

## IFUT Charter slams ‘casualisation of teaching’ by UCC

*Wednesday October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016*

The Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT) has launched a Charter for casual workers in UCC, saying that at least one-third of staff delivering teaching to students are now employed on a purely casual basis.

Calling for a reversal of casualisation policy by UCC and throughout the university system, Mike Jennings, General Secretary of IFUT, said there has been in recent years a concerted attempt by university managements to implement casualisation and low pay for both lecturing and research staff.

“Over 200 people are now affected in UCC alone. This is extremely demotivating for those involved and indeed for all academic staff. It results in rapid staff turnover, extremely precarious pay and conditions and is totally unsatisfactory from the perspective of good teaching practice.

“At a time when international rankings for Irish universities are falling sharply, the blatant cost-cutting strategy behind casualisation of new staff is exacerbating problems. It is unfair and exploitative of staff and students alike and must be reversed,” he said.

The Charter commits IFUT to ‘collective action to defend the rights of casual workers’ and arises from a meeting on “Casualisation of Academic Work: Solidarity or Precarity” organized by the UCC Branch of IFUT last April.

“It aims to underpin collective action that can be taken by established staff to protect those who are more vulnerable. Furthermore, by taking actions in this way IFUT members can ensure they are not implicated in or supportive of exploitative working practices,” Mike Jennings said.

The full IFUT Charter for UCC reads:

- a) We will not co-operate with unethical/exploitative employment or labour practices.
- b) We will take collective action to defend the rights of casual workers.
- c) We will speak up against efforts to casualise our academic work.
- d) We will acknowledge that precarious workers require our support and are vulnerable.
- e) We will use social media to share stories of precarity.
- f) We will engage with the Students’ Union to ensure that students are aware of the unacceptable conditions of employment to which some of their lecturers and tutors are subject.
- g) We will discuss widely and openly the plight of precarious casual workers with our colleagues so that nobody can claim that they are unaware of the situation.
- h) We will enquire into the status of colleagues with whom we work and liaise, and insist that they are being paid for **all** the work that they do including lecture preparation, meetings with faculty and students, and marking/assessing.
- i) We will call on our own individual departments, schools and colleges to declare precisely the extent of the use of casual workers to support their programmes.

- j) We will launch and engage in a campaign to openly acknowledge the extent of the use of casual workers to support programmes: “How many casual credits?”
- k) Where hourly paid work is all that is provided, we will campaign for the establishment of a substantial and realistic baseline number of hours that should be paid to all involved in casual teaching and supervising, over and above their actual class contact time.

ENDS

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