



Newsletter of UCL UNISON
incorporating
London School of Hygiene
and Royal Veterinary College
FEBRUARY 2006 Issue

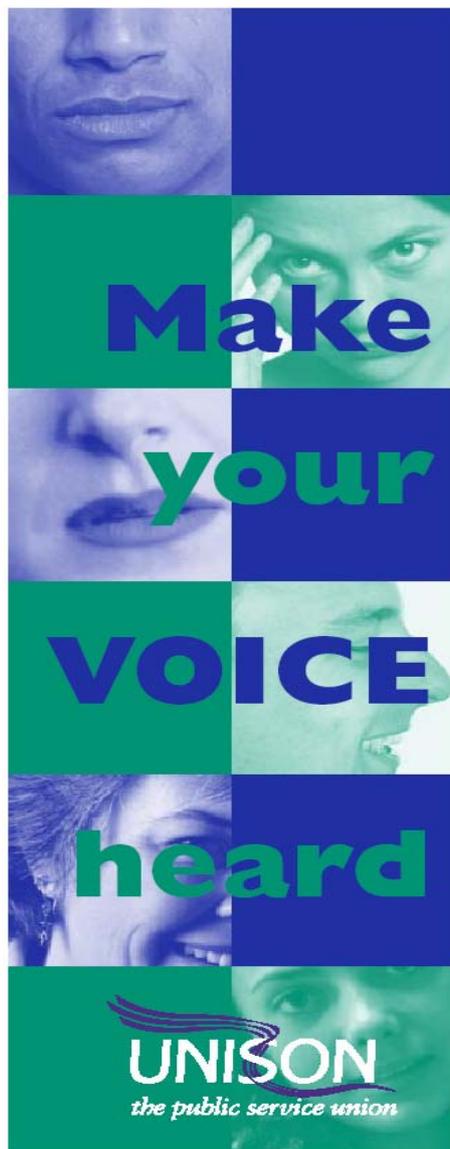
The only news worth reading, from UCL UNISON —Your workmate in the workplace

AGM MEMBERS GUIDE

**YOUR BRIEF GUIDE TO UCL
UNISON'S ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING TO BE HELD on:-**

**Monday
6th MARCH 2006 ,
Cruciform Building LT 2
1-2.30PM**

DON'T MISS IT!
REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED





AGENDA

UCL UNISON AGM Monday 6th March 2006, Cruciform Building Lecture Theatre 2, 1-2.30pm

Welcome to all Members

Ray Harris UNISON Regional Officer to address the meeting

Apologies

1. Minutes of the last AGM (March 2005)
(see next page)
2. Matters Arising
3. Written Reports from Branch Officers
4. Election of Branch Officers
5. Ratification of Shop Stewards
6. Election of Safety Reps
7. Election of delegates to internal and external bodies :-

Safety Committee (2)
Equal Opportunities Committee (2)
Regional Higher Education Committee
(2- must be at least 1 woman, 1 manual grade & 1 clerical grade)
Regional Council (2- must be at least 1 woman, 1 manual grade & 1 clerical grade)

8. Motions
9. Any Other Business

***Close of Meeting
Thank you for attending***

***Refreshments will be available
throughout meeting***

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING– UCL UNISON AGM 2005

UCL UNISON AGM 2nd March 2005, 1-2pm, Room SB1

In attendance: Andre Burbidge, Kenn Brown, Paola Stillone, Simon Warren, Javed Khanzada, Colum McDermott, Marcela Wanasen, Emily Fell, J Orie, Bill Martin, Sandra Cunningham-Sherrett, Nicola Best, Leroy Alade, E Navarayan, Sarah Alleemudder, Cristina Gardini, Stevie Russell, Sharon James, Breege Whiten, Jane Ferrie, Stephanie Smith, Patricia Johnson, Marigold Nunes, Roberto Hertel, Paul Howell, Helen Dunning, Marie Parker, Sofia Viesca-Espira, D J Richardson, Alun Rees, Samuel Atack, Tim Purkiss, Roy Jhubbo, Ann Smith, Hazel Crossley, Joanne Wilson, Emanuel Ade, Oliver Thomas, Maria Cotera, Wendy Biggin (chair), Ray Harris (guest speaker), Tom Silverlock, Maria Trimi-kliniotis

