

## Why it's a "NO" to the Tentative Agreement



**Revolutionary Marxist Students**  
**marxiststudents.wordpress.com**

As members of the Cal chapter of Revolutionary Marxist Students, we have had the great fortune to take part as supporters in the strike of 48,000 academic workers across the UC system this term. As the strike continues through its sixth consecutive week and graduate students continue to withhold their labor as instructors and researchers, we would like to explain why we think rank and file of UAW 2865 and SRU should reject the tentative agreement currently up for a ratification vote.

The demands advanced by the participating unions (UAW 2865, 5810, and SRU) at the outset of the strike called for some real material improvements for UC academic workers: wages and subsequent annual raises based on the cost of living in California, remittance of burdensome and xenophobic supplemental tuition for international students, support for student parents in line with the price of UC's own childcare services, inclusion of dependents in the student healthcare program, and rights for students with disabilities that would go beyond the scope of outdated and bureaucratic ADA requirements, and the elimination of an expensive, corrupt, and heavily-militarized campus police force. The incredible upswell in mass participation and support for the strike across all ten UC campuses is testament to the fact that these basic advances in graduate students' material conditions are sorely needed and long overdue.

We hope the rank and file of UAW 2865 and SRU will have the clairvoyance to cut through current fear-mongering and propaganda from both the UC and conservative factions of the UAW leadership and recognize that the current TA satisfies none of the above demands. Based on our time on the picket over the past several weeks, we know that there is an active and clear-eyed core of rank and file workers who are dedicated to holding the line. Although victory is definitely not guaranteed by a no vote alone, we believe that wholesale rejection of the potential for further progress – which is being put forward, unfortunately, by many in union leadership positions – is essentially a statement that we should never dare to struggle for fear of defeat. We must work actively to root out and reject such anti-people ideas, which are dominant in our current society.

However, even if the TA passes, it is essential to bear in mind that the broader struggle is not over. Just as local attempts at tenant organizing in Santa Cruz gave way to the COLA wildcat strike of 2020, just as the wildcat leant strength and inspiration to the successful strike by Columbia University grads in 2021, and just as the experiences at Columbia have offered key insights for the UC workers on strike here – so, in turn, will the ideas and relationships fostered through this strike in 2022 lay fertile ground from which the next movements can grow. Look around you: there is no shortage of battles to be fought against exploitation and oppression.

Ultimately, we believe that one of those battles must be waged against the university itself – not only as a boss and a landlord, but also a cog in the US capitalist imperialist machine. It is a training ground for state functionaries, a laboratory for development of military technologies, and a center for social science research on how to best carry out coups and wield 'soft power' both at home and abroad. Furthermore, the university facilitates the production and reproduction of ideologies that function in millions of diverse (and often subtle) ways to justify and uphold the dismal, life-sucking reign of the capitalist class. The fight for higher wages is necessary but not sufficient for liberation of the masses: the institutions that currently provide us education must eventually be smashed, and new structures built in their stead.

We will carry on to our greatest ability the spirit and lessons of this historic UC strike, no matter the outcome of this week's ratification vote. To all those who have shared in conversation and debate so far: thank you, and we hope our paths will cross again soon. Solidarity with UC workers!

**- Cal Revolutionary Marxist Students**