



OFFICE OF THE PROVOST AND
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Oakland, California 94607-5200

May 19, 2026

ACADEMIC COUNCIL CHAIR AHMET PALAZOGLU
EXECUTIVE VICE CHANCELLORS AND PROVOSTS

Dear Colleagues:

I am writing to you with an update regarding implementation of the recently negotiated agreement between the University and the United Auto Workers (UAW) for the unified Academic Student Employees (ASE – Teaching Assistants (TA), Associate Instructors (AI), Readers, Tutors) and Graduate Student Researchers (GSR) bargaining units. Please share this message with all faculty who serve as Principal Investigators (PIs) for their planning purposes.

As you know, the University and the UAW already reached agreement on the unified ASE and GSR contract. However, the parties continued discussions over the past seven weeks to clarify some outstanding issues and develop implementation plans, culminating in a Post-Ratification Settlement Side Letter signed on May 5, 2026. It provides detailed provisions for ASE Appointment Notification, ASE Summer Session, and Wages articles.

I want to be sure you have full insight into these details. As you may be aware, the ASE Appointment Notification article includes a new provision establishing a 50% appointment requirement for TAs and AIs in PhD and MFA programs. The Side Letter delays implementation of this provision until Winter Quarter 2027 and Spring Semester 2027 to allow campuses and departments adequate time to accommodate this change. The parties also agreed that when the 50% FTE requirement takes effect, 50% FTE appointments will be offered unless one or more of the following exceptions apply: (1) in conjunction with other salaried bargaining unit appointments to reach a total of 50% FTE; (2) the University determines in its academic judgment that another TA or AI is more qualified to teach available course(s) and provides notice of its decision to the union; or (3) by exception, the University maintains sole discretion to appoint at a higher percentage than 50% FTE.

Additionally, for academic year 2026-2027 only, departments that had already communicated TA appointments below 50% FTE to incoming PhD and MFA students as of May 5, 2026 will not be required to supplement those appointments, provided the student receives concurrent financial support that is at least equivalent to GSR Salary Point 1 at 25% FTE for the relevant academic term.

The Post-Ratification Settlement Side Letter also establishes a new ongoing exception to the 50% FTE TA and AI requirement for cases in which fellowships or training grants

May 19, 2026

Page 2

restrict employment at below 50% FTE. Nothing in the agreement prevents a graduate student from rejecting a training grant-funded position or a fellowship to accept a 50% TA or AI appointment. Moreover, the University has agreed not to create or modify internal fellowship terms for the purpose of circumventing the 50% appointment requirement.

The University and UAW also reached several clarifications regarding the implementation of the GSR Wages article. Consistent with the ratified collective bargaining agreement (CBA), departments, hiring units, and programs will continue to apply the existing salary point practices in place at the time of ratification. The side letter further clarifies how current GSR salary point practices will transition to the five-point salary scale effective October 1, 2029.

We have agreed that the GSR experience will continue to be calculated annually as of June 30 for each year of the contract. Experience-based salary progression, effective October 1, 2029, will occur prior to the elimination of the five-point scale and will be applied using the existing six-point salary scale, effective October 1, 2028. After any applicable progression is implemented, GSRs will transition horizontally onto the new five-point unified salary scale effective October 1, 2029. For the 2029-2030 academic year only, experience will still be evaluated as of June 30, 2029, but placement on the newly applicable salary point will occur on January 1, 2030.

I recognize that the GSR salary progression and the new format of the salary scale are complicated. For ease of reference and for your internal planning purposes, I am attaching PowerPoint slides developed by the Systemwide Academic Personnel office that illustrate salary progression and experience-based increases for a GSR at each salary point on the salary scale. In close coordination with Systemwide Labor Relations and UC Legal, Systemwide Academic Personnel is continuing to develop implementation guidance and campus support resources, which will be shared in the coming weeks.

If you have any questions about the content of this letter, please feel free to contact your local Academic Personnel office. Meanwhile, I send you my thanks (once again!) for your continued commitment to supporting our graduate student employees and maintaining the strength of our academic mission.

Best wishes,



Katherine S. Newman
UC System Provost and
Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

UC Berkeley Chancellor's Distinguished Professor
of Sociology & Public Policy

Attachment

GSR Wages Summary PPT Slides

May 19, 2026

Page 3

cc: President Milliken
Chancellors
Academic Council Vice Chair Scott
Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Nava
Executive Vice President Rubin
Senior Vice President and Chief Compliance Officer Bustamante
Senior Vice President Turner
Laboratory Director Witherell
Vice President Brown
Vice President/Vice Provost Gullatt
Vice President Humiston
Vice President and Chief of Staff Kao
Vice President Henderson
Vice President Maldonado
Vice Provost Varsanyi
Vice Provosts/Vice Chancellors for Academic Personnel
Vice Chancellors for Research
Deputy Provost Lee
Associate Vice Provost Jennings
Associate Vice President Matella
Associate Vice President McRae
Assistant Vice Provosts/Vice Chancellors for Academic Personnel
Chief Human Resource Officers
Graduate Deans
Executive Director Anders
Executive Director Lin
Executive Director Menezes
Deputy General Counsel Woodall
Chief of Staff Beechem
Labor Relations Directors
Director Weston-Dawkes
Associate Director Burnett
Associate Director DiCaprio
Manager Ishaya