



## UCWAZ Calls On Arizona Regents To Move Focus From Administrative Bonuses To Improving Working Conditions

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*Dr. Nataliya Apanovich speaking during public comments at ABOR meeting on Nov. 21*

**TUCSON, AZ** – In the 2025 Arizona state budget, higher education has been targeted for huge cuts of approximately \$21.7 million across all three universities. Funding for Arizona's universities is now more than half a billion dollars less than for the state's Department of Corrections, and represents only 6% of the state budget, down from 15% of the state budget in 1993.

In addition, university administration and decision makers' continuous failed financial oversight at the University of Arizona has led to even more financial problems and instability, the brunt of which are borne by students and the faculty who teach them.

Responding to these developments at the Arizona Board of Regents public comments session on Thursday, three University of Arizona faculty members spoke succinctly about the consequences.



Dr. Beatriz Urrea, an Associate Professor of Practice, noted, “Contingent faculty teach most undergraduate courses. As professionals in higher education, we care deeply about our students’ learning and their learning conditions. Over the past few years, UA administrators have consistently increased undergraduate class sizes. The recent financial mismanagement has exacerbated this trend. Now, the University of Arizona has the highest ratio of students to faculty among our peer institutions, much to the detriment of student learning.”

“At the same time, some contingent faculty are asked to be program chairs and lead committees without proper compensation or a course release, leading to diminished ability to do their teaching work. This is simply unacceptable and exploitative and compromises the quality of education we provide,” she said.

Jaime Fatás-Cabeza, Associate Specialist and Associate Professor of Practice emphasized that “Arizona universities heavily depend on contingent faculty hired on short-term contracts, often for just a year or less. This precarious arrangement, which amounts to an ever-present threat of non-renewal regardless of performance, is not a career builder—it is a coercive tool.

“In addition to this precariousness, contingent faculty salaries fall far below the cost of living in Arizona. Meager raises do not keep pace with inflation. Meanwhile, Arizona K-12 teachers, while also among the lowest paid in the nation, enjoy better pay and working conditions, making high school teaching an increasingly attractive option.

“Abusive contracts, low salaries, budget cuts, and increasing workloads—compounded by the growing demands of technological teaching—threaten our livelihoods, cause high turnover, and erode morale. Higher education no longer feels like a viable career; many faculty see themselves as ‘wounded tigers’ rather than proud Wildcats.”

We at the United Campus Workers of Arizona call on ABOR to hear to the concerns of Arizona’s higher education workers; and to prioritize addressing deteriorating working conditions for faculty and educational conditions for students instead of providing huge bonuses to university presidents and even an ex-president who resigned in light of financial mismanagement.

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#### About United Campus Workers of Arizona (UCWAZ)

UCWAZ, CWA Local 7065, unites Arizona's diverse public higher-education workforce—including part-time and full-time staff, faculty, and students—to address the critical issues we all face. Our mission is to champion and defend the interests and well-being of all university workers and to build social and economic justice in our workplaces. For more information on the United Campus Workers of Arizona, visit [www.ucwarizona.org](http://www.ucwarizona.org).