA) that meets the basic needs of all UC graduate students. We also echo their call that UC leadership ceases retaliation against striking students and immediately reinstates the employment of graduate student workers at UC Santa Cruz.

As a campus, UC Berkeley purports to promote the recruitment and retention of underrepresented groups within academia. However, without adequate support for graduate student workers, who provide labor without which the UC system would cease to function, these efforts exist in name only. Provision of adequate support mandates meeting basic needs, including but not limited to food, shelter, healthcare, and safety. As such, the graduate student workers at UC Santa Cruz have called on the UC administration to provide a COLA that removes rent burden from every graduate student. We wholeheartedly agree with our peers in the African American Studies department that any administrative response is inadequate without "...the demilitarization of the UCPD to ensure freedom from police violence and intimidation, particularly for all students, faculty, and staff of color who currently feel unsafe on Berkeley's campus."

If the UC Berkeley Administration fails to formally respond to the urgent demands of COLA organizers on this campus by March 6, 2020, we are prepared to follow the lead of our peers at Berkeley and other UCs and declare the graduate students of the Anthropology Department strike-ready.

Signed,

The Graduate Students of the Anthropology Department and the Folklore Program