Apologies: received from Rob Connell and Gary Walsham

Address by Ray Harris, UNISON Regional Official

Ray spoke on the Framework Agreement and London Weighting, stressing the importance of all members engaging with the process, not just branch officers, and drawing parallels with NHS Agenda for Change. Ray also spoke on pensions, where Government intend to implement a range of changes by 2008 ; and stressed the importance of members voting in the General Secretary, Political Fund and NEC elections.

1. Minutes of 2004 AGM & 2. matters arising

The minutes, distributed to those present, and published in February newsletter, were put to the meeting for agreement, with one amendment: Alum Rees pointed out he had been present at 2004 AGM. Agreed he should be added to e-mail list.

Agreed as correct record: In favour: 11, Against: 0, Abstentions: 2

AGREED subject to above amendments

2. Written reports from officers. Tabled were: Branch Secretary ; Treasurer incl. accounts ; Womens' Officer ; Membership Secretary ; Black Members' Group

TS spoke to the Branch Secretary report. Expressed concern at membership density of less than 50%, and drew attention to "Recruit a member for £10" scheme. Thanked shop stewards and reps for their contribution and reminder members of HERA rep network. Concern expressed that only 3 persons undertaking casework: thanked WB and JF. Drew attention to the welfare support network available via Welfare Officers. Encouraged members to stand for branch positions, which could be job shared.

There were no questions on the reports which were put formally to the meeting

In favour: 45, against: 0, abstentions 0

CARRIED

3. Election of Branch Officers.

Secretary	– Tom Silverlock	Women's (joint)	– Wendy Biggin
Chair	– Wendy Biggin	Women's (joint)	– Marcela Wanasen
Treasurer	– Andre Burbidge	Recruitment	– Alex Molade
Health & Safety	– Sam Atack	International (joint)	– Ann Johnson
Equalities	– Sarah Alleemudder	International (joint)	– Joan Brennan
Education	– Cristina Gardini	International (joint)	– Colum McDermott
Membership	– Stephanie Smith	Entertainments	– Alex Molade
Manual Staff Convenor	– Cleveland Davis	Welfare (joint)	– Wendy Biggin
Minutes	– Andre Burbidge	Welfare (joint)	– Kenn Brown

All listed officers and the above nominations were elected.

In favour: 45, against: 0, abstentions 0

ELECTED

4. Ratification of shop stewards.

The following were elected by workplace meetings and put to AGM for ratification:

Rob Connell,	Porters
Kenn Brown,	Residences
Wendy Biggin,	Library Services
Oliver Thomas,	Domestics
Andre Burbidge,	LSHTM
Solomon Egerton,	LSHTM

Leroy Alade, UNISON HERA Role Analyst (LSHTM)

Lucy Paul, UNISON HERA Role Analyst (LSHTM)

In favour of ratification: 45, against :0, abstentions: 0

RATIFIED

5. Safety Reps

Bill Martin,	EISD
Sarah Alleemudder,	HCS
Wendy Biggin,	Library Service
Tom Silverlock,	Estates & Facilities
Andre Burbidge,	LSHTM
Sandra Adedapo,	LSHTM
Marcela Wanasen,	Residences
Colum McDermott,	Residences
Sam Atack,	Residences
Adam Horne,	Residences
Marie Parker,	Civil Engineering

6. Delegates to Committees

Committee for Equal Opportunities:

Sarah Alleemudder, Marigold Nunes

Safety Committee:

Sam Atack (one other vacancy)

UCL UNISON Consultative Committee:
(JCC)

Branch Secretary, Equalities Officer,
Women's Officer & Black Members' Officer

UNISON Regional Council :

Oliver Thomas, Wendy Biggin

UNISON Regional Higher Education Committee:

Wendy Biggin, Oliver Thomas

In favour : 45 against:0 abstentions: 0

ELECTED

Pay Framework Agreement (AUT pause)

