Dear Occupy Movement People,

This letter is about why you should actively participate in the Free University on the week of September 18th – 22nd in Madison Square Park.

The Free University is being held the week after S17 in order to provide a space for critical dialogue and debriefing, skill-sharing, self-education, and movement-building. And while the undergirding message remains a strong critique of the existing educational system, we are also actively thinking about the Free University strategically as a *movement space.* The idea is that the Free U can be a place where the various strands and groups emerging from OWS can come together, regroup, converse, outreach (to the broader public and to one-another), and think collectively about the next steps in building a radical social movement here in New York City.

The Free University is also being conceived as a direct action against the privatization and corporatization of the university. By gathering in public parks with days of radical, free, and open courses, workshops, discussions, and trainings, we seek to re-imagine what a liberatory education could be. That is, a de-commodified and revolutionary form of education which values direct action trainings and skill shares on how to build gray-water systems in your household as highly as it values teach-ins by renowned public intellectuals (like David Harvey or Rebecca Solnit).

This upcoming week of free educational courses will also have a distinctly international movement-building theme, featuring workshops with Canadian student activists from CLASSE, sessions on the structure European student movements and how the tactics and language of OWS is indebted to Latin American social movements.

These are our Principles of Unity:

-to be a cooperative enterprise working for a new form of education that re-defines what it means to be educators and students.

-to prefigure a more democratic, horizontal, and radical educational structure.

-to empower ourselves, each other, and our communities to become decision-makers in our own processes of self-education.

-to expose the inequities of the existing university system.

- to intentionally and conscientiously create educational spaces that are anti-oppressive, anti-racist, and anti-authoritarian.

-to fight against the casualization and precaritization of academic labor.

-to join others who see education as a form of direct action by withdrawing from the failing capitalist education system, and collaborating in the realization of a more accessible education for all.

It is in this spirit that we invite you and whatever group(s) you may be a part of to come participate in the Free University, host a teach-in or skill-share, listen and learn with us, and join the conversation about building the movement in the coming year: http://freeuniversitynyc.org/get-involved/registration-form/

In Solidarity,

The Free University Planning Team