

RX/TX Bargaining Update #12 - January 16-17, UC Santa Cruz

UPTE members give UC an earful on wages, pensions, workload

Gathered around a bargaining table in Santa Cruz last week, UPTE researchers, techs and health care professionals gave UC's bargaining team a real world view of the effects of below-market salaries and staff turnoff.

"I've watched the best and brightest leave, fly out as fast as they could, teams drop to half, and they would not even bring anybody new in," said one UPTE member. "They'd just pile more on to other people, saying 'more with less, more with less.'"

After gaining skills and experience, he added, employees would often leave for the private sector, Stanford or USC.

Demanding respect

The scene was the latest bargaining session between UPTE's team and UC management's, at UCSC on January 16-17. A key issue was the lack of respect that employees feel as they struggle with increased workload and financial hardships.

"UC is becoming the Walmart of higher education -- loving high turnover, not caring about retaining the people that have built this university," the union's chief bargainer and newly-elected president Jaime McDole told the management team.

"We feel the lack of care," McDole added. "It's our labor that runs this place, and that needs to be respected."

UC has slowed the bargaining process by refusing to respond to proposals in a timely way.

The university continues to push a 401(k)-style pension plan that would undermine our existing, superior defined benefit pension plan.

Quality staff deserve fair wages

UC's refuses to offer more than a token 2% wage increase, lower than the rate of inflation.

UPTE bargainers and members repeatedly explained how that sets UC up to fail by encouraging rapid staff turnover that increasingly depletes the university's workforce.

"The only people who are here sticking it out are those who are passionate about this institution, who love this institution," another UPTE member told UC's team.

"Don't take what the corporate world is doing and say that's going to be the new norm. It's UC's job to push back against the trend of gigging and non-career employment."

Urging management's team to take responsibility for supporting its dedicated staff, he added:

"California invested in the UC system to provide that leadership, to provide first class knowledge development, first class jobs, and a first class education. That starts with the offer you make to us. Two percent is not first class.

UC weakens the workplace

UC's limited response to our proposals thus far clearly demonstrate that UC is making an effort to weaken the solidarity of our union. UC is clearly not concerned about recruiting and retaining experienced staff. Further, UC's efforts are promoting turnover which increases costs

which in turn weakens salaries, and results in UC claiming the need to decrease Retiree Benefits -- most specifically, the UC Pension. For more info:

<http://america.aljazeera.com/opinions/2014/12/wall-street-unionspensioncrisis.html>

Proposals in progress this session:

UC argued that UPTE was stalling and not responding to their insulting counter compensation proposal, which had been passed as part of a package that expired in September. Is UC bargaining in bad faith or are they merely confused about how bargaining works? UPTE continues to bargain in good faith but will not chip away at our proposals and maintenance of benefits when UC is not fully responding to our proposals - and UPTE cannot 'respond' to offers that have expired. UC needs to have an active compensation proposal. UC needs to put their compensation proposal back on the table with steps as well as location specific scale and minimum wage adjustments.

Article 38: Shift Differential - UPTE proposes that UC needs to have definitions of night, weekend and holiday differentials since workplaces have a wide variety in current practice, especially since many jobs are no longer Monday through Friday, 9am-5pm. UC was unaware of the UPTE proposal on shift increases which was included in our original compensation proposal, once again showing UC has not even bothered to review the details of our current compensation proposal.

Article 45: Work Incurred Injury or Illness: UPTE had conference call with UCOP Benefits attorney to discuss UC proposed language to clarify documentation, eligibility of serious health conditions and conditions surrounding FMLA and Workers Compensation concerns and UPTE posed questions and concerns about removing current language which would provide benefits to represented members. At the end of the call the attorney said it was acceptable to strike the language that UC added.

Article 10: Grievance Procedure - UPTE proposes current contract language on timelines and added FX or email communication. Maintaining sexual harassment language, refusing to add UC policy into UPTE contract.

Article 40: Subcontracting: UPTE proposes that UC may not subcontract out any UPTE represented job title.

