



OFFICE OF THE PROVOST AND
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Oakland, California 94607-5200

April 22, 2021

CHANCELLORS
LABORATORY DIRECTOR MICHAEL WITHERELL
EXECUTIVE VICE CHANCELLORS/PROVOSTS
ANR VICE PRESIDENT GLENDA HUMISTON

Dear Colleagues:

It has come to our attention that the International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW), AFL-CIO (“Union”) is actively organizing the Graduate Student Researchers (“GSRs”) across the system. Part of the Union’s organizing efforts includes soliciting the GSRs to sign union authorization cards or a petition expressing their interest in unionizing and being represented by this particular Union.

As you may know, California’s Higher Education Employer-Employee Relations Act (HEERA) grants University employees the right to form, join, or assist labor organizations (unions). HEERA prohibits the University from interfering with those rights by engaging in conduct to discourage or deter union activity. Violation of those rights exposes the University to significant legal liability.

The purpose of this letter is to reiterate the University’s support for the rights of employees to decide whether or not to form, join, or assist a union. Accordingly, supervisory or managerial employees including, but not limited to, principal investigators should refrain from engaging in conduct that would constitute interfering with the employee GSRs’ rights to engage in union activity. This includes, but is not limited to, asking them about their union activity, making statements to discourage or deter their union activity, monitoring their union activities, instructing them not to sign union cards or petitions, creating more onerous working conditions, or otherwise discriminating against them because of their union activities or support for the union.

Attached please find Guidelines for Supervisory/Managerial Employees regarding the organizing of Graduate Student Researchers. Please share the Guidelines with the supervisory and managerial employees at your location. For additional general information, you may also visit: https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/labor/faq.html#3_13.

With respect to next steps, if the Union is able to demonstrate that a majority (defined as fifty percent, plus one) of eligible GSRs want to be represented by the Union, it may file a representation petition with the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) or demand

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that the University voluntarily recognize the Union as the exclusive bargaining representative for the GSRs with respect to their terms and conditions of employment.

If there are questions regarding whether someone qualifies as a manager or supervisor, the content of this letter, or the attached information, please refer them to Office of the President Labor Relations or your campus labor relations office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael T. Brown".

Michael T. Brown, Ph.D.
Provost and
Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Attachment:

Organizing of Graduate Student Researchers: Guidelines for
Supervisory/Managerial Employees

cc: President Drake

Academic Council Chair Gauvain

Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Nava

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Vice President Maldonado

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Vice Chancellors for Research

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