

To: GESO  
Date: April 18, 2005

via email

With some exceptions, universities have never come close to the proclaimed ideal of free and open communities that encourage independent thought and inquiry, pressing the boundaries of understanding and contributing to intellectual and moral culture and social welfare. But the very ideal, and the efforts to approach it, are considered a serious threat by centers of concentrated power. In recent years, the freedom and independence of universities have come concerted attack, partly through the corporatization of the universities and reliance on part-time easily exploitable labor, more recently by dedicated totalitarians seeking to intimidate and coerce those who might stray from their Party Line.

Campaigns to organize graduate students have already made a significant contribution to resisting these attacks, to guaranteeing elementary rights, and to opening the universities to women and others who have traditionally been excluded or marginalized. That role should be of even greater significance with the growing assault against democracy and justice, over a broad range. Your current efforts are a major contribution to a cause that could hardly be more important. I would like to join those who are hoping that they will achieve the success they richly merit.

Noam Chomsky