

Why are UIC United Faculty members planning to strike?

The faculty are concerned about the teaching and research mission of your university. Your professors are:

- Teaching much bigger classes than 2-3 years ago and sometimes more classes than they were contracted to teach without extra pay.
- Not being paid a fair salary when compared to other Research-1 universities in Chicago.
- Paid less than faculty at UIUC when you adjust for the cost of living.
- Being forced to leave UIC for better conditions elsewhere.

We don't want to strike. We are fighting for many things of direct benefit to you, like smaller class sizes, retaining quality faculty, and more time for students. The good news is that these things do not require any increase in your tuition or fees – we know the university can afford a fair contract with faculty.

While we continue to bargain in good faith to get a fair contract, the administration has moved very little, and has refused to move more on salary increases, sticking with an amount that does not even keep up with inflation or account for the cost of living in Chicago. Instead, they tell us that despite increasing tuition revenue from increasing enrollment, we need to accept their offer. And instead of identifying other options, they have accepted the narrative that UIC is second to UIUC. They need to figure out how to get UIC properly funded – and not through raising fees and differentials – to fairly compensate its faculty and graduate students that provide the education UIC students deserve.

Is the strike definitely going to happen?

We hope it doesn't have to happen. Bargaining is still ongoing while this FAQ is being made, and it is possible that a deal could be reached, preventing a strike. We are doing everything we can to bring about a fair contract agreement as soon as possible.

Why are faculty striking at the end of the semester?

We have been bargaining since June 2018 and without a contract since August. We are at a point in the bargaining process where salaries and some additional protections are left to negotiate. Considering they have not moved on our salary request since their first offer 6 months ago, we are not confident they will without a strike before the semester ends. We learned from the GEO strike that our power to change things requires us to withhold our labor, and sadly, it means walking out of the classroom.

How long will the strike last?

There is no way to know for sure. If we do strike, we will be out of the classroom until a mutually acceptable contract is negotiated.

What happens if faculty are still striking during exam week?

Faculty will not be able to give final exams during that week. Administration will need to figure out a system whereby faculty can give exams after the end of the semester, once a mutually acceptable contract is negotiated. Exams and official graduation could be delayed until the administration agrees to the kind of contract that will uphold quality education. Students can still go through graduation ceremony. But until they take finals, they will not be able to receive final grades or official transcripts. The best thing students can do to help prevent any of these delays is to let the administration know that you are concerned and want to know what they are going to do.

How can I support the faculty in fighting for a fair contract and better education at UIC?

- Read this petition started by the United Faculty Student Alliance and if you agree sign it and share with other students. <https://www.change.org/p/uic-administration-uic-students-demand-fair-faculty-contracts>
- Write to UI President Tim Killeen (tkilleen@uic.edu) and the UI Board of Trustees (UIBOT@uillinois.edu) since they control the whole University of Illinois System, as well as the Chancellor (chancellor@uic.edu).
- Follow UIC United Faculty on social media @UICUF and Facebook.com/UICUF.