TS explained AUT had advised their members to fill in, but not sign-off Job Description Outlines (JDOs). They had withdrawn temporarily from negotiations and changed their negotiating team. Some of the disputed items (harmonisation, appeals process) had already been agreed by previous negotiators. Persuading AUT to work jointly with other unions had been difficult and problematic. Amicus also on pause, but this is related to changes to disciplinary and grievance procedures which fall outside the scope of the Framework Agreement. UCL had met AUT separately on several occasions, whereas all UNISON discussions were brought back to members' meetings. A discussion ensued on red and green circling and issues around the AUT pause. It was agreed that a joint members' meeting of the three unions would be arranged. TS thanked HERA reps.

Any other business

The Branch is in negotiation with UCL over implementation of EU Directive on Flexible Working Hours.

Meeting concluded 2pm



UCL BRANCH AGM - *BRANCH OFFICER POSITIONS*

Anyone who is a fully paid up member for at least thirteen weeks can stand for an Officer's Post and, in order to ensure democracy and fair representation, we encourage sharing roles (this can also ease the workload on members).

Branch Officer Posts:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| ☆ Branch secretary | ☆ Retired members officer |
| ☆ Black members officer | ☆ Recruitment Officer |
| ☆ Chair | ☆ Treasurer |
| ☆ Disabilities officer | ☆ Vice-chair |
| ☆ Education officer | ☆ Welfare officer |
| ☆ Entertainments officer | ☆ Women's officer |
| ☆ Equalities officer | ☆ Young person's officer |
| ☆ Health and safety officer | additional posts: |
| ☆ International officer | ☆ Committee of equal opportunities X2 |
| ☆ Manual staff officer | ☆ Regional higher education committee X2 |
| ☆ Membership secretary | ☆ Regional council X2 |
| ☆ Minutes secretary | ☆ Safety committee X2 |
| ☆ Lesbians & gay men's officer | ☆ Shared conference delegates X2 |
| ☆ Communications officer | |

Nominations can be submitted using the form on opposite page or



Nomination of Branch Officers Form



University College London Branch—Incorporating London School of Hygiene and Royal Veterinary College

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - Monday 6 March 2006 Cruciform Building Lecture Theatre 2

I hereby nominate(nominees name)

For the post of(see below for posts)

I confirm I have spoken to the member and she/he is willing to be considered for election

Proposed by (must be current UNISON Member)

Department

Seconded by.....(must be current UNISON Member)

Department

I accept the above nomination Signed..... (nominees signature)

Date

Nominees Full Name.....

Department.....

Address.....

Telephone Number..... Internal extension.....

Email Address.....

Please Note: You must be a fully paid up member for at least 13 weeks in order to nominate or stand

You may submit nominations for more than 1 post - please photocopy this form

We welcome joint or shared nominations for Officer Posts

Officer Posts: (alphabetical order)

- branch secretary
- black members officer
- chair
- disabilities officer
- education officer
- entertainments officer
- equalities officer
- health and safety officer
- international officer

- manual staff officer
- membership secretary
- minutes secretary
- lesbians and gay men's officer
- publicity officer
- Recruitment Officer
- retired members officer
- treasurer
- vice-chair
- welfare officer

- women's officer
- young person's officer
- additional posts:**
- Camden trades council
- committee of equal opportunities X2
- regional higher education committee X2
- regional council X2
- safety committee X2
- shared conference delegates X2

Please return completed forms to Wendy Biggin, c/o UCL UNISON Office, Room 118, Brook House, 2-16 Torrington Place
London, WC1E 7HN NO LATER THAN Thursday 2 March 2006

CELEBRATING OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

UCL UNISON ANNUAL REPORT 2005/06

Our annual report focuses on the work the branch has carried out during 2005.

Improving working lives, making a difference.....

Welcome to UCL UNISON's annual report. This year's report describes the way our union has put all of its efforts and all of its resources together to make a real difference for our members. UCL UNISON is using every opportunity to improve working lives for our members. We use our recruiting, organising, representing and negotiating skills, our campaigning and political lobbying together to win real change. Most of all, we rely on the strength of our members and their activity in supporting and building the union.

