February 13, 2020

To Whom it May Concern:

The graduate student protests sweeping the UC System are a great source of pride for me as a member of the faculty at UCSB. I think we can all agree that the skill and organization with which the graduate students have so effectively made their demands known is a bright light for the future of the UC System.

Over my career thus far, I’ve had the privilege of working for nine institutions across diverse parts of Mexico, the U.S., and Canada. In that time, I’ve never seen graduate students required to labor for the university for the number of hours that they do here at UCSB, that’s one point. And second, that they are compensated so inadequately in relationship to the cost of living of the location where their institution happens to be.

As people invested in higher education, I’m sure we can all agree that the purpose of pursuing graduate study is to study. When graduate students have to take on additional off-campus jobs unrelated to their scholarship, they simply cannot dedicate the time and energy that graduate study requires. And so, graduate students must be given a living stipend and have their labor obligations to the university decreased so as to perform the duties they came here to engage: reading, writing, attending seminar, becoming colleagues.

I support their demands and hope that the UC system will be quick and generous in response.

Sincerely,

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