

From: Many faculty in the UC Davis Department of Religious Studies
Re: Support for Strike Call by UAQ-2865, UAW-5810 and SRU-UAW to resolve Unfair Labor Practices

The Religious Studies Department at the University of California, Davis recognizes the long struggle that University of California graduate students, researchers, student employees and postdocs have engaged in in efforts to secure fair wages, benefits and working conditions. In light of these struggles, a majority of our faculty members signed this letter expressing our support for our fellow academic workers and calls on the UC to bargain in good faith.

Our students, researchers and workers cannot often afford to live near where they work and attend classes. As a public land-grant institution committed to educating future generations and one of the top-tier research universities in the world, our university is responsible for providing not only rigorous training but by the means by which all who enroll – including the most economically vulnerable – can live and study productively.

Graduate programs such as ours, which focuses on the Study of Religion, can only attract and keep the best students by offering them competitive packages. Increasingly, doing so has required working individually with applicants so that they understand the relative costs and benefits of living in and around Davis and can assess levels of health coverage and benefits provided to them when matriculating at UC Davis. Our experience working with such applicants renews our commitment to recognizing the demands of student employees and researchers as they fight for more affordable UC housing, greater support for working parents, sustainable transit benefits, equity for international scholars and other improvements that would strengthen teaching and research across the University of California.