2005 was an important year for our branch. The year has (as with 2004) been dominated by our work in the Pay Framework Agreement negotiations and the implementation of the HERA job evaluation scheme.

The results of the HERA evaluation showed us what we had already believed to be the case — that many of our support staff have been undervalued for years. This is reflected in the number of green circled staff, particularly throughout the manual staff. The appeals process is now being undertaken for any staff who feel they have not been fairly graded. The Branch HERA Reps have shown their value during this process, and have contributed enormously to UCL UNISON delivering a high quality service to our members. As a result of the numerous PFA presentations, we have also managed to elect new workplace contacts in more outlying sites such as the Institute of Orthopaedics and the Institute of Ophthalmology.

In addition to PFA/HERA, the Branch has been involved in negotiating amendments to the sickness absence, flexible working, and capability policies, amongst others. We have also negotiated new grievance and disciplinary procedures along with a new Work Life Balance Policy which sees improvements for members in terms of being compensated for time worked over contracted hours. We have also represented dozens of members in disciplinary and grievance cases.

The complete outsourcing of the Refectory to Scolarest was the subject of a UNISON campaign which led to many new members within the Refectory and non-committee members becoming involved in gathering signatures for our "Save Our Refectory" petition and the lunchtime lobbying of the Refectory.

The Branch has also been involved in the "Basic Skills" and "ESOL" projects which are available to manual staff, and proving to be very successful.

A number of UCL departments are undergoing "restructuring" exercises, and the Branch has achieved success in ensuring the number of redundancies are kept to a minimum, and that any staff being made redundant are treated fairly and achieve the best package possible.

There are still areas in need of improvement; for example, our membership density is still only 30%, so that's a challenge we need to meet in the coming year.

We hope this report gives a sense of what your union has achieved in the past year and how it is working together to deliver for our members.

Tom Silverlock
Branch Secretary

Jane Ferrie
Asst Branch Secretary

Wendy Biggin
Branch Chair

BRANCH DEVELOPMENT AND ORGANISATION PLAN

Branch...UCL

Date.....January 2006

Review Date.....December 2006

Organising Objective	Organising Initiative	Organising Target
Recruitment	<p>General Recruitment activities (see below)</p> <p>Regular Stalls</p> <p>Workplace Meetings</p> <p>Safety Inspections</p> <p>Notice boards</p> <p>Monthly Newsletter</p> <p>Regular all member E-mail notification</p> <p>Regular Update of web site www.uclunison.org</p> <p>More Recruitment Activities</p> <p>Pursue the issue of staff lists with UCL</p> <p>Social Activities</p>	<p>100 members</p> <p>At least 4 annually</p> <p>At least one in each section per year</p> <p>Undertake an inspection every 2 months and train more safety reps.</p> <p>Ensure update of notice-boards. Encourage more workplace reps</p> <p>Continue with monthly news- letter. Distribute to members and non-members</p> <p>Continue with regular e-mail updates.</p> <p>Continue with regular updates of web site</p> <p>Recruitment events to be organized by Branch Recruitment Officer; recruit joint Recruitment Officer</p> <p>Look at ways in which to distribute recruitment material to members and non-members</p> <p>Recruit joint Social Events Officer</p>
<p>Organisation: Identifying and developing stewards</p>	<p>Election of stewards and Workplace reps in all areas</p> <p>Filling of all Officer Posts</p>	<p>10 new reps/Officers</p> <p>Hold more workplace meetings</p> <p>Encourage members to stand for posts by advertising in newsletter on web and by e-mail and encouraging members to attend the AGM. Invite UNISON Regional Secretary to AGM as a way of getting more members to come</p>

BRANCH DEVELOPMENT AND ORGANISATION PLAN (cont....)

