

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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New Majority Faculty Day – National Day of Action April 30th

UC Faculty working outside the tenure system will teach classes outside and hold rallies to raise awareness concerning faculty teaching without tenure and recent undermining of the quality of education at UC.

Across the UC system, non-tenure track faculty members will be holding their classes outside to draw attention to the fact that the majority of people teaching in higher education do not have access to tenure and have limited academic freedom and job security. The University of California system is poised to use the current economic downturn to justify the layoff of lecturers, and once these teachers are released, we will witness a cutting of courses and an expansion of class size coupled with an increase in tuition and fees.

Approximately 60% of instruction at UC is done by lecturers and graduate student teaching assistants. Many students and parents do not realize that the instructors that students have the most contact with are actually not professors. Lecturers are paid much less than what a tenure track professor earns, and many are working on quarterly or annual contracts with very little job security. Lecturers are also the highest rated teachers in the UC system, and they teach many of the small classes undergraduates take.

Non-tenure track positions make the whole system more vulnerable in times of budget shortfalls because UC relies heavily on them for its core instructional mission. When temporary funding for Lecturers is cut, programs and students are heavily impacted by the loss of courses, and the loss of experienced lecturers.

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According to UC-AFT President Bob Samuels, “When 60% of courses are taught by non-tenure people that means 60% of the courses are vulnerable to budget cuts.”

Lecturers are disproportionately affected by budget cuts because they are funded through “temporary” funds. The reality is that most lecturers are not temporary. About 20-40% of UC’s lecturers are on quarterly contracts and they tend to come and go. The other 60-80% are career teachers at UC, who are working with low pay, no role in departmental governance, and limited access to benefits.

UC must begin to prioritize undergraduate education by funding some non-tenured instruction with permanent funds, and fully funding its libraries.

UC has the money to make these changes. It’s a matter of priorities, and unfortunately, the delivery of undergraduate education has been a low priority for UC. #

The University Council-American Federation of Teachers is the union of 4000 librarians and non-senate faculty working in the UC system.

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