Executive Board

Letter of Demand_ Extension to Graduate Waiver of Non-Resident Supplementary Tuition

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October 1, 2020

Gregg Goldman
Vice Chancellor/Chief Financial Officer

Susan Ettner
Interim Dean of Graduate Education

Re: Committee on International Education Letter on Non-Residential Supplemental Tuition Waiver

Dear Vice Chancellor Goldman and Interim Dean Ettner,

The Committee on International Education (CIE) of the UCLA Academic Senate sent a “Letter of Demand: Extension to Graduate Waiver of Non-Resident Supplemental Tuition” to you, and to me, dated September 22, 2020. The CIE letter stated:

“To mitigate some of the financial concerns and challenges, the Committee supports the letter of demand from the graduate students and additionally, recommends the following considerations:

1. An NRST waiver of at least one year until normal operations and research are no longer disrupted by the pandemic and travel restrictions for all international students regardless of whether they have advanced to candidacy.
2. For international students who have advanced to candidacy and are on a leave of absence due to COVID-19, the Committee recommends that the leave of absence is not counted against the three-year NRST reduction period.
3. The Committee also urges the administration to put pressure on UCOP to address this issue at the system level, including providing additional resources to the campuses to ameliorate this crisis.”

At its meeting on October 1, 2020, the Executive Board reviewed the CIE letter. In matters other than legislation, the Executive Board usually acts for the UCLA Division of the Academic Senate. After discussion, the members decided to send a letter to you regarding the CIE letter, described above.

Regarding point 1, above, the Executive Board members recommended a one-year extension of the post-advancement to candidacy (ATC) Nonresident Supplemental Tuition (NRST) waiver due to the ongoing pandemic. However, we ask for clarification as to the fiscal impact and the location of funding sources to cover lost NRST. Without a systemwide response, and an unknown duration of the pandemic, an open-ended commitment appears imprudent.
Executive Board members agreed with point 2, above; it is only reasonable to not count approved leaves of absence due to COVID-19 to the three-year NRST reduction period. Lastly, members agreed that point 3 above is best addressed at a systemwide level.

Sincerely,

Shane N White
Chair, UCLA Academic Senate

Cc: Jody Kreiman, Vice Chair/Chair Elect, UCLA Academic Senate
    Michael Meranze, Immediate Past Chair, UCLA Academic Senate
    April de Stefano, Executive Director, UCLA Academic Senate
    Andrea Goldman, Chair, Committee on International Education (CIE)
September 22, 2020

Susan Ettner, Interim Dean
Graduate Division

Gregg Goldman, Vice Chancellor
Office of the Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer

Shane White, Chair
Academic Senate

Re: Letter of Demand: Extension to Graduate Waiver of Non-Resident Supplemental Tuition

Dear Dean Ettner, Vice Chancellor Goldman, and Chair White,

The Committee on International Education (CIE) requests immediate action and calls upon the Graduate Division and Administration to consider the letter of demand from the graduate student members of UAW 2865.

Due to the current pandemic, graduate students have faced inordinate academic and financial challenges. While still assessed the non-resident supplement tuition, international students do not qualify for federal assistance, are not eligible for many extramural fellowships, and cannot work more than 20 hours a week during the term. The limitations on external support and potential delays to academic and research progress place an undue burden on international graduate students.

To mitigate some of the financial concerns and challenges, the Committee supports the letter of demand from the graduate students and additionally, recommends the following considerations:

1. An NRST waiver of at least one year until normal operations and research are no longer disrupted by the pandemic and travel restrictions for all international students regardless of whether they have advanced to candidacy.
2. For international students who have advanced to candidacy and are on a leave of absence due to COVID-19, the Committee recommends that the leave of absence is not counted against the three-year NRST reduction period.
3. The Committee also urges the administration to put pressure on UCOP to address this issue at the system level, including providing additional resources to the campuses to ameliorate this crisis.

The Committee on International Education calls for the Academic Senate to endorse the recommendations and for the University to take immediate action to address the issues brought forth by the graduate student members of UAW. Thank you for the opportunity to express our concerns. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at goldman@history.ucla.edu or the Committee’s analyst, Emily Le, at ele@senate.ucla.edu.

Sincerely,

Andrea S. Goldman, Chair
Committee on International Education
Members of the Committee on International Education
Stephen Acabado, Anthropology
Ka-Kit Hui, Medicine
Edith Omwami, Education
Carlos Torres, Education
Thomas Newhall, Graduate Student Representative
Magdalena Barragan, Summer Session & International Education
Robin Derby, Faculty Director, History/International Institute
Sam Nahidi, Dashew Center for International Students and Scholars

cc: Gene Block, Chancellor
    Emily Carter, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost
    Jody Kreiman, Vice Chair/Chair Elect, Academic Senate
    Michael Meranze, Immediate Past Chair, Academic Senate
    Onyebuchi Arah, Interim Associate Dean, Graduate Division
    Estrella Arciba, Principal Analyst, Graduate Council
    Sam Bersola, Assistant Vice Provost, Graduate Division
    April de Stefano, Executive Director, Academic Senate
    Yolanda Gorman, Chief of Staff, Office of the Chancellor
    Andrea Kasko, Chair, Graduate Council
    Renate Lux, Associate Dean, Graduate Division
    Laurie Summers, Assistant Provost, Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost
LETTER OF DEMAND:
Extension to Graduate Waiver of Non-Resident Supplemental Tuition

