

Proposed Statement to the Commission on the Future of the UC
UCSC Campus Visit, October 29, 2009

On behalf of the graduate students at UC Santa Cruz, the GSA's Committee on Activism and Nonviolence would like to welcome the Gould Commission to UCSC. The charge of this commission is to devise a vision for the future of the UC. We would like to urge the Gould Commission to take seriously the role of graduate students and graduate education in the UC's future. Not only do graduate students conduct a substantial portion of the research that burnishes the UC's reputation, but we also perform a sizeable amount of undergraduate teaching and instruction. An investment in graduate students is an investment in the key missions of the University of California.

To that end, we offer the following recommendations for maintaining and improving graduate education here at UC Santa Cruz:

1. We request an immediate restoration of ALL cut TAships across ALL divisions. Some divisions will lose as many as fifty TAships over the next three years, and these cuts will create both serious financial hardship for graduate students and will affect undergraduate education by increasing already high student-to-TA ratios.
2. We request a commitment to full funding of departments such as History of Consciousness, Community Studies, and programs such as Latin American and Latino Studies. These departments are among the flagship academic programs at UCSC and their diminishment damages the reputation of UCSC as a graduate research institution.
3. We request a freeze on graduate student fees at their levels in Fall 2009. The proposed 32% increase in graduate fees by Fall 2010 is unacceptable and, if passed, will produce serious graduate student hardship and the loss of many potential scholars.
4. We request no future cuts to the benefits provided by the Graduate Student Health Insurance Program (GSHIP). With a salary near or even below the poverty line, graduate students cannot be asked to shoulder the burden of increasing health care costs.
5. We request a continuation of subsidized rent in Family-Student Housing and Graduate Student Housing. Recent moves toward pricing graduate housing at market rates have strained the budgets of graduate students and their families.
6. We request increased resources for the recruitment and retention of graduate students of color, graduate students with families, re-entry students, and graduate students from low-income households.

We believe that these requests are the MINIMUM requirements for graduate student support here at UCSC. In addition, however, we would urge the Gould Commission to consider additional commitments to graduate education here at UCSC, including but not limited to

1. The full funding of all PhD students in all departments, through TAships and fellowships, for a full eighteen quarters.
2. The restoration and expansion of university-subsidized child care for graduate students with children.

We recognize that the budget climate is difficult right now and may continue to be so in the future. However, we express our belief that the UC in general and UCSC in particular are

fundamentally dependent on graduate students. We urge the Gould Commission to reaffirm the centrality of graduate education to the mission of the UC by adopting these policies.