



Union representation FAQ

HOW DO WE GET "A VOICE" AT UC?

The only way to guarantee that we speak with a collective voice is to choose a union to represent us with UC management. By doing this, we choose to exercise our legal right to collective bargaining. UC employees gained the right to vote for union representation in 1979 when Governor Brown signed the Higher Education Employer-Employee Relations Act (HEERA). Two-thirds of all UC staff (approximately 80,000 employees) have already chosen union representation.

WHAT'S THE PROCESS OF CHOOSING A UNION TO REPRESENT US?

Administrative professionals have been working with **University Professional and Technical Employees (UPTe-CWA Local 9119)**. To formally choose a union, at least 30% of the members of the AP bargaining unit need to sign an authorization card that says we want UPTe-CWA 9119 as our exclusive bargaining representative. When we've gathered enough cards, we will submit them directly to **California's Public Employment Relations Board**, the government agency that oversees labor relations at the University of California and they will schedule an election. If 50% of the employees sign a card, there is no need for an election.

Background on UPTe

- ♦ University Professional and Technical Employees (UPTe-CWA) was founded by University of California employees in 1990. In 1993, UPTe members voted to affiliate with the national Communications Workers of America, a 700,000-member union in the AFL-CIO that already represents university and public employees in several states.
- ♦ UPTe-CWA represents 4,000 UC technical employees, 5,500 research professionals, 3,300 health care professionals, and 150 skilled trades workers at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. UPTe also represents about 1,500 part-time faculty at three California community colleges. UPTe CWA Local 9119 is a democratic, member-run union. All union officials are UC or Community College employees or retirees. For more information, please visit upte.org.
- ♦ The current UPTe contracts guarantee wage increases plus step increases when an employee receives a performance evaluation of meets expectations or better. These contracts also govern pensions, health benefits, career development, layoffs, seniority, and more.
- ♦ UPTe negotiates with the University to get a fair contract for current represented employees and will do so for Administrative Professionals.
- ♦ UPTe works with the University, employees, students, other unions, and elected officials to advocate for and secure adequate funding to support UC's missions of teaching, research, and public service.
- ♦ UPTe promotes employee reclassifications, even if it moves an employee out of one of UPTe's bargaining units.

Frequently Asked Questions related to Administrative Professionals

WHAT JOB TITLES ARE INCLUDED?

Although this is subject to negotiations with the University, we expect that approximately 20,000 employees across the UC system will be included, giving us a powerful presence at the bargaining table. Job titles include student affairs officers, analysts, buyers, programmer analysts, administrative specialists, library assistant Vs, accountants, learning skills counselors, senior and principal writers/editors, and many others. Most "Career Compass" or "Career Tracks" titles are included. See APsforUPTe.org/99titles.html for a more complete list.

WHAT ARE COMMON REASONS ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS WANT UNION REPRESENTATION?

Having a "voice" and a "seat at the table" when important decisions and University priorities are set are common reasons employees seek union representation. In particular, Administrative Professionals have fallen far behind in pay over the last decade compared to unionized employees; comparing UPTe-represented Researchers' salaries with Administrative Professionals' salaries—it's a \$50,000 difference over the last 10 years! Protection on the job and secure futures, benefits, and retirement are all common reasons as well.

Many people don't see the immediate need for a union. We often have good working relationships with our immediate supervisors but we recognize that most of the decisions that govern the rules are controlled by higher-level management. We can advocate for ourselves – and our constituencies – most effectively when we work together with our colleagues to negotiate for our priorities.

WHAT DOES SIGNING AN AUTHORIZATION CARD MEAN?

Simply put, the card means when there is a union election, you will vote **YES for UPTE**. It means that you are agreeing to have UPTE be the exclusive representative in bargaining conditions related to your compensation, benefits, hours and other terms of your UC employment.

CAN PEOPLE SIGN THE CARD ELECTRONICALLY?

No. Although we can ask the University if they would acknowledge the validity of electronically submitted authorization cards, current law requires an employer to agree to electronic submission. It is unlikely that the University will agree to do so.

DOES SIGNING A CARD MEAN THAT I HAVE TO PAY DUES?

No. Signing the authorization card does not make you a member of the union. If Administrative Professionals choose to be represented by UPTE, dues will be required to support the work done on behalf of those being represented. But dues will not be required until we vote to approve our first contract.

HOW MUCH ARE DUES AND WHEN WILL WE START TO PAY THEM?

When we begin to pay dues, they will be 1.3% of gross pay with an initial maximum of \$20 per month and they are paid by payroll deduction (like your parking or health care premiums). Dues will not “kick in” until a contract for Administrative Professionals is negotiated, settled and ratified by members. This means that people will have to vote in favor of the contract in order for it to be “ratified.” One of the goals of negotiations will be to bargain more than enough of a pay raise and other financial improvements to offset the cost of dues and other increasing costs like health care premiums and pension contributions. Dues will increase by \$5.00 per month in any year the contract provides for a raise of 2% or more, up to a maximum of 1.3% of your pay.

WILL UC MANAGEMENT KNOW IF I SIGN AN AUTHORIZATION CARD?

Authorization cards are confidential. UC will not be given the names of signers. The cards are filed with PERB, the state agency governing UC labor relations.

WHAT ABOUT RECLASSES?

UPTE strongly supports career development. We support all reclassifications that advance our members' careers. We even negotiated language requiring UC to automatically review some members for reclassifications. We know that some other unions block reclassifications and we strongly disagree with this practice.

CAN I GET IN TROUBLE FOR TALKING TO MY CO-WORKERS ABOUT UNION ORGANIZING?

You have the right to organize in the workplace. If you can talk about Girl Scout cookie orders or ball games, you can talk about the union. However, you may want to be sure the conversation takes place during a break or lunch. Always ask if the person you want to speak with can take a break.

WHAT IF I HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

Please feel free to contact us to ask questions. We're reachable via email at APs@upte-wa.org. You can also find your campus UPTE local at upte.org/contacts. And you can check us out on Facebook at facebook.com/APsforUPTE.

IMPORTANT TAKE-AWAYS

- ◆ When getting signed authorization cards, be certain that the name, campus, payroll job title, signature and date are included.
- ◆ You should call the UPTE office upte.org/contacts to arrange for the card(s) to be picked up.
- ◆ If you need more cards or materials, contact your local UPTE office (see #2 above).
- ◆ If your co-workers ask questions that you don't know the answers to, call or email the UPTE office. An UPTE staff person or one of our activists will be happy to help.
- ◆ If you don't feel comfortable continuing the conversation with somebody, just call or email the office. You can make the introduction or give us the name of the co-worker who may be interested.
- ◆ More info is available at APsforUPTE.org, including an FAQ section and briefs on many topics affecting APs at UC.
- ◆ Like us on Facebook!