



December 2018

Welcome to our Branch Newsletter

The Branch Committee would like to wish all members a Happy Christmas. Have a great break.

This newsletter is to keep you up to date with a number of things that your Branch Committee has been involved with this year.

Bargaining close to a vote!

We have been in bargaining since July and are now able to bring a recommended settlement to members. Meetings to explain the proposed offer will be held on **Wednesday 5th December at 6.30am for cleaners in Undercroft 101, 1.00pm at the Wheki Staff room** and on **Thursday 6th December at 12noon and 4.00pm in lecture theatre A3**. This will be followed by an electronic ballot - or paper ballot if you don't have an email address.

The UC offer has retained all the normal union benefits and includes a non pass-on clause. Only members of the Union will get the pay increase on the 1st January. Everyone else will be waiting until 1 April. The offer is for another three year term but above predicted CPI: 2% for year one, 2.5 for year two and 3% for year three. It includes a \$1000 increase in the median pay scale for general staff, and a minimum wage of \$20.55 for all staff, along with other benefits. The minimum wage offer is a significant gain for our lower paid members and comes as recognition of TEU support for the living wage.

If your colleagues are not members of the TEU you can invite them to join on the TEU website: <https://teu.ac.nz/#join>

AGM report

TEU members gathered in the convivial surroundings of the Shilling Club on Wednesday 27th September for the Annual Branch AGM. The general consensus was that the venue was ideal. After the procedural matters, and the election of a new committee, the meeting was addressed by TEU Deputy Secretary, Nanette Cormack who outlined the challenges facing the TEU nationally including the challenges of government policy despite the seemingly friendly relationships with members of parliament, the amalgamations and mergers in the polytech sector and staff and student representation on Tertiary institution councils. A summary of TEU Canterbury Branch activities for the year follows.

Co-President's Report

Tēnā koutou katoa

The past year has been steadily busy for the TEU at the UC Branch but we are perhaps entering the calm before the storm, with merger talks between with Lincoln and Canterbury potentially having significant implications for us all.

At national level the change of government meant the National government's Tertiary Education Amendment Bill was dead in the water. We sent in submissions, one of our main concerns being the movement of public funds tagged for tertiary education into the private sector. We continue to view higher education as a public good. It is an investment that should primarily benefit the community as opposed to corporations and the private sector.

While the change of government gives hope for greater alignment between the union and government policy, the first year free tuition policy has meant there isn't much education money to address the disinvestment in higher education under the National government.

Wage increases have barely kept pace with inflation over the last 10 years - and for some they have gone backwards. Universities across the country, despite supposedly working independently, appear to be offering the same meagre 1.4%. Our wages are falling behind.

That said we have had a good relationship with the university over the last 10 years. But we might ask - on the things that matter, are we being taken advantage of? We are quite a way out from the earthquakes now. We expect the university to start taking staff remuneration more seriously. We have been patient, and now the university is in a much better financial situation.

While the university sector is fairly stable, polytechnics are in need of serious reform and will require some form of cash injection. Of notably in Wellington is the merger of Whitireia and Welltech, which started with these two polytechnics being given a single CEO and Council. But the merger is going to be more complete than that – doubtless with redundancies and problems likely to arise from merging two institutions with quite different focuses – one being having a strong tangata whenua and Pasifika focus, and the other being more traditional and trades-oriented.

This brings us to the memorandum of understanding between UC and Lincoln. We don't know how this will play out, but it looks like we're starting down the road taken by Whitireia and Welltech. This may leave us dealing with academic and general staff redundancies in one or both universities, along with upheaval to teaching arrangements in some disciplines – for instance commerce. Any UC-Lincoln merger has huge implications and cultural challenges.

We are acutely aware that the ongoing increase in the cost of car parking is a concern to many. Despite TEU representations the university has been solid in maintaining its line. We are attempting to get more equitable outcomes for members

who have irregular hours, pro-rata for part-time staff, and for those members who have young children, and whose therefore rely on driving to work.

