



MEDIA ADVISORY

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UC staff, students to protest at regents' meeting, demand greater scrutiny for taxpayer monies

Hundreds of University of California employees and students will converge at the UC regents' meeting to demand stricter scrutiny of the university's use of public funds.

**Wednesday, February 4 -- press conference 7:45-8:00am
(spokespeople also available by phone)
UCSF--Mission Bay Community Center (Owens Street entrance)
1675 Owens Street, San Francisco**

The regents' agenda includes new employee contributions to the UC pension fund. The Coalition of UC Unions believes that before such mandatory contributions are instituted, staff should have representation on the fund's board of trustees, like all other California state employees.

"The regents aren't accountable to public, faculty or staff," said Paul Brooks, who works as a mass spectroscopist from UC Berkeley, and is a member of his union, UPTE-CWA 9119. "We don't even know the funding level of our pension because the regents refuse to release what should be public information," said Brooks. "We need greater accountability before giving any more of our hard-earned dollars to UC's plans."

UC workers also question how the university is handling large sums of grant money. "UC is abusing federal funds" says Kevin Rooney, a health and safety technician at UCSF and chief negotiator for UPTE-CWA. UC brings in billions of dollars of grant money and then takes up to 54% of it for "administrative expenses." The public has a "right to know where that money goes. Our grants have funds set aside for raises," said Rooney, "but UC is telling us there's no money to keep our pay from falling behind inflation. Where did that money go? We want transparency from the regents."

"Librarians, clerical staff, and lab assistants have been underpaid for years," said Harrison Dekker, a librarian at UCB and a member of the UC-AFT 1474. UC claims top execs' high salaries and perks are justified by practices in the corporate world. "As a public university, we should be modeling more responsible pay practices," said Dekker.

UC is also still prioritizing executive compensation over retaining quality staff "UC has given raises to dozens of executives in their September and November meetings," said Ellie Corley, a CUE member who was recently laid off from her job as a UCB administrative assistant. "I've worked at UC for 33 years and I can't afford to retire. I'm 72 but now I won't have a job because the university is pushing out its most experienced workers," she said.

For more information, see any of the websites in the Coalition of UC Unions: UPTE-CWA (www.upte.org), AFSCME 3299 (www.afscme3299.org) or CUE (www.cueunion.org).

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