

**SUCU General Meeting 28th November 2013, 1 – 2pm**

**Council Chamber, Octagon Centre**

**Chair: Craig Brandist**

1. Welcome and introductions

Craig Brandist welcomed all members to the meeting.

2. Industrial action

2.1 Since our last day of industrial action on 31<sup>st</sup> October the joint union negotiators have met with the Employers on two occasions in the hope of reaching an acceptable settlement. There has been no significant movement from the Employers - just an offer to discuss equality issues, should the pay offer be accepted. So a second strike has been called for Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December, and we will be joined by UCU colleagues in Further education. There was a discussion about the success of the last strike. The strike was well supported, fewer people crossed picket lines, and we had a large march and rally in Barkers Pool. The students and Students Union also gave very strong and visible support on the day.

2.2 The organisation of next Tuesday's action (3<sup>rd</sup> December) will be very similar to the last. There will be a stall on the Concourse from 7.30 for strikers to collect placards, official picket armbands, leaflets and membership forms. Members are asked to talk to colleagues about what is at stake and encourage them to support the strike. The decline in pay has meant that people are already losing 2/3 of a day's pay every week. The Students Union will have an information stall for students during the day next Tuesday.

2.3 Questions and comments from the floor included:

- What is the best advice for post graduate teaching assistants who are non members? Colleagues are encouraged to ask post grads to join UCU and take part in the action. There is a Hardship Fund for anyone suffering financial hardship as a consequence of the strike.
- There was a suggestion that members have an automatic reply on their email tomorrow which requests that emails are resent as work from this day of action will not be deferred.

- Students need to take advice from the Students' Union regarding making a complaint about cancelled lectures etc.
- The University plans to implement the 1% pay offer. There will be response to this sent out in Branch News.
- There is a national plan of escalating industrial action that will affect the examination period if a settlement is not reached.
- Indications are that the majority of staff in most Departments will be taking strike action on 3<sup>rd</sup> December.
- Members asked for further clarification about the obligation to notify management of strike action. There is no obligation to notify management ahead of the action, and doing so would weaken the impact.
- Members felt it was important to hold a rally after the picket of workplaces.
- Casualisation is not part of the current pay dispute, but is one issue that many members would be willing to take action over. This will be discussed at the UCU National Executive Committee on 29<sup>th</sup> November.

### 3. Working to contract

Members are asked to continue working to contract. A faculty meeting was held to discuss how to effectively work to contract in Arts and Humanities yesterday, and this could be replicated in other Faculties.

### 4. Recruitment

There was a significant surge in SUCU membership during the first two weeks after the last strike on 31<sup>st</sup> October. We had 60 new members.

### 5. AOB

5.1 Two members volunteered to attend the Student Debating Society on 2<sup>nd</sup> December.

5.2 It was agreed that the Branch would send a message of support to the 3COSAS strikers who are taking action for equality of terms and conditions between the University of London's direct employees, and its outsourced workers.