

Student Demands

Financial security has a direct impact on the mental-emotional-physical health, wellness, academic performance, professional development, and holistic success of students. A student's quality of life impacts their sense of belonging, persistence, graduation, and overall Pomona experience. Therefore, we refuse to accept financial insecurity and inaccessibility to basic needs as part of our Pomona College.¹ We will no longer tolerate administration's lack of transparency and disregard of students and their experiences. This is only the beginning. This is the first step towards holding administration accountable to supporting students, especially marginalized students. **Future actions must be conducted with the involvement of students on campus, especially students directly affected by these decisions.**

1. **Reinstate all students' jobs immediately.**
2. **Students must be permitted to register for classes regardless of any financial holds on their student accounts.** This policy must be revised BEFORE registration for Fall 2019 classes. Must be completed by **April 23, 2019.**
3. **Hold a Student Employment forum** with a representative from Financial Aid, Human Resources, Payroll, Business Office, Dean Hinkson, Audrey Bilger, and Seth Allen where the first hour will be devoted to explaining the work allotment process, specifically its logistics and at least 30 min to a Q&A. Must be completed by **May 1, 2019.**
4. **Conduct an audit on the jobs available to students for the 2019-2020 academic year.** Career Development Office (CDO) should ensure that all available jobs are visible on Handshake by Monday, July 1st, 2019. All departments should report their job offerings to the CDO by Monday, June 17th. Must be completed by **July 2019.**
5. **Do not limit the number of jobs a student can hold.** Not one job on campus can provide 20 hours a week, so students must be able to have multiple jobs to be able to cover their tuition and all associated costs of attending college.
6. **Financial Aid needs to revise the max allotment** to account for Student Health Insurance Program (SHIP) expenses. The study allotment needs to be revisited every year based on the cost of living, inflation, the increasing minimum wage, increasing tuition, and cost of attendance. Must be completed by **September 3, 2019.**
7. **There must be a process to increase work allotment based on individual circumstances.** If departments are willing to cover wages after allotment is maxed out, the student should be allowed to continue working. Financial Aid, in response, should not increase the Student Contribution

¹ University of California, Berkeley - Basic Needs Security

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8. **Business office/payroll needs to incorporate a way for students to track how much is left of their work study allotment at any time.** This will allow students to be aware of which job is under work study and which is not (i.e. paid out of department budgets). Must be completed by **September 3, 2019**.
9. **Increase the stipend compensation for the Experiential Learning Fellowship.** The compensation for the fellowships was \$750 for the 2017-2018 school year, which was decreased to \$500 for the 2018-2019 school year. **Must be completed by September 3, 2019.**
10. **Create new job opportunities that pay with stipend rather than hourly wage for undocumented students.** This would be aside from preexisting fellowships. Students can apply to the Experiential Learning Fellowship but they are not guaranteed one. Must be completed by **September 3, 2019**.
11. **Pomona must begin funding students' off campus Physical Education courses.** This is to accommodate students with certain disabilities which prohibit them from participating in Pomona's PE. Must be completed by **September 3, 2019**.
12. **Reimbursements** allocated for books, bedding, basic necessities **available to students will not be used to cover a negative student account balance.** Students need to access these reimbursements (this is especially true for undocumented, low income, and non-work eligible students).
13. **Emergency grants should not be denied because students have a positive balance in their student accounts.** The money from student accounts is part of the student's personalized budget from financial aid and is to be used for book and travel expenses. Additionally, not all students can rely on parents and must instead provide for their own necessities (food/snacks/toothpaste/hygiene products, etc.).
14. **Dean of Students and the Financial Aid Office must host a work-study information session at the start of each semester** to explain and answer all questions relating to work-study. Notes and resources must be disseminated to students via email.
15. **The office of Dean of Students, the Career Development Office, and the Office of Financial Aid must hold training for its staff to deal with issues of confidentiality in a professional manner.** These offices must send an email to the student body after the training has occurred to (1) acknowledge and apologize for the ways students have felt in the office and (2) outline their plan to improve themselves. Must be completed by **September 3, 2019**.

We acknowledge and agree to complete these demands by their established dates. Signed below:

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Hey New Sagehen!



We're so excited to see you here! As you make your way through campus and meet with **President Gabi Starr, Dean Avis Hinkson, VP of Admissions Seth Allen or Director of Financial Aid Robin Thompson**, please feel free to ask them why so many of their students are angry. Ask them about job security on campus and why 58 students were fired a few weeks ago. And don't forget to ask if they have already met with students who have occupied Alexander Hall today!

#sagehennext

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WHO WE ARE

FLI (First-Generation and/or Low Income) Scholars is committed to providing personal growth opportunities for low-income, first-generation college students at Pomona. We aim to build a supportive and welcoming community for these FLI Scholars by furthering their access to academic/professional, leadership, and community engagement opportunities, thereby narrowing the gap between talented low-income college students and their peers. In addition, we advocate for class consciousness and institutional reform to better meet the needs of low-income, first-generation college students.

GET IN TOUCH!

