



UC Graduate and Professional Council Statement on Arrests During Campus Strikes

As representatives of the graduate and professional students at the University of California, we are deeply concerned about the arrests of student protesters on campuses. Last week, workers of AFSCME 3299 went on strike, which they are legally and morally allowed to do in response to their concerns about pay stagnation and wage inequality that have not been addressed by the administration in bargaining. Many students chose to strike with them in support, but the administration, rather supporting their right to free expression, created an unwarranted environment of fear and hostility that suggested inherent danger or legal repercussions in these strikes. Students and workers have shared stories of harassment and provocation not by those striking but by university and outside police designed to intimidate, rather than protect, those peacefully protesting, leading to at least two arrests of a student and a worker at UC Santa Cruz.

The board of UCGPC condemns acts of police brutality on our campuses, and we urge administration to avoid unwarranted use of police forces, especially in calling in city departments rather than other college police departments when additional units are needed. Instead it is the responsibility of the administration to provide for safe events by working with those engaging in protest and creating safe environments for them, not sending in forces to cause unrest. Preemptively (or reactively) calling the police on students increases, rather than decreases, the chance of harm to those expressing their rights and going about their lives on the places they expect to be safe and protected.

We call on the University to:

- Commit to avoiding police brutality and provocation
- Train police on de-escalation and withdrawal techniques
- Drop charges against student protesters
- Use other campus police rather than city departments when additional units are needed
- Support -- don't infringe -- the right of students and workers to peacefully protest

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