

## Statement from UCGPC President on SB 201

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The members of the UC Graduate-Professional Council were gratified to hear that on October 15th, Governor Jerry Brown signed into law SB 201. This bill gives graduate student research assistants the right to unionize and collectively bargain for basic employment protections, a right which had previously been excluded. The UC Graduate-Professional Council has labor protection for graduate and professional student employees as one of our top priorities this year, and having SB 201 signed into law is the first step towards improving the working conditions of our students across the UC campuses.

I would like to thank State Senator Nancy Skinner for introducing this bill, co-authors Toni Atkins, Richard Pan, Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher, and Monique Limón for supporting it, all legislators who voted in favor of it, and Governor Jerry Brown for signing it into law. I would also like to acknowledge the two student organizations instrumental in helping this bill pass: the University of California Student Association and the UAW Teacher's Assistant Union. I am very grateful for their efforts in getting this bill passed. Their work on this will benefit graduate and professional students for many years to come. I personally lobbied alongside undergraduate and graduate students with UCSA last spring to encourage passage of this bill, and am elated to see legislators listening to our needs.

Now it is time for the university and graduate student researchers to come to the table to come up with policies that enshrine the labor protections researchers have a right to while respecting the academic and educational process. The UC Graduate-Professional Council will be working on advocating for the rights of graduate and professional student laborers in many regards throughout the year, including supporting graduate students that wish to join the unionization process. I look forward to working with administrators and graduate students across the system to ensure our researchers are treated fairly and appropriately in their education and employment.

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Interim-President of the UC Graduate-Professional Council