Email us at
FLIScholars.Pomona@gmail.com

WHY WE ARE ORGANIZING

This began with a distinct need for more mental health resources directed at marginalized identities, and continued with occurrences such as the firing of 58 students during spring break, holds on low-income student accounts barring them from course registration, and utter disrespect and concern from administrators like President Gabi Starr and Dean Avis Hinkson. As students became fed up with the lack of transparency and student representation in admin, we began to form coalitions among groups representing various lived experiences and organized for change.



NEXT STEPS AND DELIVERABLES

Administration cautiously agreed to most of our sit-in demands, except for those revolving around undocumented/DACA-mented student issues. These are on a timeline, with the latest being completed in Fall 2019. We plan to hold administration accountable for these issues as well as continuing to advocate for other resources that have yet to be allocated, such as summer bridge programs, increased funding for emergency grants, and better health insurance coverage and financing.

WHAT WE DID

We, alongside other marginalized communities hosted a rally in early March on mental health resources and disability rights. We met with administrators regularly to discuss urgent matters such as emergency grants, health insurance, and summer bridge program opportunities. We also called for an open forum on mental health, during which President Starr accused students of not being grateful enough for the work administrators are doing despite a five-week wait at Monsour.

Realizing that other options had been exhausted, we held a sit-in in Alexander Hall during Admitted Students Day demanding for greater transparency around work-study, holds on registration to be lifted, rehiring of fired student employees, more opportunities for undocumented/DACA-mented students, and low-income students who send money home. We also demanded the rehiring of fired student employees, more opportunities for undocumented/DACA-mented students, and low-income students who send money home.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Email VP of Student Affairs, Avis Hinkson, Director of Alumni Engagement, Craig Arteaga-Johnson, or President G. Gabrielle Starr expressing your support for these requests by students. Your voice as alumni, especially as alumni of color, is valued by the college. Please take the time to reach out for the benefit of students following in your footsteps.

Dean Hinkson:
avis.hinkson@pomona.edu
Director Arteaga-Johnson:
craig.artega-johnson@pomona.edu
President Starr:
president@pomona.edu

Demand #1: Robin agreed to reach out to all the supervisors affected by the firing of the 58 students to outline the steps to reinstate student jobs. She also agreed to investigate and report if the only students fired were those on financial aid. We also ask that Robin and the Office of Financial Aid personally message each student fired to determine if they have started the process to getting rehired. This was agreed to be done **immediately**.

Demand #2: Dean Hinkson, VP Sisson, and President Starr agreed to look into the list of students who currently have a negative balance and will have a hold on their student account before registration. President Starr agreed to waive the late fees and payment plan fees for students on financial aid. Additionally, it was agreed that students will be given a few contact points beyond Judy Arriola who they can talk to in case they have a hold on their account before registration. This was agreed to be done **immediately, before the first day of registration which is April 23, 2019**. It was also agreed that future conversations will be held to discuss how to institutionally change how holds incentive students to pay their tuition and fees, especially for low-income and first-generation students, without further marginalizing students and preventing them from registering for classes each semester.

Demand #3: President Starr, Dean Hinkson, VP Sisson, and Robin agreed to hold a Student Employment forum this semester. You agreed to give us an exact date for the forum by no later than May 1. We ask that representatives from Financial Aid, Human Resources, Payroll, and the Business Office, Dean Hinkson, Dean Bilger, VP Seth Allen, and President Starr be present. We recommend that you reach out to us before May 1 about the exact date for the forum to accommodate students who want to attend but will be unable to attend because of finals and reading days.

Demand #4: President Starr, on behalf of the Financial Aid Advisory Committee, agreed to **update** students on the ongoing audit of jobs on campus by **July 1, 2019** and have a **complete list of jobs on Handshake by August 1, 2019**. It is recommended that students, especially incoming first-year students, are informed that jobs are on Handshake and that instructional videos about Handshake are provided. It was also agreed that at the next all-faculty meeting on May 1, 2019, it will be communicated with faculty that it is important for them to post their jobs on Handshake, as well as taking jobs down once they are filled. Students were invited to speak and share at this meeting. The same will occur at the next chair meetings since not all faculty attend the all-faculty meeting.

Demand #5: President Starr agreed not to limit the number of jobs a student can hold over the course of the school year. In addition, President Starr committed to expanding the number of hours a student can work at one job and increasing the number of jobs available on campus to fulfill students' need to work.

Demand #6 & 7: Robin and the Office of Financial Aid agreed to report whether the status of the current student work allotment is reflective of the data gathered from the Financial Aid survey shared last year by **July 1, 2019**. The work study allotment will be increased based on investigation as required by federal law and regulation. President Starr agreed that students will be allowed to continue working past their work study allotment with the understanding that wages will be taxed after the work study allotment has been met. It was also shared that the cost of SHIP will be dispersed across the two semesters so students do not have the burden of paying the full cost of SHIP during the fall semester. Along with this, President Starr, Dean Hinkson, and VP Sisson agreed to bring in a Medi-Cal advisor as an alternative health insurance option.

