

UC, UNION REACH TENTATIVE AGREEMENT FOR POSTDOCS

UC and the United Auto Workers (UAW) have agreed to extend their 2010 contract for UC's more than 6,500 postdoctoral scholars (postdocs) for an additional year. The parties also agreed to a few modifications to the current contract, as described below.

The U.S. Department of Labor sets the salary threshold for professional exempt employees, a category that currently includes postdocs, and is proposing to increase the minimum threshold. Given the uncertainty of the proposed change, timing and final dollar amount of the Department of Labor's order, the university and union settled on a deal through September 30, 2016.

Members of the union will vote on the tentative agreement within the next couple weeks.

Highlights of the contract extension are:

- Wages: The university would continue to follow the National Institute of Health's pay scale which has historically provided about a 6 percent pay increase per year, comprised of an annual cost of living adjustment plus the approximate 4 percent step increase postdocs receive upon any annual reappointment or anniversary.
- Healthcare: Quality affordable healthcare benefits in which the postdocs' share of the premium would remain low and UC would cover at least 95 percent of the cost, depending on the health plan.
- International postdocs on visas: The university and union strengthened contract language to ensure international postdocs who have been dismissed and must leave the country have the ability to participate in the arbitration process.
- Childcare: The parties agreed to create a Family-Friendly Committee consisting of university and union representatives to explore options for providing childcare to postdocs.

The two parties had been in negotiations since May before reaching this tentative agreement.

The university and the UAW will return to the bargaining table in June 2016 to begin negotiations for a successor agreement.