

HX Bargaining Update #3

“Status quo” bargaining and what it means

UPTE bargaining teams met with UCOP and UC Medical Center representatives on September 21-22 at UCLA to continue contract negotiations before the HX contract expires October 31, 2017. UCOP requested a 1-month extension. UPTE pointed out that there was no benefit for our members in extending the contract, at which point UCOP hesitated, and then agreed to UPTE’s proposal of going into a “status quo” period.

“Opting for ‘status quo’ protects members rights and puts more pressure on UC to settle a new contract,” said Jamie McDole, the union’s chief bargainer and an HX worker at UC Davis. Status quo means management rights to make workplace changes are gone and all contractual terms and conditions of employment must remain in effect, exactly as they were.

If UC wants to make any changes, they must bargain them with the union. If you notice changes to the work rules in your workplace, please contact UPTE immediately.

UPTE supports longevity, career advancement

The union demands UC support and retain experienced health care workers that improve the quality of patient care, generate revenue for UC, improve patient health and save money by decreasing hospital stays.

While UC maintains that the pension was originally created to “encourage people to stay” it continues to insist that it wants new hires to have a ‘choice’ between the interior pension tier that we rejected in 2013 and a risky 401K. UC’s president, Janet Napolitano, dismissed her retiree task force recommendation for a stronger pension in exchange for one-time state funds for the UC budget. Read more about UC pension proposal [here](#).

Here’s the way we see it: UC has no respect for longevity. Many titles have no career ladders for promotion or reclassification, offers very little support to young professionals who want to specialize and even less support once someone reaches the top step. For many job titles, management is unable to hire or retain experienced staff at current below market rates. Some titles are hired at the top step, regardless of experience, because step structures remain so far below the local salary market.

UC Medical Center reps are hearing similar stories at every campus

During the two day UCLA bargaining session, many UPTE HX members spoke about increased workload in difficult work conditions, poor staffing, below market pay and problems with retention of experienced staff to provide quality patient care.

UPTE continues to educate UC management, making the case for increased wages and maintenance of benefits. As an example, Physicians Assistants brought letters from over 70 physicians supporting pay parity with nurse practitioners. Dr. Kwang, a UCLA cardiac surgeon came and spoke in support of equal pay for equal work, saying “Physician Assistant work is indistinguishable from Nurse Practitioner work. I take offense they are not paid equally”.

Many UPTE members are advocating for career ladders or reclassification to encourage retention and ability to grow at UCLA. They say colleagues are leaving for better pay elsewhere and positions are left unfilled. UPTE HX members are working holidays, weekends and overtime without appropriate compensation, forced to work without breaks, be on call with minimal incentive and precepting interns and new staff for free.

Pharmacists, Genetic Counselors, Physician Assistants, Social Workers, Dietitians, Child Life Specialists, RN Case Managers, Recreation Therapists, Occupational Therapists and Clinical Lab Scientists all provided well organized and data driven presentations.

Presentations supported the need for wage increases, career ladders, specific market salary adjustments with improved shift differentials and stipends for precepting as well as stipends for specialty certifications to retain highly experienced and advanced practitioners and clinicians.

Chancellors given higher wage increase than UC proposes for HX workers

In their initial compensation proposal, UC management offered HX members an annual 2% step increase, but with no across-the-board cost of living increases. This would mean no equity adjustments, the same undermarket wages, and *nothing* for the nearly 40% of employees at the top of the step structure in all titles.

Yet, the UC regents have given a 3% salary increase to 8 chancellors, reports the [San Francisco Chronicle](#), once again undermining front line workers to inflate the salaries of executives.

UC management said it was looking forward to more presentations from members at UCI and UCSD next month. Show your support for a stronger contract, equity adjustments, market wages and maintenance of benefits at future HX bargaining sessions:

- October 9-10, UCSD
- October 23-24, UCI
- November 6-7, UCSF
- November 27-28, UCLA

(Locations subject to change based on conference room availability)

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