Branch...UCL

Date.....January 2006

Review Date.....December 2006

Member Participation	<p>Encouraging more members To attend branch meetings</p> <p>Workplace Meetings</p> <p>Continue promoting Self Organisation</p>	<p>Attain quorum on regular Basis >27</p> <p>Continue to review and provide incentives for members to attend meetings, including providing funds to cover child-care costs.</p> <p>At least one in each section per year</p> <p>Continue to promote self-organisation</p>
Effective Negotiation and Representation	<p>Development of negotiation skills and encourage more reps to take responsibility of representation and negotiation</p> <p>Continue to press for more facility time</p>	<p>Encourage more members to stand as reps and take training courses. We now have a new Education Officer. Ensure that education is a priority in the branch</p> <p>Continue to press for more facility time. Enter into negotiations to continue the full-time secondment after the framework agreement negotiations are completed</p>

Organising Objective	Potential Areas for Development
Recruitment	RVC, ICH & LSHTM Domestics, Maintenance & Security Off- Site departments
Organisation: Identifying and developing stewards	Training of reps General trade union education Participation in meetings by members both union and with management Mentoring
Encouraging Member Participation	More workplace meetings Attendance of branch meetings Meetings orientated to specific issues Social activities Communication
Effective negotiation and Representation	Training for reps More reps Briefings Member participation in consultation processes (e.g. ballots)

Black Members Group Report (Branch AGM 6 March 2006)

The Black Members Group (BMG) has continued to function without an Officer or a Convener this year. Although attendance numbers have been a disappointment, the group have been successful in achieving a number of things this year. Below is a brief outline of some the activities carried out through the year.

Campaigns

Movement for Justice/ Alex Olowade

The group have continued to support the Alex Olowade's case where a black worker was sacked by Lambeth Council for speaking out against institutional racism at work. Alex won the public enquiry and still continues to fight his campaign. Contact Movement for justice for further details.

Web : <http://www.m4j.ukhome.net/>, Tel: 07976 916 956 / 07930 302 263

Email: movement4justice@hotmail.com, Post: PO Box 27497, London SW9 7HU

BMG Meetings: morning sessions

The group introduced early morning meetings at the beginning of the year for members who were unable to attend the lunch-time sessions. The morning sessions take place each alternative month at 8.30am with the lunch-time meeting taking place at 1pm during the months in between. The group will continue alternating the times of the monthly meeting as they feel that they have been a success.

National Assembly Against Racism

The BMG continue to support the NAAR.

UCL's Race Equality Working Groups

The BMG continue to take a main part in the work groups. The race equality review group meets 3-4 times a year

Working with UCL Equalities Project Officer

The BMG have worked closely with UCL's Equalities Project Officer and have invited her to past meetings.

UNISON Black Members Regional Committee

The BMG has a member on this committee. The committee meets regular.

BMG Conference 2006

Four delegates attended the BMG conference this year. It was the first time for one of the delegation who felt that it was a good experience. Although, smaller numbers were noted at the conference this year, the delegation felt that the debates were worthwhile. The group will continue where possible to send members to the annual conference.

BMG Christmas Social

The BMG Christmas social in December was held, for the first time this year with the Womens' Group. A group attended a Caribbean restaurant in Camden Town. Both groups thoroughly enjoyed the social.

Future meetings The following meetings are scheduled for 2006:

Date	Time	Venue
Wednesday 29 th March	1-2pm	Cruciform Building, (room to be arranged)
Wednesday 26 th April	8.30-9.00am	Anatomy Building, room B08
Wednesday 31 st May	1-2pm	Cruciform Building, (room to be arranged)
Wednesday 28 th June	8.30-9.00am	Anatomy Building, room B08
Wednesday 26 th July	1-2pm	Cruciform Building, (room to be arranged)
Wednesday 30 th August	8.30-9.00am	Anatomy Building, room B08
Wednesday 27 th September	1-2pm	Cruciform Building, (room to be arranged)
Wednesday 25 th October	8.30-9.00am	Anatomy Building, room B08
Wednesday 29 th November	1-2pm	Cruciform Building, (room to be arranged)

Disabilities: Ann Tucker/UCL UNISON Branch Disability Officer

I became the branch disability officer in July 2006. My first year has proved to be very interesting. I attended The Higher Education Branch Seminar which took place in Birmingham last November which gave me my first taste of meeting committed trade unionists.

Aims for this coming year.

