

Petition to end punishment for participating in a legal strike

9/16/24

We, the undersigned, as students of the Environmental Studies department and faculty at the University of California Santa Cruz, demand that the University of California drop the intent to dismiss Summer Sullivan. These actions are part of a larger pattern of retaliation against organized labor and repression of political speech by the University.

UCOP (University of California Office of the President) sent Summer Sullivan a Notice of Intent to Dismiss on August 5, claiming that she had participated in an “unlawful strike” beginning on May 21. However, on May 23 the California Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) denied the University’s injunction and declared that the strike was not unlawful¹. PERB reaffirmed this decision on June 4th and issued a complaint against the UC for discrimination, arbitrary changing of policies, and discouraging labor organizing.

Despite PERB having sole authority in determining the legality of strikes in California, the UC shopped for an Orange County judge to circumvent them. Nevertheless, Summer complied with UCOP’s demand to return to work. The letter from the UCOP falsely states that Summer did not return to work after the Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) on June 8. A letter from her work supervisor, emails from her students, as well as a detailed schedule showing how she spent her hours were all sent to the University as evidence that Summer did return to work after the TRO.

The University is unfairly and unreasonably disciplining Summer Sullivan, who is a great asset to our community. Their allegations are both factually incorrect and spiteful and vindictive in nature, clearly designed to punish and discourage future political speech. These actions are in violation of Article 8 (Discipline and Dismissal), and Article 21 (Non-Discrimination in Employment) of the BX CBA. We, as the community of Environmental Studies, stand by her and urge the University to drop disciplinary action against Summer Sullivan.

Signed,

1. Christina Blebea, PhD Candidate
2. Emma Gee, PhD Student
3. Karen Crespo Triveño, PhD Student
4. Liliana Hinojoza, PhD Student
5. Liz Rennie, MS Student
6. Megan Gross, PhD Student
7. Abby Cunniff, PhD Student
8. Taylor Braswell, Postdoctoral Scholar
9. Charlie Chesney, PhD Candidate
10. Delaney Pues, PhD Student
11. Danielle Klawitter, PhD Student

¹ Fitzgerald Rodriguez, J. (2024, May 24). *Academic Workers’ Strike Will Roll On as UC’s Request for Court Order Is Denied*. KQED. <https://www.kqed.org/news/11987737/academic-workers-strike-will-roll-on-as-ucs-request-for-court-order-is-denied>

12. Sanya Cowal, PhD Candidate
13. Elsa Calderon, PhD Student
14. Tracy Liu, PhD Student
15. Edith M. Gonzales, PhD student
16. Spencer C. Schubert, Postdoctoral Scholar
17. Madeleine Fairbairn, Associate Professor
18. Mike Kowalski, PhD student
19. Dave Shaw, PhD student
20. Francis Joyce, PhD Candidate
21. Tashina Vavuris, PhD Candidate
22. Alissa Takesy, PhD Student
23. Chris Lang, PhD Student
24. Brook Constantz, Phd Candidate
25. Indiana Reid-Shaw, PhD Candidate
26. PwintPhyu Nandar, PhD Student
27. Siyu Luo, PhD Candidate
28. Esaac Mazengia, PhD Student
29. Brook Thompson, PhD Student
30. Karla Yadira Jasso, PhD Student
31. Katherine Seto, Associate Professor
32. J. Mijin Cha, Assistant Professor
33. Elliott Campbell, Professor
34. Ravi Rajan, Professor
35. Maywa Montenegro, Assistant Professor
36. Hannah Waterhouse, Assistant Professor
37. Natalia Ocampo-Peñuela, Assistant Professor
38. Flora Lu, Professor
39. Stacy Philpott, Professor
40. Astrid Hoefler, PhD Candidate
41. Chris Benner, Professor and Dorothy E. Everett Chair
42. Scott Winton, Assistant Professor
43. Karen Holl, Professor
44. Steve McKay, Professor
45. Muriam Haleh Davis, Associate Professor
46. Madhavi Murty, Associate Professor
47. Sikina Jinnah, Professor
48. Michael Loik, Professor
49. Pallab Sarker, Assistant Professor