



UNIVERSITY PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL EMPLOYEES
representing employees at the University of California

UPTE Bargaining Update #6

UPTE members march into RX/TX bargaining, as their team fights for improvements

UPTE's research and technical (RX/TX) bargaining representatives continued working to improve contract language and maintain employee benefits in their latest negotiating session at UC Merced September 6-7. UC again came to the table with an incomplete team – only UCOP, UCSD, UCSC and UC Merced (for the first time) – were represented on management's side.



UPTE reps with UC Union Coalition members at Merced

"We expect UC to have reps from all campuses at each session, and to bargain in good faith for the remainder of the sessions," said UPTE's chief bargainer Jamie McDole.

The union's team got a boost when UPTE members and their union coalition brothers and sisters from UC-AFT, AFSCME and UAW marched across the Merced campus chanting, "We don't get a contract, UC gets no peace." Echoing down the halls as they came closer, UC's team definitely took notice.

"The action shows that while UC Merced may be small, its union members have great solidarity," said Mark Kosier, a computer research specialist who is on UPTE's bargaining

team. UPTE members in many job titles spoke about the inability to advance, and their low wages, which will be falling behind the new California minimum wage soon.

Taking a stand for our pensions

UC management has not yet even acknowledged UPTE's compensation proposal to bring employees' wages up to market levels. UCOP presented its dangerous new proposal to allow all new hires to opt out of the UC pension plan. That position undermines our pensions, and devalues longevity in favor of short-term employment. UCOP also proposed a cap to the pension far below the IRS cap, which would deter applicants with experience in higher salary job titles and would encourage those making over the cap to leave UC for higher paid jobs once vested.

"UC says it values experience and longevity but its proposals and action show the opposite," said UPTE bargainer Dan Russellk, a business technology support analyst at UC Berkeley. "Management admits this pension cap is a takeaway, as well as an effort to cover UC's own mistake of not contributing to the pension for twenty years and making employees shoulder the burden."

UPTE's bargaining team also presented wage market data on some of the most underpaid titles at each campus. "The evidence is there for anyone to see: stagnant wages, skyrocketing housing costs, wage inequities with similar agencies and institutions," said McDole. "Yet UC apparently doesn't care to do its research, thus following the new custom of piling new job tasks on underpaid workers ... that is, UPTE members!"

Another topic discussed at the table was the irrelevance of the "rural vs. urban" campus argument for wage inequities. As anyone at a so-called "rural" campus can attest, these are among the most unaffordable cities to live in the nation, yet UC remains in denial of this fact.

Bargaining is coming to a campus near you!

Show your support for a better contract and market wages at these future RX/TX bargaining dates:

- September 19-20, UC Santa Barbara
- September 25-26, UC Riverside
- October 19-20, UC Berkeley

Locations subject to change based on conference room availability. Visit [UPTE' website](#) for more information, and UPTE-CWA's [Facebook page](#) for videos from our bargaining sessions.