I have been in contact with Claire Jamieson, Chair of the UCL Committee for People with Disabilities. Claire Jamieson and Marion Hingston Lamb jointly chair the Disability Equality Scheme Working group. I have requested that I be sent copies of the minutes of each meeting, so that there is no conflict of interests and none of our disabled members' interests are compromised. I also intend to attend the National Disabled Members Conference in the autumn.

Education: Cristina Gardini/Education Co-ordinator report

I have been on the Education Co-ordinator role for nearly one year. Achievements, plans and activities I have been involved in so far:

- Completed the Learning Rep course in June – July 05 and planning to attend courses specifically designed for Education Co-ordinators which are held once a year in Spring.
- Attended two informal meetings with the regional educational branch to discuss role's aims and objectives.
- published and distributed the roles and tasks relating to the post of education co-ordinator as outlined in the UNISON Code of good branch practice.
- Published and distributed the Trade Union Education courses which are advertised twice a year in the Union booklet.
- Designed and distributed an evaluation/feed back form to help gather information on training needs for those members that have been already on courses and/or would like to register for more.
- Published and distributed the aims and objectives of the Learning and Organising Services (LAOS) which co-ordinates education and training for UNISON activists and members.
- Took an active role during the "Save the Refectory" campaign.

Learning Rep: Wendy Biggin/UCL UNISON Learning Rep

The Branch has been involved in the Basic Skills and ESOL Projects, and has worked closely with the Staff Development and Training Unit.

Although the Basic Skills project was successful, the providers wished to alter the way the project courses were run in that staff were expected to attend an external institution for the courses.

Both SDTU and UNISON opposed this, and the project is now still in the process of attaining another provider. UNISON is the likely to be one of the key funders.

Unfortunately there was quite a high dropout rate. Reasons given were the room being changed for every training session, and the feeling that the course was too "basic". All course participants had been assessed via the National Test level 1 before starting the course.

The ESOL Project is hugely successful, with many manual staff member showing an interest in these courses.

The courses run at 6.00am and 11.00am in the mornings and staff are given paid time off to attend.

Camden "Working Men's College" are providing trainers for the course, and are using UCL as an example of the value of ESOL in the workplace.

One problem has been a gender imbalance in applicants for the course, and there are concerns that many part-time women workers are unable to make the times that courses run. Due to Equal Opportunities legislation, we may be able to gain additional funding so that courses can be run at more "female-friendly" times.

Membership: Stephanie Smith/Membership Secretary

Monthly breakdown for the year 2005:

Month	Number Joined	Number Left (by notification)	Gain/ Loss
January 2005	0	7	-7
February 2005	7	9	-2
March 2005	8	6	2
April 2005	6	5	1
May 2005	5	4	1
June 2005	7	3	4
July 2005	12	5	7
August 2005	9	19	-10
September 2005	3	6	-3
October 2005	7	7	0
November 2005	16	6	10
December 2005	10	0	0
Total:	90	77	13

During the year 2005 we saw **90** members join and **77** members leave the branch. By the end of the year a total of **574** members were recorded on branch files.

Although the HERA process prompted more staff to join UNISON, this year the branch did not recruit as many members. Last year 108 members joined and 99 left the branch with a total membership of 550.

Recruit a member campaign

Only 3 members took up the recruit a member campaign this year. This is a good way of getting members involved with helping to recruit new members to the branch.

Well done to all those who introduced new members to the branch, keep spreading the word!

New home or work address

Members should be aware of the change of address form which can be found on the UNISON web page <http://www.unison.org.uk/help/changeofaddress.asp> Please use this form to notify us of any changes to your home address. Members can also contact me direct with their home or work address changes.

Thanks to all of you who have notified me of staff that have left UNISON and UCL. This has been very useful in helping to keep the membership file as up to date as possible. Please continue with this approach.

New membership application forms

Please continue to add my pre-address labels to the back of membership application forms. This helps with the prompt process of new applications. Forms that are sent to the UNISON freepost address take several weeks longer to process compared to forms that are sent directly to me. Completed application forms should be sent to: **Stephanie Smith, UCL UNISON Membership Secretary, C/o Dept of Epidemiology and Public Health, 1-19 Torrington Place, London WC1E 6BT**. The envelope can be sent via the college internal mail system. I am happy to send out pre-printed labels where required.

