

# ICUCU Newsletter No 3

## UCU Office, Imperial College

Room 561, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus, London SW7 2AZ  
Tel: **0207 594 3815** email: [ucu-office@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:ucu-office@imperial.ac.uk)

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**Welcome** to the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the newsletter for Imperial College UCU members.

## Introducing your Branch Committee

### Neil Fairweather



Neil is Professor of Microbiology within the Department of Life Sciences and has been an active member of Imperial's UCU committee for many years. He recently took a break from the committee to "recharge his batteries" but is now back and ready to help the branch meet the needs of its members. He has considerable experience in branch activities including pay negotiations and in consultations over redundancies. Hobbies don't include politics, but rather walking his dog, badminton and, recently, learning ballroom dancing.

## UCU Campaign Update

### Annual Pay Negotiations

UCU at Imperial, together with the other trade unions (UNISON and Unite), has recently begun the annual negotiations on pay with the College management. Over the last 10 years local pay rises at Imperial have consistently fallen below the annual rate of inflation. This has resulted in a loss in earning power of over 12% during this period. In addition we now face increased NI contributions of up to 1.4% and additional USS pension contributions of up to 1.5% i.e. an effective 2.9% overall cut in take-home pay. Last year Imperial recorded its largest surplus ever of £143.5 m, equivalent to nearly £20k per member of staff. Support us in our claim for a fair increase in 2016 to reverse this erosion of our pay. Full details of our pay claim can be found at:

<http://imperial.web.ucu.org.uk/files/2016/05/Imperial-College-JTU-2016-Pay-Claim.pdf>

## UCU Imperial News

### Health and Safety

Employers must consult representatives of employees on health and safety issues. At Imperial

UCU and the other trade union safety reps carry out this role. We represent your interests at College health and safety committees on all matter concerning health and safety. This includes a wide range of issues from laboratory safety, the provision of a suitable working environment, to harassment and bullying. If you are interested in finding out more about what we do or becoming involved in health and safety please contact us at:

[ucu-office@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:ucu-office@imperial.ac.uk)

### New, Improved Website

We are happy to announce that following a great deal of work by a few of our Branch Committee members we now have a new website. Please take a look and let us know if there is any information missing which you think would be useful to members. You can visit the site via the Imperial College website or go direct to: [www.ucu.imperial.ac.uk](http://www.ucu.imperial.ac.uk)

## Imperial, Fossil Fuels & Climate Change



PARIS2015  
UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE  
COP21-CMP11

The effect of climate change is one of the biggest global challenges that we face. In Paris, December 2015, at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 21) 196 countries agreed to a goal of limiting global warming to less than 2°C compared to pre-industrial levels and made it clear that major reductions in the use of fossil fuels is key to achieving this goal. This was spelled out in graphic detail, here at Imperial, by Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), who gave the Grantham Institute 2016 Annual Lecture on 11<sup>th</sup> April. To listen to it, go to:

<http://www.imperial.ac.uk/grantham/news-and-events/past-events/public-lectures--seminars/grantham-annual-lecture-2016/>

It is clear that at least 80% of known fossil fuel reserves will have to remain in the ground if COP21 has any chance of being achieved. These "stranded assets" will be a serious problems for fossil fuel producers and investors alike, as highlighted by the Governor of the Bank of England, Mark Carney, in a speech last year. Even the Gates Foundation which

had previously argued against divestment in fossil fuels now appears to recognise the financial risks and the incompatibility of an institution set up for the betterment of human health having investments in fossil fuels. It has greatly reduced its holdings in fossil fuel producers, most recently selling off its \$187m of shares in BP. Imperial College, which aspires to helping humanity address future changes and challenges, including climate change, also needs to play its part by divesting from fossil fuels and developing an ethical investment policy for the Imperial College Endowment Fund.

## UCU Delegation to Calais



“I joined a UCU delegation which visited the Calais refugee camp on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May. It was a life-changing experience.

The camp is on a toxic old industrial site next to a motorway west of Calais. Almost all of the “Jungle” was bulldozed in early March. Apart from the many tents clustered across

the site, the few surviving temporary structures are made of plywood and plastic sheeting.



Most of the roughly 6000 refugees in the camp (mainly young men who have fled war zones) now live in a new compound of white steel containers, arranged in numbered blocks and enclosed by high fences.



Each has room for 12 beds but little else.

Despite the appalling conditions, most people went out of their way to welcome us. Some had been here only a few days, others for over a year.

I thought the best way to spend the 285 euros donated by UCU members at Imperial College would be to give it to the indomitable Marco, who runs the camp’s main school. He fled Iraqi Kurdistan with his family in 1999 to settle in the UK when he was only 13. Marco has lived in the school since building it over four months ago with his friend Zimnako. The compound has two schoolrooms, but teaching happens wherever both space and the right teacher are available. There’s also a kitchen and a makeshift adventure playground.



Many refugees are desperate for more education. Classes are from 11am to 4pm, but structure and continuity are difficult to achieve with so many different teachers and such unstable conditions. The biggest demand is for English lessons, but there’s lots of interest in most subjects. Our delegation came to look at the possibility of setting up some summer classes, but anyone who goes there to teach needs to be flexible. Refugees are always keen to meet people from the UK, even just for a chance to practice their English.

Do let me know if you want to donate or you’re interested in going. There’s also more information about future delegations to Calais at:

<http://www.standuptoracism.org.uk/>

Roddy Storach, Equalities and Diversity Officer - [r.storach@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:r.storach@imperial.ac.uk)”

## UCU Services to members



### Personal Injury Claims

Thousands of personal injuries are sustained in the workplace every year. UCU’s specialist lawyers can advise and represent members to recover compensation. The claims covered include:

- A work-related accident or disease at or out of work which was not your fault including road traffic accidents;
- Clinical negligence arising from medical treatment after a work-related accident or disease.

To find out more go to:

<https://www.ucu.org.uk/piclaims>