

*Welcome to the first edition of your local association's newsletter! We aim to keep you updated about the work your union is doing locally and the issues that are affecting members of staff here at York.*

*Find out more at: <http://www-cgi.york.ac.uk/~intm101/cgi-bin/ucu>*

## ----- Redundancies -----

The University informed UCU and the other campus unions on 24<sup>th</sup> June that it intended to undertake a cost saving restructuring in the Directorate of Facilities Management (DFM) which may result in redundancies. We met formally with the employer on 24<sup>th</sup> July as part of the statutory consultation process and we have had further meetings on 4<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> August.

So far it has been very difficult to get precise figures from the University about the number of people whom it may be seeking to lose (either through voluntary or compulsory redundancy), but it should be remembered that 107 individuals were made redundant last year—the vast majority being fixed term or 'fixed funding' researchers. Added to the as yet unknown number of potential job losses in DFM, many of our colleagues are facing the prospect of an uncertain and anxious future.

Although the University has told us that it is seeking to avoid compulsory redundancies in DFM, it has not ruled them out. At the same time many research staff coming to the end of their contracts or funding grants continue to have no security of employment. UCU is therefore seeking full implementation of the national redundancy avoidance agreement (put forward by the staff side representatives on the joint HE negotiating body, JNCHES), which will not only widen the possibilities for mitigating redundancies (including job sharing arrangements, unpaid sabbaticals, early retirement, and the establishment of regional redeployment pools with neighbouring institutions), but will also tackle the chronic employment insecurity faced by many researchers and research administrators.

UCU is determined to ensure that any cost savings are achieved without the need for compulsory redundancies, and the local branch is working closely with our regional officers and the other campus unions to that end. We also want to ensure that this is a fair, transparent and meaningful consultation, which is why we have asked to take part in briefings with relevant staff groups. To ensure that we are representing colleagues effectively, we would like to hear from any member who has concerns about their own situation or their work area. As usual, please contact us in the first instance by email via [socs2@york.ac.uk](mailto:socs2@york.ac.uk).

### Pay and Redundancy Campaign

Many thanks to all of you who have responded to our email survey on the national pay offer. We have received a very gratifying number of responses and the feedback we have received has been invaluable. Your responses will inform our contribution to the regional consultation on the employer's offer in Manchester on 1<sup>st</sup> October. We have been reassured to see that concern over redundancies is widely shared by members at the University of York and that you wish to see UCU make the avoidance of redundancies its number one priority in national and local negotiations.

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### Vacancies on the local executive and for departmental reps

We are currently seeking new executive members, as well as departmental representatives for the following departments: CHE, Chemistry, Computing Service, Environment, Estates, Health Studies, Language, Music, Philosophy, Psychology, SPRU, Sociology, Sports and Recreation Service, and York Health Economics Consortium.

Please contact [socs2@york.ac.uk](mailto:socs2@york.ac.uk) if you would like further information about these positions.

## Hourly paid tutors

Over the course of this year UCU has been involved in negotiations with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and HR colleagues in order to regularise the pay and conditions of hourly paid tutors and those engaged in 'atypical teaching roles'. This involves colleagues engaged on a sessional basis in Languages for All, the Centre for English Language Teaching and the Centre for Lifelong Learning, those who provide tutoring or lecturing to departments on an hourly rate, and postgraduates who teach. We have made progress with the University on a number of

important issues, but to date the University has refused to accept that hourly paid tutors are covered by the national framework agreement, which has been in place at the University of York since August 2006.

This has important implications in terms of this group of staff's entitlement to back pay, incremental progression and 'no detriment'. UCU's national's policy is to insist on the protection of the framework agreement for all staff because this underpins the important principle of 'equal pay for work

of equal value' whatever the nature of the employee's engagement. UCU has restated its case for the equal treatment of hourly paid tutorial staff and has demonstrated its willingness to discuss the details of implementation with management. UCU remains committed to the regularisation of hourly paid tutors and will be involved in the working party on postgraduates who teach. In the meantime we remain open to further discussions on a mutually acceptable implementation plan for all hourly paid teaching staff.

## New environment reps

The founding Congress in 2007 committed UCU to play its part in 'greening the campus' and since then a network of environment reps has begun to be established up and down the country. Two members at U of Y have recently agreed to take on this role and are now investigating ways the union can stimulate change at a local level. The new reps are:

Chris Copland (Centre for English Language Teaching)  
e-mail: [cnc502@york.ac.uk](mailto:cnc502@york.ac.uk)

Amanda Dixon (Dept. of Chemistry)  
e-mail: [ajd9@york.ac.uk](mailto:ajd9@york.ac.uk)

What exactly will they be able to do? According to UCU nationally, green reps "work in a similar way to other union reps by raising awareness of green issues in the workplace and making sure they are included in the negotiating/bargaining agenda."

At a local level, this means ensuring that, at a time when the campus is going through rapid change, ordinary staff members have a say in the kind of environment in which we all live and work. A more sustainable workplace is to everyone's benefit, of course, but should also have tangible benefits for individual members. To take the example of transport, if commuting can be made more convenient, sustainable and affordable, this will not only reduce our carbon footprint but can also involve a significant improvement in staff conditions.

There will also be financial implications. It is interesting

to note that the Secretary of State has informed HEFCE that "all institutions... should have plans to reduce carbon emissions, and performance against these plans should be a factor in future capital allocations."

In the coming term, we hope to begin by gauging members' views and there will be a launch event in October for staff (both members and non-members) interested in the environment. In the meantime, if any members want to raise any specific concerns, Chris and Amanda would be interested to hear from you.

You can find out more about UCU's policies on the environment at a national level at:

<http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=338>

### Taking a stand against the BNP



York UCU members with our new banner at a recent UAF demo