Continue Supporting the University Staff in their Industrial Action

What we will do

1. To support the University staff and the University and College Union in their industrial action with the University during their upcoming strike action, as well as any future strike action or action short of strike part of the current Pensions and Four Fights dispute on pay, equality, workload, and casualization
2. For the Sabbatical Officers to coordinate with the UCU Committee in spreading awareness about the reasons for the strike, and build solidarity between staff and students
3. Facilitate and provide venues for teach-outs and events to spread information amongst the student body about the issues behind the industrial action
4. Provide information to students on what a picket line is
5. Provide alternative study spaces for students so they do not have to cross picket lines at university buildings to study
6. Lobby the University to stop pressuring students to cross picket lines using deadlines, the overzealous enforcing of the Hostile Environment policy or other threats
7. Lobby the University to consider solidarity with industrial action as legitimate reasons for student absence and to stop penalising students who miss classes because they do not cross picket lines
8. Lobby the University to mandate that Course Organisers and Exam Boards exempt material that was not taught due to strike action from exams and assessments
9. Lobby the University to invest withheld pay in the Discretionary and Hardship Fund and other support services such as the peer proofreading service, Advice Place, and/or Counselling Service, offered by EUSA and the University
10. Lobby the University to ensure fair contracts and working conditions for PhD students who are on scholarships that require them to teach.

Background to this

1. The UCU industrial dispute with the university management is ongoing and the UCU has called further strike action in February and March
2. The employers have not made adequate progress in addressing staff concerns regarding pensions, a median gender wage gap amongst staff, exploitative workloads, and precarious employment of staff members.
3. During the last strike, students felt compelled to cross picket lines because of intimidating emails from course organisers about deadlines and exams or because of the Home Office’s Hostile Environment policies.
4. The Principal has made no clear commitment to what aspects of ‘student experience’ the withheld pay will be used for.
5. Some PhD students’ contracts require them to undertake which mean they may feel unable to observe the strike.

Beliefs and motivating actions

1. Staff working conditions are our learning conditions
2. The University management’s commitment to providing good ‘student experience’ cannot be sustained without fair treatment of staff
3. The University’s policies around workload, pay, pensions, and working conditions for staff has adversely affected the standard of our education.
4. The implementation of PhD scholarships that incorporate teaching goes against the spirit of the anti-casualisation agreement between the University and UCU.
5. Staff and students must work together to defend higher education

Passed at Student Council in February 2020.