Treasurer Report: Andre Burbidge/Branch Treasurer

Funding for 2005 was assessed by UNISON centrally at the rate of £900 per calendar month (based on calculations of subscription receipts at March 2004). This represents 21% of the subscriptions members pay. The Branch attracted a recruitment award of £500, and earned £193 on monies invested in the Building Society. As recommended by UNISON, we use a mutual society run for the benefit of its members.

Inevitably, the calculation of expected income is not an exact science, and the branch needed to repay £796 of funding back to HQ. This is in contrast with previous years where we have received additional funding from the previous year.

In terms of expenditure, Branch administration refers to those items necessary to fund core functions, and depreciation of equipment. It also refers to Officer expenses, usually travel to remote sites. The Branch bought a new laptop at the cost of £875 which will be depreciated over 2 years ; the depreciation costs also include the printer and allied equipment used to produce the newsletter.

We picked up members as a result of the Refectory Campaign, which included an education event for members on their rights under TUPE, as well as campaign meetings and the summer lobby. Newsletters and other information produced as Pay Framework negotiations unfolded also attracted new members.

Conference expenditure is higher than we would have liked, although UCL UNISON is one of the few branches with active Self-Organised Groups. It proved difficult to secure budget accommodation in Glasgow for the National Conference, and we had pay for the BMG Conference in 2006 from 2005 funding due to the timing of conference

Branch donations include Breast Cancer BACUP (including funds raised by the Women Members' Group), South Asian Support Network, Argentina appeal ; affiliations include Colombia Solidarity, Cuba Solidarity, Labour Research Department.

We received £866 from UNISON Welfare. UNISON Welfare releases funds for successful claims, which are then paid via the Branch.

I look forward to seeing you at the AGM and will be happy to take questions on the audited accounts.

Welfare: Wendy Biggin/Branch Welfare Officer

2005 was the "Year of the Volunteer" and UNISON Welfare in particular encouraged members to volunteer for trade union involvement, or to participate in fundraising events; at the Welfare Seminar/AGM I was invited by the Regional Welfare Committee to speak on what it is like to be a trade union Activist.

This year showed the highest number of Welfare applications ever, most being successful, whether it be financial assistance debt counselling, or a convalescent holiday. Most applications were from manual staff, and were ethnic minority members, which suggests that we are reaching the right people, i.e. those most in need.

I have attended workshops on debt counselling, assisting members with disabilities (e.g. seeking financial assistance for necessary equipment, etc.)

For the first time, the Welfare Officer role was included in the UNISON rulebook which means that (theoretically at least!) I can gain time off to deal with cases.

In 2006 I aim to increase the applications to UNISON Welfare twofold (this year the applications trebled), and to work with other officers to highlight the importance of this membership benefit.

Womens: Carol Blackburn and Wendy Biggin/joint Women Officers

Carol Blackburn: I joined as a member last year in 2005 and became a Joint Women's Officer in February 2006. Although I have not been in the post long I did manage to attend the UNISON Women's National Conference in Gateshead, Newcastle on 16-18 February 2006. This confirmed what I understand the issues for women are, and I have managed to bring back some in-depth reading, which will keep me out of mischief for a while. My key aim this year is to learn what the post involves and to attend relevant training courses (hence, the brief note).

Wendy Biggin: This year casework with women shows there are issues around maternity leave and women retaining their responsibilities on returning to work. There have also been a number of sexual harassment cases all of which were resolved informally. Many women came to UNISON or help due to problems with carer's leave.

The women's group had a difficult year this year, with no group meetings for several months during the summer. Happily, in September the meetings started to take place again regularly, and we have raised issues relating to sufferers of domestic violence being treated with sensitivity by Line Managers (we have achieved a paragraph about it being added to the HR Policy on Leave for Personal and Domestic Reasons, although HR are still not keen on having a special policy for this widespread social problem).