USE THIS **LINK TO SIGN THE LETTER**

31 August 2020

**Dean Susan Etner (UCLA Graduate Division), Vice Chancellor Gregg Goldman (Finance)**

CC: Chancellor Gene Block, Executive Chancellor Emily Carter, Assistant Vice Provost Samuel Bersola (UCLA Graduate Division), Associate Dean Renate Lux (UCLA Graduate Division), Acting Associate Dean Onyebuchi Arah (UCLA Graduate Division)

Dear Dean Etner, VC. Goldman,

On April 19th 2020, our union UAW 2865 sent out a letter to the UC Office of President (UCOP) calling for extensions of Non-Residential Supplemental Tuition (NRST) waivers and a lift of the six-year teaching limit. These measures are important for many doctoral students, especially international students, who are currently dealing with disruptions brought on by the COVID-19 crisis in their professional and personal lives. After sustained efforts by our members to organize around this issue, UCOP has deferred this decision to individual UC schools.
Since that time, as a result of pressure from graduate students on each campus, the UC as a whole has agreed to lift the six-year teaching limit, yet only UC Davis and UC Berkeley have taken steps to extend NRST waivers; the former has indicated that it will utilize an existing fellowship program to ensure access to NRST funding for international graduate students, while the latter instituted a universal one-year NRST waiver extension. We, the undersigned UAW 2865 members and graduate students, representing the richness of our campus’ plurality and diversity across fields of study, urge UCLA to follow suit.

Access to research resources, including Library materials, has drastically been curtailed in addition to the economic, political, social, physical, and psychological hardships we already face as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated effects. Our research in many fields has effectively come to a grinding halt, while fees and deadlines have not sufficiently adapted to the reality that we have all made sacrifices to meet responsibly.

Effectively financially penalizing doctoral students who are, or will become subject to NRST – many of whom are international students – is completely unacceptable, cannot be justified, and goes against the values of UCLA and the UC system, particularly the words of Chancellor Gene Block dated 7th July 2020 in response to the ICE directive against our international student community:

“UCLA is proud that we have attracted the best minds from around the world who have helped us build a vibrant learning community, advanced vital research and strengthened essential international collaborations...We value the voices, insights and presence of every single member of the UCLA family, including those from other countries who have created an intellectual home here, who have established roots in our communities, and who greatly contribute to our campus. UCLA stands with our international students during this challenging period”

The imposition of NRST, which often amounts to an extra $15,000.00 a year, is a heavy and disproportionate burden on students who are paying for resources they can no longer access during this period. International students do not qualify for federal assistance like that contemplated in the CARES Act, cannot ordinarily seek employment outside UCLA, cannot work more than 20 hours a week during term, cannot safely return to their home countries in many instances, and, moreover, face challenges working from abroad if they do return. All of this amounts to an economic strangulation that is further compounded by NRST.
We therefore urge UCLA to:

1. to issue a universal extension to the graduate waiver of NRST for a period of no less than 1 year;
2. apply this extension to doctoral students who have already advanced to candidacy and those who will advance to candidacy within the next 3 years

Students who are affected are not just those who have advanced to candidacy, but also those who have planned to advance and now are struggling to meet deadlines and requirements because of the drastic changes to inter alia teaching, housing, employment, research access, and administration. In addition doctoral students who were planning to go on the job market next year now find that option a remote possibility, and many would have to stay in their programs longer as a result of this disruption in their job search.

Union members believe this is a serious issue concerning equity among the student body across all UCs and will continue to take strong organizing efforts to advocate for this demand. We hope to see UCLA live up to its rhetoric by taking timely action to demonstrate its commitment to the well-being of all its students by covering the NRST for all affected students. At this stage, we call on you to meet with us to discuss these issues, such that they can be sufficiently resolved.

Yours sincerely,

Graduate student members of UAW 2865

Signed:

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School of Public Affairs
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260. Samantha Solis, PhD Student, English
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295. Nafis Hasan, PhD, Anthropology
296. Ziyang Zhang, PhD graduate, MSE
297. Ryan Rockmore, PhD student, WAC/D
298. Shuaihang Pan, PhD, MAE
299. Tieyi Li, PhD candidate, MSE
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<td>Jiyoungh Kim</td>
<td>PhD Student</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
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<td>Cinema and Media Studies</td>
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<td>Cody Cushing</td>
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<td>Psychology</td>
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<td>Galen Murray</td>
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<td>Political Science</td>
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<td>Thomas Motter</td>
<td>PhD Candidate</td>
<td>Program in Indo-European Studies</td>
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<td>326</td>
<td>Ciara Sterbenz</td>
<td>PhD Student</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
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<td>327</td>
<td>Hsuan Ming Yu</td>
<td>PhD Student</td>
<td>Material Science and Engineering</td>
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<td>Elliona Li</td>
<td>MA, Music</td>
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<td>History</td>
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<td>James Huynh</td>
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<td>Community Health Sciences</td>
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<td>331</td>
<td>Theo Schmitt</td>
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<td>Classics</td>
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<td>Catherine Crooke</td>
<td>PhD Student</td>
<td>Sociology</td>
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<td>334</td>
<td>Kendale Winbush</td>
<td>MA Student</td>
<td>TFT</td>
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<td>335</td>
<td>Erfan Sedighi</td>
<td>PhD Candidate</td>
<td>Mechanical and Aerospace engineering</td>
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<td>336</td>
<td>Rebecca L Pol Balboa</td>
<td>PhD Student</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
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