



**UUP West Campus Chapter at SUNY Stony Brook  
Stands in Solidarity with its Graduate Students  
Executive Board Issued April 29, 2020**

**Whereas** SUNY Stony Brook prides itself on providing “comprehensive” graduate education “of the highest quality” (<https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/pres/vision/mission.php>) and our Graduate School is committed to “the highest standards of academic excellence” and “a diverse and productive academic community” (<https://grad.stonybrook.edu/about/mission.php>);

**Whereas** graduate students, as university employees, perform vital work in the form of grading, teaching, mentoring, researching, and running laboratories and therefore play an absolutely essential role in advancing Stony Brook’s research, teaching, and cultural missions;

**Whereas** graduate students currently receive an annual stipend between \$20,000 and \$25,000, which falls below the cost of living in Suffolk County and thus leaves many students struggling to pay for basic necessities like food and housing;

**Whereas** graduate students are required to pay fees that have increased, on average, 8% each academic year since 2013-14 and that, during the 2019-20 academic year, amounted to over \$2,000 (an amount that represents 8-10% of their annual stipend);

**Whereas** the COVID 19 pandemic has interrupted graduate student research agendas, intensified their workloads as teaching assistants and graduate instructors, and exacerbated existing financial anxiety and hardship, as options for supplemental employment have evaporated and as university hiring freezes have decimated the academic job market;

**Whereas**, in spite of this unprecedented global health and economic crisis, Stony Brook administration is preparing to implement an additional \$148 increase in broad-based fees for graduate students beginning Fall 2020;

**Whereas** this unprecedented crisis represents a crucial moment for our campus community to exercise shared governance in reassessing our priorities as a public research university and to



take steps to invest in graduate education “of the highest quality” and to ensure the “academic excellence” of our graduate students;

**Now, therefore be it resolved** that the UUP West Campus chapter at SUNY Stony Brook stands in solidarity with the Graduate Student Organization, the Graduate Student Employees Union, and the RA Union in their protest against the planned fee increase for next year and their ongoing campaign to eliminate all graduate student fees;

**Be it resolved** that UUP calls upon SUNY Stony Brook administrators to immediately halt its plans for increasing graduate student fees in Fall 2020;

**Be it resolved** that UUP calls upon SUNY Stony Brook administrators to further alleviate the financial burdens placed on graduate students by waiving graduate student fees for 2020-21 and developing an alternative funding model that will not require students to cover these costs from their stipends in the future;

**Be it resolved** that UUP calls upon SUNY Stony Brook administrators to exhaustively search all other avenues to identify other funding sources that would allow the Graduate School and graduate programs to offer immediate summer funding to students and to extend stipendiary funding packages for one year (a move parallel to the extensions granted to tenure-track faculty who have faced similar disruptions to their research agendas);

**Be it resolved** that UUP calls upon SUNY Stony Brook to include representatives from GSO, GSEU, and the RA Union in shared governance processes in meaningful ways as graduate students are essential employees and key stakeholders in fulfilling the mission of the university.