

A SPECIAL UC UPDATE REGARDING CURRENT LABOR NEGOTIATIONS

May 23, 2005

TO: UCLA EMPLOYEES

As you may be aware, UPTE, the union representing research support (RX) and technical (TX) unit employees in negotiations with the University, has provided notice of its intent to strike on Thursday, May 26, 2005.

Strikes do not help resolve differences and tend to make matters worse by inflaming negotiations. Therefore, the University believes it is important that all members of the UC community understand what the key issues are in these negotiations; what the University is doing on its side of the bargaining table to offer the best proposals possible given the present budget circumstances; and what we are doing to resolve outstanding differences.

It is equally important that the UC community understand all that the University has been doing for employees during these tough budgetary times, and that the duty to negotiate in good faith and with financially realistic expectations is an obligation that both the University and the unions share.

In recent months the University has been successful in negotiating agreements with its service workers and police unions. The service workers agreement with AFSCME was ratified on May 9, 2005.

UC commitment to good faith negotiations, fair contracts and honoring the bargaining process

The proper forum for resolving labor disputes is at the bargaining table and via the negotiation process. The University takes seriously its bargaining obligations, which include the duty to bargain in good faith, work earnestly to settle differences and utilize the entire collective-bargaining process including mediation and fact-finding.

UC efforts to recognize and reward employees during challenging budget years

The University strives to offer its employees the most competitive salaries and benefits within available resources. Due to the lack of state funding over the past few years, the University has not been able to offer systemwide wage increases, and as a result, many of the salaries for UC faculty and staff have started to fall behind the market. Fortunately, UC's new compact with the governor provides increased funding for salaries, which if approved by the Legislature, should allow the University to resume regular systemwide raises.

Information about employees' rights and obligations regarding strikes

Strikes are presumptively unlawful if they are called at any time during the collective-bargaining process, which includes mediation and impasse proceedings. This applies to all strikes, including "sympathy strikes" (striking in support of another union). The University will continue to be available to meet and negotiate with UPTE to see if an agreement can be reached. The University has already asked UPTE if they would agree to have the help of a mediator, but at this time, UPTE will not agree to bring in a neutral mediator to help resolve the outstanding issues.

In addition to understanding the issues, it's also very important for employees to understand their rights and obligations regarding strikes. See http://www.chr.ucla.edu/chr/updatesnews_chr.html for additional information.