

Statement of Support from Department of History

The cost of living in San Diego has risen dramatically while student worker salaries have remained stagnant. According to the UCSD History Department Graduate Student Housing Survey, students endure precarious financial situations, and many must spend half or more of their UCSD salary on rent and consider themselves housing insecure. Many take additional jobs during the academic year and commute long distances due to unaffordable rents near campus. Some are dependent on food stamps, and others have experienced homelessness. The stress of making ends meet significantly impacts graduate students' mental health and their ability to carry out innovative research and effective teaching, the two principal objectives of a premier university like UCSD.

Moreover, the high cost of living in San Diego combined with the low salaries UCSD offers puts us at a disadvantage in attracting the top students into our graduate program and competing with other equivalent research universities that offer superior funding packages. Testimonies reveal that financial factors, like the length of guaranteed funding, TA minimum wages, and housing costs made it impossible for otherwise enthusiastic prospective applicants to select UCSD. For financially insecure prospective applicants, the prospect of fulfilling all of their research and teaching obligations, while worrying about making ends meet meant that no matter how perfectly suited the academic strengths of the department were to their research interests, attending USCD was simply unviable.

Given the precarious living conditions of our student workers, the Department of History at the University of California-San Diego demands that the University of California bargain in good faith with UAW/COLA coalition leadership to resolve the current labor dispute. Moreover, History faculty promise not to retaliate against any graduate student, undergraduate student, or faculty who participate in COLA-related actions such as grade withholding, striking, picketing, and other forms of nonviolent protest and civil disobedience. Specifically, History faculty make the following commitments:

1. To not report to university administration, retaliate against, or otherwise punish student workers who participate in COLA-related actions including a grading strike and/or full labor stoppage.
2. Guarantee future departmental decisions about fellowship support, stipends, and ASE appointments will not be influenced by student participation in COLA-related actions.
3. Publicly condemn any intimidation, harassment, threat, or bodily harm of student workers perpetrated by campus police or other agents acting on behalf of university administration.
4. Support, by all means available to us, any international and undocumented student whose safety, immigration status, and/or visa status is jeopardized by retaliatory actions taken by University of California.

5. Condemn the recent terminations of all UCSC COLA strike participants and supporters, as well as any future retaliatory actions undertaken by University of California at Santa Cruz or other campuses.
6. To not retaliate against faculty of UCSD Department of History who may choose to withhold grades and/or participate in rolling strikes in solidarity with student workers engaged in COLA-related actions.
7. Accept that faculty of UCSD Department of History may decide to hold classes on occasion at COLA-related actions, such as picket-lines, in solidarity with all striking ASE's.