

From: Hal Stern - Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor <zotmail@uci.edu>

Sent: Thursday, February 23, 2023 8:00 AM

To: Tenure, Tenure-Track Faculty and Professors of Teaching, Sender Custom Email List <zotmail@uci.edu>

Subject: Updates Regarding New Labor Agreements

UCI

Office of the Provost and
Executive Vice Chancellor

A message from Hal Stern



Dear colleagues,

I write to provide updates related to what the campus is doing regarding the UAW strike and the resulting agreements. At the outset, I should say that we do not yet know the answers to all of your questions. Nonetheless, knowing that you are eager for updates, let me share what we do know and the steps that we are taking.

Financial Implications of the New Contracts

Many of your questions post-strike pertain to the financial implications of the new contracts for our instructional and research missions. Below is what we currently know and the issues we are still working through.

Funding our educational mission:

- For 2022-23, the campus has already provided a \$1.5 million increase in permanent funding for Teaching Assistant (TA) appointments to academic units. This will help offset the increased costs of spring 2023 appointments.
- For 2023-24, the campus will provide an additional increase of \$9.3 million (a combination of one-time and permanent funding) to instructional budgets to allow time for the campus and individual units to better plan for future instructional and funding needs.

Funding our research mission:

- It may be challenging for many principal investigators (PIs) to cover increased costs to their grants. For external grants in progress, PIs are encouraged to rebudget and/or use discretionary funds to cover the increased costs for current GSRs, postdocs and academic researchers.

- The campus will partner with schools and departments to help address the needs of PIs lacking the resources in their own funding portfolio to maintain research staff commitments. I will establish a fund of up to \$3 million for this purpose. We will share additional information about this fund as it is available.

Issues Pertaining to Labor Withheld During the Strike

Grant Compliance

- To comply with university requirements and ensure appropriate reporting of salary charges on federal awards during the UAW strike, PIs are required to complete a supplementary payroll certification for the months of November and December 2022. This supplementary certification is necessary to confirm whether salary and wage expenses incurred during the November 14 – December 23, 2022 work stoppage were correctly charged and are consistent with the work performed. Any charges that are not appropriate will be moved to departmental continuation accounts. PIs have been contacted directly with further instructions.

Attestation and Overpayment

- For UAW-represented employees that self-attested that they withheld labor during the strike, we are following UCOP guidance for addressing overpayments.
- There is no action needed by departments at this time.

Fall 2023 Admissions Cycle

I appreciate your questions related to how the new labor contracts and current budget environment will affect the recruitment of new graduate students and funding for current and incoming students.

Incoming Students

Because the situation is different in every school and department, the campus has refrained from dictating numbers. However, it is prudent to be cautious in this uncertain environment. The [Graduate Division](#) and Associate Deans in your schools are available to discuss current and future plans with department representatives.

The Graduate Division has developed a new template for admission offer letters with funding guarantees for this admissions cycle that must be delivered via Slate. It is

mandatory to use this template for all doctoral and MFA admits on campus. Please contact the [Graduate Division](#) with any questions related to graduate admissions.

Continuing Students

Note that offer letters for graduate students currently enrolled at UCI do not need to be updated with the new salaries; however, the financial and/or employment commitments made in past offer letters must be considered for current graduate students along with the new contracts when determining compensation for an individual.

Contract Implementation

Academic Personnel is developing local training for faculty and staff and has provided training information to Deans, Chairs, Associate Deans, Assistant Deans, and Chief Personnel Officers. The Academic Personnel Labor Relations team also continues to hold bi-weekly office hours to answer questions.

- The new salary scales for Academic Student Employees (ASEs—Teaching Assistants, Readers, and Tutors), GSRs, postdoctoral scholars, and academic researchers are posted [here](#).
- The new collective bargaining agreements for these groups are posted [here](#).
- With very limited exceptions, GSRs and ASEs must receive either 25%- or 50%-time appointments during the academic year; in particular, appointments should normally not be made at less than 25% or at any percentage between 25% and 50%. Appointment percentage must be commensurate with expected workload. If you have any questions, please contact [Academic Personnel](#).
- Compensation for work as an ASE or GSR is the only financial support that can be accompanied with an expectation of work or service. All other types of financial support must not be connected to work or service to the University.
- We have also updated the [Provost Continuity Site](#) to serve as a central source of information about the new contracts and their implementation.

Post-Strike Environment

While faculty had a range of experiences during the strike, it is important that we work to rebuild and strengthen faculty-student relationships. Program or department conversations are encouraged as part of this work. It is critical that no faculty member say or do anything

that may be interpreted as retaliatory toward those who engaged or did not engage in protected labor activity.

An issue that confronts many of us is how to distinguish between what a student does as part of their education and what they may do as part of their employment. Please consider this guidance:

- Academic credit must be given solely on the basis of academic work and may not be used as a means for evaluating employment. Any issues with employment should be managed through employment processes.
- As with all courses providing academic credit at the University of California, it is essential that all students receiving academic credit for independent study or research know what the expectations are, understand how their grade was determined, and are receiving an appropriate number of units for the academic work they complete.
- Graduate Council passed a resolution in January 2018 affirming that there must be a syllabus for every graduate-level independent study course. However, this syllabus does not need to be of the style of a formal classroom course. Every faculty member advising a graduate student for research or thesis units should have a written set of expectations for grading independent study courses. Graduate Council has convened a workgroup to further support faculty in implementing these expectations.

The strike was challenging for our community. We will continue to provide updates on these and other questions related to the new labor agreements. I look forward to working collaboratively with you to explore and develop solutions.

Thank you again for all you do.

Sincerely,

Hal Stern

Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor
Chancellor's Professor, Department of Statistics