



IN THE NEWS:

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Multiple unions rally on campus in support of United Auto Workers strike



Protesters, with an effigy labeled “Genocide Gene,” rally in support of the ongoing United Auto Workers Local 4811 Strike. The rally went from Murphy Hall through South Campus to the UCPD station on Westwood Plaza and then the Luskin turnaround. (Zoraiz Irshad/Daily Bruin senior staff)



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Over 300 students and community members rallied outside Murphy Hall on Wednesday in support of the ongoing United Auto Workers Local 4811 strike.

The union – which represents academic student employees, graduate student researchers, and academic and postdoctoral researchers – began striking at UCLA last week in protest of what it alleges to be unfair labor practices, including the use of police force against its members during the police sweep of the Palestine solidarity encampment. The protest began at 3 p.m. after multiple organizations, including Labor for

Palestine Los Angeles and UCLA Rank and File for a Democratic Union – a caucus within the union – posted on [Instagram](#) calling for people to rally in support of the strike.

Protesters marched through South Campus to the UCPD station on Westwood Plaza and then the Luskin turnaround chanting phrases such as, “Out of the classrooms, into the streets,” “Drop the charges now” and “What’s disgusting? Union busting.”

Organizers led the protest to demonstrate the existence of widespread support for the strike, said Jacqueline Perez, a psychology doctoral student and protest organizer. She added that the union plans to continue demonstrating until its demands are met.

“We seriously need to escalate our power and leverage that power against the University right now,” Perez said. “How we do that is by showing them the broad support that we have.”

Anny Vilorio Winnett, the unit chair of UAW Local 4811 at UCLA, said in a speech that the rally aimed to draw attention to unfair labor practices that she alleged the university has engaged in on campus. She added that union members are continuing to protest despite recent arrests and threats of sanctions and conduct hearings against students.

Randall Kuhn, a professor in the Fielding School of Public Health, said in a speech that he and other members of Faculty for Justice in Palestine at UCLA are proud of recent student protests. He added that he believes security on campus, including UCLA Health security workers, have suppressed pro-Palestine activism on campus by tearing down posters.

The UCLA Faculty Association joined UAW Local 4811 and the University Council-American Federation of Teachers in filing an unfair labor practice complaint against the UC on Monday for the University’s treatment of members during the encampment and stifling of free speech. The UCLAFA is a nonunion entity, unlike UAW Local 4811 and UC-AFT.

Siobhan Braybrook, a member of the faculty association, said one reason the association filed its charge was that UCLA’s administration instructed faculty to avoid speaking about the strike. An email from university administrators, including Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Darnell Hunt, to the university community had told instructors not to speak to union members about the strike.

“Our jobs are to be here to teach, to research, to be inquisitive, to be curious, to ask

questions and to build a better world,” Braybrook said. “We can’t do our job with the university’s gag order about what we can and cannot say.”

[Related: [UCLA calls student hearings for arrested participants of pro-Palestine encampment](#)]

As protesters marched toward the UCPD station, they blocked traffic along Charles E Young Drive.

Vincent Doehr, a member of Graduate Students for Justice in Palestine at UCLA, said in a speech that he believes recent decisions by UCPD – including the [arrest](#) of a student – have endangered student safety. He also alleged that a student who was attacked while wearing a keffiyeh had to wait two hours to file a police report about the incident.

“Our University is funding and profiting from the weapons used in Israel’s genocide of Palestinians,” said Doehr, a political science doctoral student. “We have the right and the responsibility to resist and to demand divestment.”

[Related: [UCLA Faculty Association files unfair labor practice charge against the UC](#)]



Protesters supporting the United Auto Workers Local 4811 strike carry an effigy labeled “Genocide Gene” on Westwood Plaza at a rally Wednesday. The event featured several speakers from UAW Local 4811 and other unions. (Zoraiz Irshad/Daily Bruin senior staff)

Non-University employees also rallied in solidarity with UAW.

Cliff Smith, the business manager of the United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers and Allied Workers Local 36, said in a written statement distributed at the rally that his organization stands in solidarity with UAW Local 4811's unfair labor practice strike and has called for an immediate ceasefire in the Gaza Strip. Ethan Robins, a production staff worker, added that he attended the protest to show his support for the strike.

"Strikes are meant to disrupt, and protests are meant to disrupt," he said. "If you're not disrupting, who are you showing you have a problem?"

Union workers from the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees as well as United Teachers Los Angeles also said in speeches at the rally that their unions stand in solidarity with UAW Local 4811, and they called on the University to protect the right to protest.

Around 50 people, including UCLA medical residents, demonstrated earlier in the day outside the Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center around noon. Protesters chanted phrases such as, "In solidarity, here we stand, with health care workers, hand in hand" and "In our millions, in our billions, we are all Palestinians."



Members of United Auto Workers Local 4811 march through campus Wednesday. The union began striking at UCLA on May 28 after filing multiple unfair labor practices against the UC. (Zoraiz Irshad/Daily

Bruin senior staff)

The rally came after recent attempts from the University to end the strike.

The UC announced Wednesday that it had filed a breach of contract lawsuit against UAW Local 4811, claiming the strike violates a no-strike clause in the 2022 collective bargaining agreement between the two parties. The move comes after the California Public Employment Relations Board – the state agency that administers collective bargaining agreements – denied two requests by the UC on May 23 and June 3 for injunctive relief to end the strike.

“The blatant breach of the parties’ no-strike clauses by UAW will continue to cause irreversible harm to the University,” said Melissa Matella, associate vice president for systemwide labor relations for the UC, in a statement Wednesday. “It will disrupt the education of thousands of students in the form of canceled classes and delayed grades.”

The latest lawsuit requests the state to issue a temporary restraining order on UAW Local 4811, which would effectively end the strike across all UC campuses. Union members at UCLA, UC Davis, UC San Diego, UC Santa Barbara, UC Irvine and UC Santa Cruz are currently all on strike.

“It’s disheartening to see the union making it hard for students to attend the classes they’ve paid for, and right before finals when stress levels are at an all-time high,” said Mary Osako, the vice chancellor of strategic communications, in an emailed statement. “UCLA is doing all we can to support our talented students so that they can get the education they deserve.”

In Matella’s statement, the UC further claimed that the strike is unlawful because UAW Local 4811 members are striking based upon political and social issues and not issues of labor. Rafael Jaime, president of UAW Local 4811 and an English doctoral student, said in a statement Monday that the union is striking because of the UC’s violation of its employees’ rights to free speech and peaceful protest.

Juan Pablo Gatica, a member of UAW Local 4811, said the UC’s choice to circumvent PERB’s decision is unlawful.

“They can go on and on – filing injunctions, going to court, paying legal fees – all they want because they’re a multibillion dollar industry,” he said. “By going through those channels and completely circumventing it (PERB) – I think it’s a gross injustice.”