

## **IFUT rejects UCC attempts to impose new staff contracts**

*Wed. Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2105*

The Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT) has demanded an urgent meeting to discuss proposed new staff contracts in University College Cork. The contracts seek to undermine or circumvent key aspects of labour practice, including areas such as unfair dismissal legislation, work location and academic freedom.

At an IFUT meeting attended by over 100 staff in UCC this week, members voted unanimously to ballot for industrial action, in the event that the college seeks to implement the new contracts.

Staff are particularly incensed that many measures introduced on a temporary basis as part of the Croke Park and Haddington Road Agreements and due to expire in 2016, are proposed for continuation in the draft contracts.

Mike Jennings, General Secretary of IFUT, said that the new contract “makes unprecedented changes to terms and conditions and makes permanent many aspects of the recent temporary Public Sector Agreements (PSA). It also introduces many limits and restrictions that were never negotiated through any PSA.

“Any changes to staffing terms and conditions must be subject to negotiation.

“As such no employee should be obliged to sign such a contract and the college should defer presenting any new form of contract until such time as negotiations have concluded.”

UCC is proposing that the revised contracts apply to all new staff and where existing staff are promoted or move to new work areas.

“Effectively the college is seeking to make permanent measures that are temporary in nature and are due to expire as the country comes out of recession. The stark fact is that reduced numbers of academic staff are already teaching ever-increasing numbers of students. The college cannot keep coming back to the well for further cuts.

“IFUT is therefore seeking an urgent meeting to discuss all issues around this proposal. In the absence of such talks and agreement, IFUT is mandated to ballot for industrial action,” Mike Jennings said.

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