

# Vote “No” on the Postdocs and Academic Researcher Contracts! For unified action until all our demands are met!

The UC Rank-and-File Strike Committee  
5 December 2022

*The following statement has been issued by the University of California Rank-and-File Strike Committee. Voting on tentative agreements covering 11,000 postdocs and academic researchers is beginning today and will continue throughout the week. To join the UCRFSC, email [ucstrikerfc@gmail.com](mailto:ucstrikerfc@gmail.com).*

The University of California Rank-and-File Strike Committee (UCRFSC) calls on all postdocs and academic researchers to vote NO on the tentative agreements that are being pushed by the UAW Local 5810 bargaining units. These TAs are an attempt by the UAW bureaucracy, in collaboration with the UC administration, to accomplish two interconnected goals to undermine our unity and strength.

First, they aim to divide and demoralize our historic strike of 48,000 academic workers by forcing 11,000 of us back to work, while the rest of us remain on strike. Both TAs explicitly include “no strike” clauses that prohibit work stoppages, including sympathy strikes. If these contracts are ratified, it would immediately result in one-fifth of the strikers crossing the picket line.

Second, it sets a precedent of sellout contracts to be imposed both at the UC and beyond. Tens of thousands of us voted for strike authorization based on the demands for a substantial improvement in base pay, COLA, child care and to address the legal needs of our international coworkers and accessibility needs of our disabled coworkers. The proposed TAs do not adequately address any of the core demands behind the strike and further establish dangerous precedents for living and working standards.

Already the bargaining teams for all the UAW locals involved in the strike have abandoned the demand for COLA and are continuously making further

concessions at every bargaining session while suppressing the democratic rights of the membership to know how the BT is voting. The UC system is the third largest employer in California, and we comprise eight percent of the UAW’s total active membership. Our contracts set the standard for millions of workers throughout the United States and internationally.

The decision by the UAW to call a vote on two sellout agreements is a conscious move to draw the strike to a close, especially now because of the possibility of a nationwide strike of more than 100,000 railroad workers. The Biden administration and Congress have voted to ban a rail strike and impose a contract that the workers already rejected.

All attempts to appeal or pressure the UAW bargaining teams have failed because the UAW apparatus is thoroughly anti-democratic. The UAW apparatus is a tool of corporate management and the Democratic Party, which acts to suppress the class struggle and impose the demands of the ruling class.

Nothing expresses this undemocratic character so much as the recent UAW International general election. Large sections of the membership were kept uninformed that an election was even happening and many workers reported not receiving ballots. As a result, only 10 percent of the entire UAW membership—or 103,495 out of over one million active and retired UAW members—voted in the election.

Significantly, only 2.6 percent of UC academic workers participated in the election. Among Local 5810 members—which includes 11,000 postdocs and academic researchers—just 6,000 ballots were sent out, and only 328 ballots were returned. For Local 2865—which includes 19,000 academic student

workers—only 921 ballots were cast.

The election results indicate a staggering level of voter suppression among academic worker UAW members in the universities. Our strike cannot be left in the hands of these corporatist bureaucrats who are suppressing democracy at the highest levels of the UAW as well as on the bargaining sessions.

Workers are in an extremely powerful position. It is the UAW apparatus that is threatening us with false claims that the strike is “losing steam” and that “power is cresting.” The opposite is the case, as the deadline to submit grades is rapidly approaching. We call on undergraduates to support our strike, as we are fighting for the future of public education!

Moreover, we must begin to reach out to what is our greatest source of strength: the international working class. We are part of a growing rebellion of workers throughout the US and internationally who are increasingly engaged in direct confrontation with the ruling elite, which prioritizes profits over human need. The way forward is not by appealing to union bureaucracies or pressuring Democratic Party and capitalist politicians, but through mobilizing the immense social force of the international working class.

We call on our brothers and sisters in Local 5810 to vote NO on their respective contracts. We call for the immediate removal of the UAW bargaining team and the election of a new bargaining committee, elected and controlled by the rank-and-file, committed to the following demands:

- No COLA, No Contract! This is necessary for all contracts, as the cost of living continues to skyrocket. The current TAs provide no guarantee of COLA and keep salary increases hovering around 4 percent for Ars, and 7.5 percent for the first year and 3.5 percent in subsequent years for postdocs. This falls far short of the 8.6 percent inflation in 2022. We demand COLA for all contracts on top of a substantial pay increase to help address years of declining wages. This is the only way to finally end rent burden!

- Protection for international workers! End the systematic abuse by PIs! For rank-and-file oversight committees!

- \$2,000/month reimbursement for child care! \$2,500/year is an insult!

Easy access to disability accommodations! Recognize Long Covid! An end to the administrative hurdles!

- Greater COVID-19 protections! Despite the claims that the “pandemic is over,” COVID-19 continues to spread through our campuses, with heightened impact on the most vulnerable. We demand the implementation of every public health measure necessary to contain and eliminate COVID-19 transmission, including access to online instruction, masks, testing and surveillance, quarantine measures and ventilation.

- Full strike pay! The full assets of the UAW must be made available to ensure that workers can stay out long enough to win our demands.

The UC Rank-and-File Strike Committee declares its political independence from all the capitalist political forces that are working to end our strike and to smother the upsurge of the working class in a fight for improved wages and conditions. This includes the two parties of Wall Street and war, the Democrats and Republicans, as well as the fake left “progressives”, like the Democratic Socialists of America—including Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez—who just voted to pass legislation to block a strike of more than 100,000 railroad workers.

In order to ensure our demands are met, we must assume control of our struggle from the UAW bureaucracy working with the UC Regents and the upper echelons of the Democratic Party and the Biden administration. In order to prevent a repeat of 2020 and the sellout of the COLA strike, we call on our fellow workers to join the UCRFCS, help turn outwards to our allies among railroaders, dock workers and health care workers as part of the fight to expand our struggle.

*To join the UCRFCS, email [ucstrikerfc@gmail.com](mailto:ucstrikerfc@gmail.com). We also call on all strikers to attend the Railroad Workers Rank-and-File Committee online rally this Tuesday December 6th, at 4 pm Pacific to oppose Washington’s imposition of a contract that workers rejected. Register for the event [here](#).*



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