

# Oppose the NTEU sellout at University of Sydney! For a unified struggle of all university workers across Australia!

The Socialist Equality Party (Australia)  
20 September 2017

*The following leaflet and motion is being distributed today to a meeting of academics and staff at Western Sydney University.*

Behind the backs of National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) members, the union's bargaining team and branch leaders yesterday unveiled a sellout enterprise bargaining agreement (EBA) with University of Sydney management that is so brazen that even the branch committee is recommending its rejection.

No details have been given to University of Sydney NTEU members, just a typically misleading summary, sent by email. By the bargaining team's own admission, the management's "revised offer"—which the branch leaders are recommending—"does not include any improvements in casual sick leave or casual superannuation or further improvements on the current redundancy provisions for academic staff."

Yet, the branch leaders claim that "the overall package represents a significant win for our members." We have all heard that before, after every single EBA, which have all eroded conditions and paved the way for massive workloads and casualisation.

Exactly as the *World Socialist Web Site* warned on September 1, the NTEU is rushing to use last month's Fair Work Commission decision to terminate the EBA at Murdoch University in Western Australia in order to organise retrograde agreements with individual universities.

These agreements will assist university managements to deliver the multi-billion dollar cuts to jobs, wages and basic conditions that Education Minister Simon Birmingham, the Turnbull government and the corporate elites are demanding.

Throughout the working class, the trade unions have

used EBAs for the past two decades to split and divide workers, workplace-by-workplace, to help employers make their operations more "competitive" than those of their "rivals." The NTEU is utilising the same destructive process to impose, university-by-university, historic attacks on university staff and students, who are bearing the brunt of ever-fewer and larger classes, and ever-greater exploitation of casuals.

NTEU members at Western Sydney University (WSU), like their brothers and sisters at every other university, are being urged by the union to insist "we are the university." But if we actually *were* in control of WSU, we would not be assisting management to help "our" university compete against every other university for survival, or to deepen the cuts inflicted by one government after another, Liberal-National and Greens-backed Labor alike.

We would not be spending millions of dollars on marketing, and on high-paid executives and corporate consultants to body-snatch students, both domestic and international, and attract corporate investors. We would be demanding billions be poured into education at all levels, from pre-school to tertiary, to guarantee the right of all young people to a free, first-class education and the right of all staff to decent, well-paid and secure positions.

A unified struggle of university workers across the country is urgently needed to halt this latest assault, reverse the cuts and overturn the intolerable conditions that academics, all other university employees and students now confront.

With the support of the NTEU, universities are being transformed into institutions whose primary role is to serve big business and the military intelligence

apparatus.

This is not just happening at WSU, but across the entire education sector. We need new forms of rank-and-file organisations, completely independent of, and opposed to, the unions, that will answer this assault and unify university employees with their counterparts across the country. This is only possible on the basis of a socialist perspective, aimed at the complete reorganisation of society in the interests of all, not just the profits of the wealthy few.

Instead of staging a publicity stunt today to appeal to the Vice Chancellor to work with the NTEU to improve WSU's "competitive" position, we need to appeal to our fellow workers across the country for a unified struggle along these lines.

We urge you to support the following motion:

We oppose the proposed NTEU sellout at University of Sydney and call for a unified fight by university workers at WSU and nationally against the Turnbull government's cuts, and to overturn all the previous cuts imposed by both Labor and Coalition governments over the past four decades.



To contact the WSWS and the  
Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](http://wsws.org/contact)**