Dear Feminist Studies Community,

We write to express our unwavering support for graduate students who were terminated on Friday. As a result of the administration’s punitive approach to students’ demands for a living wage, five graduate students in our department have lost their livelihoods for spring quarter. One of those is an international student who faces the threat of deportation and several others – including students with significant medical needs – will lose their health care. In an era in which we witness attacks by the government against immigrants and a deeply unequal health care system in the US, moves to terminate students and compromise their personal safety sends a message that the university is abandoning its ethical duties to our community in the pursuit of a narrow-minded labor relations strategy.

One of the most significant outcomes of the terminations will be a negative effect on undergraduates, which gives lie to the administration’s claim of protecting undergraduate education. On Monday, we were forced to take the unprecedented step of removing approximately 200 seats from spring quarter Feminist Studies courses, largely in General Education classes which introduce important feminist concepts to students across campus. Without teaching assistants to lead discussion sections, provide mentorship, and support the instructor in a large lecture format, the department has no choice but to cap enrollment at 35 seats for courses without TA support. We expect that other departments will release cancellation figures totaling over 2,000 seats in classes for spring. While these numbers are significant for our small department, the negative impact to the undergraduates’ education extends beyond the mere quantitative. We are witnessing that the firings are going to significantly limit the curriculum in the Humanities devoted to the study of race, gender, and sexuality. In this way, the punitive action of firing our feminist educators only exacerbates the manner in which feminist and critical race inquiry are treated as marginal and expendable by the university.

Furthermore, today we learned that the Executive Vice Chancellor will not allow departments missing more than 15% of Fall grades to hire new Academic Student Employees for Spring quarter. The Feminist Studies Department, among other departments, is now effectively on a blacklist, unable to hire any ASE regardless of whether that ASE participated in a grading strike. This action is a collective form of punishment by removing employment opportunities for graduate students who submitted grades, by further reducing classes and mentorship for undergraduates, and by removing essential teaching support to spring instructors. Once again, the administration’s own actions undermine their purported goals of undergraduate and graduate education.

We recognize these mass firings and blacklisting as institutional racism and sexism. We stand with all workers fighting for a living wage and know that this is a key element of fighting for a more just university and world.

Please note that there is a [fund to support FMST graduate students](#) as well as a [general strike fund](#) to support all terminated students.

In solidarity,
The Faculty in Feminist Studies