Article 8: Development and Training: UPTE proposes reimbursement for approved educational programs, notice of approval in writing within 15 days of request, including language for night shift staff and allowing 40 hours of home study courses.

Article 6: Compensation UPTE maintains that UC is bargaining in bad faith by proposing the same compensation proposal twice during a bargaining session without any movement. UPTE in good faith proposes a package which includes across the board raises, annual step increases, shift differentials, location specific increases and job titles specific increases.

UPTE has responded to all UC proposals and demands that UC work at responding in a timely manner as we move forward.

UC weakens the workplace by promoting turnover

UC's limited response to our proposals thus far clearly demonstrate that UC is making an effort to weaken the solidarity of our union. UC is clearly not concerned about recruiting and retaining experienced staff. Further, UC's efforts are promoting turnover which increases costs which in turn weakens salaries, and results in UC claiming the need to decrease Retiree Benefits -- most specifically, the UC Pension. For more info:

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UC proposals work at cross purposes to UC to hire and retain experienced staff. New employees opting out of the pension and taking only the 401K breads short term employment which would bread detrimental results in long term research and specialty areas.

Members ask for a fair wage and 2% does not cut it!

We asking for \$62 million over 4 years which effectively add up to 1% of UCs budget so if we are not worth 1% that is insulting to our members. UC pays Fidelity 41 million per year to undermine our pension plan. UC pension advisors gave recommendation to NOT offer a 401K program.

UC offers no compassion to its employees. No actions to support work/life balance. Came for and stayed for the pension but our benefits are being threatened and we need a true cost of living increase. The quality of education and our university is deteriorating due to our talent being forced to leave. We need a solid workforce. Members work 2 and 3 jobs just to maintain living within commuting distance. Employees have dark circles under their eyes. Side gigs are the norm. Morale is low. Do not let UC take on the corporate norm which shows every other university and business the leadership of investing in your employees. 2% is low class and offensive. Attempting to kill the union with Death by a thousand cuts will come back to UC and hurt UC in the end.

Steps are necessary to maintain an experience workplace and reward longevity.

Reminder: RX/TX contracts are in "Status Quo" - BE INFORMED

UC recently sent a notice to UCLA and UC Merced managers that they will be introducing UC Path which not only is a violation of "Status Quo" but also is in direct violation of our current contract language on reclassifications and timing of wage increases. UPTE has sent a Cease and Desist Letter to UCOP and Peter Chester to inform them of this obvious and egregious violations.

REMEMBER: We need your eyes and ears for violations in your workplace. We will need actual documentation of the status quo change, so please forward any documentation (emails,

memos, meeting notes, etc.) you get to UPTE. Don't refuse to do the work or make the change, even if it may well be a status quo violation. Contact your UPTE representative with questions.

- Find your local UPTE bargaining reps here: <http://www.upte.org/rx-tx-hx/>
- See examples of Status Quo violations: <https://www.upte.org/rx-tx/newStatusquo.pdf>

UPTE is a Member Run Union

Show your support for a stronger contract, equity adjustments, shift differentials, stipends, market wages and maintenance of benefits at future RX/TX/HX Bargaining Dates:

- January 25-26, UC San Diego - HX
 - La Jolla Hospital MCM 1 140 Conference room
- February 13-14, UC Irvine - HX
 - Ayers Hotel Plumeria Orchid room
- March 1-2, UC Davis - HX
- March 12-13, San Diego - RxTx
- March 22-23, Los Angeles - HX

NEW! If you would like an UPTE bargaining or UPTE systemwide representative to come and speak to your group in the workplace, please contact Dan Russell, UPTE Executive Vice President at dan@upte-cwa.org to set up a local meeting.

You can read past bargaining reports here: <http://www.upte.org/rx-tx-hx/>

Visit our UPTE website (<http://upte.org>) for updated information and our UPTE-CWA

Facebook page for videos from our bargaining sessions. → www.facebook.com/UPTECWA