Demand #8: Robin and the Office of Financial Aid confirmed that they are working on incorporating a way for students to track how much is left of their work study allotment at any time. It was agreed that Robin and the Office of Financial Aid will receive and implement feedback from students on the new program before it is launched by the beginning of next semester or by **September 3, 2019**.

Demand #9 & 10: Dean Hinkson and President Starr agreed to convene with undocumented students to share and explain updates and new changes about work opportunities, grants, and sources of income across the college. We ask that this occur before the end of the semester and for a representative of Pomona's legal counsel to be present to answer the questions that President Starr suggested us to not further discuss per the lack of expertise in the room.

Demand #11: This demand falls under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Robin agreed to work with the Registrar's Office to send out an email letting students know that if they have an accommodation with the Disabilities Office, fees related to off campus physical education courses will be waived. It was agreed to be done **immediately**.

Demand #12: It was agreed that reimbursements available to students will not be used to cover a negative student account balance, especially for students on the payment plan. We understand this is a question about changing the system so it was agreed that you will be providing us with an **update by August 1, 2019**.

Demand #13: Dean Hinkson agreed to changing the emergency grant form to include a question asking students to explain why they have a positive balance on their student account. Additionally, it was agreed that students will be encouraged to visit the Dean of Students Office when necessary without having to repeatedly discuss their emergency which can be traumatizing for students. We recommend that this be done **immediately**.

Demand #14: Dean Hinkson and Robin agreed to host work-study information sessions at the start of each semester to explain and and answer all questions relating to work-study. Notes and resources will be sent to students via email. It is recommended that during this work-study information session, they explain the work study allotment, the process to increase the allotment, and inform students that after the allotment has been met, their wages will be taxed.

Demand #15: President Starr agreed that Dean of Students, the Career Development Office, and the Office of Financial Aid will hold training for its staff to deal with issues of confidentiality in a professional manner. It is recommended that these trainings also address the language staff use when addressing students. The language often used by staff members is often not productive and causes further distress for students. As the demand lays out, after the training, students will receive an apology and an outlined plan for how these offices will improve their services. It is also recommended that students are made aware of the people or companies conducting these trainings.

Addendum:

Per our ask to honor the institutional memory of student organizing, we hope for our initial set of demands to be made public on the Pomona website. We envision either the original document be published followed by footnotes that comment on administrator's response to demands such as #10, or an updated demands list that excludes demand #10 or an edited version of it and others. Furthermore, all updates and progress of these demands are to be made public and published on the website as soon as they happen.

Once again, we appreciate your time meeting with us. We want to emphasize that these agreements are only the first step in holding the institution accountable to supporting students, especially marginalized students. We, the students, are committed to working with Pomona administration to ensure that the needs of students, especially marginalized students, are met.

Thank you.

[ALL_STUDENTS] Update Regarding Work-Study and Student Finances

Avis E Hinkson <Avis.Hinkson@pomona.edu>

Tue 4/23/2019 16:19

To: All_Students Mailing List <All_Students@listserv.pomona.edu>;

Dean of Students Office



Dear Students,

We are writing with some important updates in response to ongoing conversations with students regarding work-study and finances in general. We believe both students and college staff members share the goal of increasing financial security and supporting students' ability to make the most of their Pomona College experience. Here are some key steps underway to advance these goals:

- All the students who received the notification in late March – stating that they had reached their student employment allotment – remain eligible to work. None has been terminated from their employment. All supervisors in this matter have been notified of the process for increasing work allotments.
- We are working to reduce the use of registrar holds. Holds now will only be applied to balances over \$500. We also are eliminating late fees for balances under \$500. Our aim is to provide more pathways for students and families to avoid charges, address challenges early and prevent situations that increase their costs.
- We are eliminating payment plan setup fees.
- At the start of each term, the Financial Aid Office sends a notice informing students of the policy that financial aid covers P.E. courses. We will include language with a reference to the Dean of Students Office/Accommodation Services (<https://www.pomona.edu/accessibility/student-accessibility/accommodation-services>). We are planning to have an announcement go out with this information shortly to notify students who may be making course selections as part of pre-registration.

We also are working to offer more clarity and information regarding available work-study opportunities, including providing an easier way for students to track how much is left of their work study allotment at any time. We will follow up with additional details in this area. In the meantime, **a student employment workshop with representatives from key areas will be held at noon on May 6 in the Frank Blue Room. Please come with your questions.**

Also, if you are facing financial challenges, please do not hesitate to reach out to the Office of Financial Aid (financial.aid@pomona.edu), the Student Accounts team (student.accounts@pomona.edu) or the Dean of Students Office (studentaffairs@pomona.edu).

Work-study and other financial issues are important, and we believe we can work together as a community in this area. Please feel welcome to reach out to us with any questions. Thank you to all the students, faculty and staff members working on this with us.

Best,

Gabrielle Starr
President

Avis Hinkson
Vice President and Dean of Students

5/9/2019



Karen Sisson
Vice President and Treasurer

Robin Thompson
Director of Financial Aid

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