

## **President**

**Candidate: Tomas Ocampo**

**Department: Politics, 2nd Year PhD**

### **Candidate Statement:**

I have served as the Secretary of the Graduate Student Association since Fall 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic, as we transitioned to our new website and back to in-person instruction. Being present for many of the meetings with Administration over our return to in-person instruction has led me to see the dire need for continued advocacy for all students at UC Santa Cruz.

High rent burden, high costs of living in Santa Cruz, difficulty commuting to and from campus, lack of funding to meet these costs, to further our research, for professional development, and having to overcome obstacles from campus leadership just to meet these needs are facts of life for many of us at UCSC. Our ability to grow as students, teachers, and researchers, and to participate fully in our community is tremendously stifled by these continuing problems that the university has been aware of for years.

We must continue demanding they address pay inequity for graduate students, just as the Chancellors across the UC's received an increase to improve "pay equity." We need to continue advocating for more stipends and increase funding for students to cover the costs of housing and living in Santa Cruz, including the costs of childcare, and be proactive in addressing future waves of Covid-19 outbreaks in the community and on-campus from newer strains. We need to strengthen professional development and cultivate our graduate students to succeed as researchers and teachers. Following years of remote learning that have separated us from each other and the debilitating costs of living that consume our energy and time, we must rebuild our robust academic community, where our needs are met and where we can thrive as students, professionals, and human beings. I hope to be one of many voices advocating for this as President of the GSA.

## **Chair of the Council**

**Candidate: Brittney Jimenez**

**Department: Latin American and Latino Studies, Ph.D., 1st Year**

### **Candidate Statement:**

Hi Everyone! My name is Brittney Jimenez, and I am interested in the Graduate Student Association Position of Chair of the Council because of its duty to ensure representation amongst graduate departments in important decisions that will impact their experiences at UCSC. I believe it's also essential to build community and trust amongst graduate departments and the GSA by recruiting representatives to facilitate proper representation. I do have previous

experience with the GSA as I currently serve as my department representative for Latin American and Latino Studies, a department that did not previously have a department representative. I also serve on multiple campus committees, including the Campus Advisory Committee on the Status of Women, Graduate Education Funding and Student Financial Support Subcommittee, and its subsequent Steering Committee. In these roles, I have become more knowledgeable about issues that currently impact graduate students and how the university is considering moving forward with these issues. I have been able to speak from the perspective of a graduate student on relevant components of the problems which may not have been addressed in previous meetings.

If chosen as Chair of the Council, I am most interested in addressing the lack of department representation in decision-making via the representatives and how this may influence decisions made to represent all graduate students. To increase representation, I would like to do outreach in the early Fall when graduate students are returning to campus and considering what their duties for the academic year may look like. I plan to reach out individually to departments to see interested parties and emphasize that their concerns are important and should be addressed. Since Fall Quarter is likely to be in-person, my goal is to conduct more in-person activities that would lead to student interest and allow students to meet one another.

### **Vice President of Shared Governance**

**Candidate: Dan Copulsky**

**Department: 3rd year in the Social Psychology Ph.D. program**

**Candidate Statement:**

I have served as the Vice President of Shared Governance for the past 2 years and I am willing to serve in this position again next year.

### **External Vice President**

**Candidate: rebecca ora/rora**

**Department: Film & Digital Media**

**Candidate Statement:**

I am interested in serving as evp during the transition from external org dues being paid by the gsa to the individual opt out fee passed by the uc regents. It is important that ucsc students be made aware that unless they act a fee will be deducted automatically and transferred to an org we have refused to pay into. This is the first time the uc has enacted a systemwide opt out fee, and, particularly since the systemwide graduate org has not necessarily represented ucsc's interests, many students may refuse this fee. I intend to hold info sessions where students can

have their voices heard directly and demand the things they want from a statewide student organization. If even one icsc grad student pays into ucgpc, this group needs to represent our needs. It is also integral that union demands be reinforced by elected statewide student representatives. I hope to ensure this is the case and that we do whatever possible to unite around fair pay, affordable and dignified housing, and appropriate treatment by the university in our learning and working conditions.

### **Treasurer**

**Candidate: Stephanie Herrera**

**Department: Electrical Engineering, Ph.D., 2nd year.**

#### **Candidate Statement:**

Being on the Graduate Student Association's executive board this past year has opened my perspective on several issues surrounding our campus and the UC system that I was utterly unaware of beforehand. This experience has also encouraged me to speak out against topics that I believe are unjust or inappropriate. Contributing to the Student Fees and Advisory Committee (SFAC) also allowed me to discover the new and needed programs on campus tailored to help both undergraduate and graduate students. Overall, it has been a huge learning experience that I would like to continue contributing to.

This year as the GSA Treasurer, I have gotten my bearings and know-how to better prepare for events for next year. Over the summer, I want to work on documentation and make an organized folder with step-by-step instructions on what the Treasurer is responsible for, during what time in the year, and who they should contact. I also want to brainstorm some ideas on how we can give incentives for students to attend our meetings. I was thinking of budgeting for raffle prizes or giving out uber eats gift cards for those who join via zoom. To make the reimbursement process less redundant, I have been thinking of making a google form that can be copied each quarter and sent to the respective parties. I would also like to see if I can budget for more in-person expenses, such as e-board bonding activities.

I want to continue with the Treasurer position because now that I know what to expect throughout the year, I have some background information on how I can improve the process while brainstorming creative ways to use our budget to enhance student participation within the GSA.

### **Solidarity Officer**

**Candidate: Ariana Yancey**

**Department: Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology, 1st year**

**Candidate Statement:**

During a time of civil unrest due to not only the pandemic but the treatment of various demographics here in the United States, UCSC stood out from countless other institutions for its value of diversity and inclusion. When applying to the PhD program for molecular, cellular, and developmental biology I was excited to share my viewpoint on how truly important this subject is to me as well. As an African American woman from an impoverished background also identifying as part of the LGBTQ community, I had my own hardships while navigating my education and know how important it is to have not only diversity but also an inclusive learning environment. My commitment to helping to produce a conducive learning space began during my undergraduate years at my prior institution. I had the opportunity to participate in programs such as Metro Academy and Summer Science Institute where I not only was inspired to pursue science at the college level but also inspire those from underrepresented backgrounds to pursue it as well. Outside of science, I had the opportunity to promote inclusion of the LGBTQ community by serving as assistant director of a program called EROS. I was responsible for attending educational training to help plan and host events that helped the campus understand and address key issues regarding their acceptance and inclusion on campus. There are so many more experiences that have shaped my passion for making a difference in this area however I hope this statement provides a bit more insight. I look forward to working with UCSC to create a community where everyone feels welcome and supported over the duration of my degree. Warmly!