Bargaining update #3: UC, UPTE continue contract negotiations

UC and UPTE continued negotiations Feb. 21, 2013 at UCSF for a new contract covering more than 8,600 research and technical employees.

Progress has been limited since bargaining began in mid-December. The university and UPTE have had two-to-three day bargaining sessions, yet the sides usually spend less than half the day in face-to-face negotiations. The union has requested time to prepare their proposals, but despite extended caucuses over 12 scheduled bargaining dates, the union has only produced proposals on about 18 contract provisions. It has not yet provided initial proposals on the remaining 25 articles for the research (RX) unit and 24 articles for the technical (TX) unit, including on key issues such as pension and retiree health benefits.

The university has presented proposals on 30 contract provisions, including on key topics such as post-employment benefits. While the union has expressed dissatisfaction with the proposal, it has not provided the university with an alternative through a formal written proposal.

Here is a summary of the most recent bargaining session:

Feb. 21, 2013
On Feb. 21, UC listened to UPTE’s concerns about wages and post-employment benefits for an hour and 45 minutes. Because the comments showed a misunderstanding about the university’s offer, UC presented an overview of its post-employment proposal, which includes:

- A new category or tier of pension benefits for employees hired on or after July 1, 2013
- Increased contributions to the UC Retirement Plan for UC from 10 percent to 12 percent, and for employees from 5 percent to 6.5 percent, starting July 1, 2013
- Revised retiree health eligibility rules

Feb. 22, 2013
The university and union were scheduled to meet again the next day on Feb. 22. Previously, UPTE had informed the university it would be ready to bargain at 1 p.m. On that day shortly before 1 p.m., UPTE indicated that it could not meet at the agreed upon time and instead requested to meet at 2:30 p.m. Because UPTE could not honor the original agreed-upon time, UC decided to reconvene at the next scheduled session.

What’s next
The next bargaining session is March 6-8, 2013 at UC Santa Barbara. UC remains committed to constructive, efficient negotiations resulting in a fair agreement for all sides, before the current contract expires June 30, 2013.