At the national level we have a new president, Michael Gilchrist (Victoria University of Wellington). We'd like to acknowledge the great leadership of Sandra Grey over the last 3 years. Sandra has been a strong advocate for members and the union, she has increased the visibility of the union in the media, participated in numerous fora and has been an astute and strong leader during this period. Tēnei mātou o Otautahi e mihi kau ake nei ki a koe Sandra!

Finally we would like to thank the UC branch and organisers Gaby Moore, and Jo McLean. The committee has also been a solid crew, with Tim O'Sullivan in particular making a huge contribution as treasurer and secretary. Thanks to you all!

Warwick Anderson, Garrick Cooper (Co-President)

TEU reiterates vital importance of protecting academic freedom

The Tertiary Education Union Te Hautū Kahurangi o Aotearoa (TEU) has reiterated the vital importance of protecting academic freedom and the right of academics to conduct research and disseminate and publish the results.

TEU Deputy Secretary Nanette Cormack said: "It is vitally important to protect academic freedom and the right of academics to conduct research and disseminate and publish the results."

Professor Jack Heinemann, co-chair of the national Academic Freedom Aotearoa group and winner of the TEU Award of Excellence in the area of Academic Freedom in 2014, said:

"Parliament was clear in its support of academic freedom stating in the Education Amendment Act (1990) that it should not be taken for granted, but continually enhanced."

The TEU broadly supports the principles of academic freedom contained in the UNESCO statement "[Recommendation concerning the status of higher education teaching personnel – November 1997](#)" and the New Zealand [Education Amendment Act 1990, No.80, Part 14](#), which enshrines in law the freedom of academic staff and students to engage in research within the constraints of current law.

The TEU also supports Section 162, (4) (a) (v) of the Education Act, which states that a defining characteristic of our universities is that they accept a role as critic and conscience of society.

TEU National website <https://teu.ac.nz/2018/11/reiterates-importance-protecting/27th-November-2018>

Your Branch Committee notes there have been a number of high profile cases this year where the importance of Academic Freedom is has been called into question or members have been unfairly targeted. This is an important issue for your Branch Committee. The full TEU policy on Academic freedom is online: <https://teu.ac.nz/2010/11/academic-freedom/>

From the organisers

Coming into the end of the year has seen no let up in personal cases, exit packages or staffing reviews. While some of these have been expected there is always the odd one that is a bit of a surprise. We are moving through the process with some level of success, and continue to ensure that members are well represented in the University environment.

We trust that everyone has a safe and happy festive season.
Gaby Moore and Jo McLean



Congratulations to TEU members!

The recent 2018 Royal Society Te Apārangi Marsden Funding round saw UC TEU members **Professor Paul Millar**, **Dr Heather Purdie**, **Associate Professor Mathieu Sellier** and **Professor Felipe Voloch** being successful in their research applications.

Congratulations also to TEU member **Dr Mitja Remus-Emsermann** who won the UC Early and Emerging Career Researcher Award 2018.

The TEU acknowledges and congratulates you on your successful applications and awards.

Congratulations also to TEU member **Te Paea Paringatai**, UC library, who has been appointed as a Commissioner on the Ngā Kaiwhakamārama i ngā Kohikohinga Kōrero – Library and Information Advisory Commission (LIAC), for a three year term. This is a significant appointment on a body that reports to the Minister of Internal Affairs on matters relating to library and information services in New Zealand.

New UC IT policy and consultation

PVC Alex Hanlon has replied to TEU on the issue of lack of consultation on this new policy. The principle that UC owns our IT accounts (email, K drive) and provides IT technology to support our work is accepted but there are a number of issues that are unclear to the Branch Committee in the new policy such as the use of personal devices. UC has always had the ability to surveil IT use and the new policy is possibly a codification what they have done in the past. However, specific attention directed to an individuals IT use should be for good reason, rather than being a fishing expedition to see what can be found. Issues of privacy, for example, correspondence relating to exam setting, will be of concern to academic staff. The use of personal devices connected to the network is an issue that needs some discussion. Your Branch Committee will be seeking further clarification.

Your 2018-2019 Branch Committee

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TEU sites of interest

TEU National webpage: <https://teu.ac.nz/>

TEU Canterbury Branch Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/StandUpForUC>

Academic Freedom Aotearoa: <https://www.facebook.com/academicfreedomnz/>