In addition we are still fighting for UCL women's toilets to be have sanitary wear dispensers; dispensers were discontinued due to alleged vandalism, although Ucl Union, LSHTM, and most other HE institutions in the area have them with no apparent problem.

During Breast Cancer Awareness Month (October) we raised £167 for a breast cancer charity (Breast Cancer Coalition).

Last year I attended the FEM '05 Conference at Sheffield University and am now on the organising committee for this event.

With the election of joint Women's Officer Carol Blackburn we hope to carry out even more activities than took place this year. Carol and I (along with women's group member Marie Parker) attended the National Women's Conference in Gateshead; attendance was a cause for concern, and the Conference Chair asked all attendees to encourage women to attend the Conference next year. This is now a priority for us...

This year tighter legislation on sexual harassment has made it easier for women to take action against "office lechers"; the Gender Equality Duty legislation comes into force next year and women are invited by the CEO to participate in the consultation process. I am attending a briefing on the legislation next month.

Carol Blackburn and myself are attending Capital Woman at the beginning of March, and we are also attending an Andrea Dworkin 1 day Commemorative Conference in April.

The past year has seen the issue of a woman's right to choose once again coming into the consciousness of the media, and our political leaders; there was a plan to reduce time limits from 24 to 22 weeks. Camden UNISON Women's Group organised a meeting for all Branch self-organised women's groups and women's rights groups from local comprehensive schools. Attendance was very high, and the group pledged to work with Abortion Rights to fight against the reduction of time limits. The threat to undermine a woman's right to an abortion is still very real, and in autumn 2005 there was a public meeting at the House of Commons to discuss issues. Many UNISON women (including myself) attended and had a lively debate on the matter. The government has so far shelved its plans to make any changes to time limits, but the campaign group is still in contact via email in case of the need for further action. UNISON National Women's Conference passed a motion reaffirming the support for a woman's right to choose, and UNISON has just published a new leaflet giving information on the subject.

I am HE delegate to the Regional Women's Committee and the Regional Diversity Forum (which looks at the promotion of Self-Organization), and am on a working group on proportionality within UNISON branches.

Womens: Wendy Biggin/joint Women Officers (cont.....)

I also am on the Equalities Seminar Project which is a working group to decide on the subject matter of the Regional Equalities Seminar which is due to take place in the Autumn.

Objectives for the coming year are:-

- Developing the Branch Women's Group, and raising equality issues for women via this group
- Getting more women to attend the National Women's Conference
- Continuing requests for a special domestic violence policy
- Working with the Ucl Union women's Officer for events around International Women's Day (March 8th)
- Being involved with local and National Women's Rights organizations (e.g. London Feminist Network and the Fawcett Society) and getting actively involved in their campaigns.

Equality: Sarah Alleemudder/Equalities Officer

Since the last year, equality issues have been high on the agenda. At UCL, the job evaluation process and the implementation of the Pay Framework Agreement to bring equal pay for equal work for all staff, has been going on and the branch has been actively involved in the negotiations with the employer.

The result of the Staff Survey undertaken by UCL to assess its policies and their impact on staff, was published. The survey achieved a response rate of only 31%. On equality issues, 59% disabled, 49% black, 27% women, a third of all Asians (38% in support roles) had experienced discrimination. Harassment and bullying have been for some on grounds of sexual orientation, disability and religion. There was a failure on the part of managers to deal with bad behaviour and bad practice at the outset and letting things get out of hand. The report revealed some concerns on issues of equal opportunities which UCL would be taking measures to address.

This year's report on Harassment and Bullying showed a higher response rate than in previous years and that support, academic related and manual staff were more likely to suffer harassment and bullying. The Staff Harassment and Bullying Policy is being revised following consultation with the unions. In the Summer, there will see a major campaign of awareness for harassment and bullying across UCL. UNISON and the other unions will be invited to take part.

Through the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) with Human Resources, UNISON has been able to monitor HR policies and will continue to work closely with HR on new and existing policies. Alongside the policy on Flexible Working, a policy on Work-Life Balance has been introduced and will be effective from 1 May 2006, which aims at giving employees the opportunity to work and meet responsibilities in their private lives. Although the policies present the employer as friendly and caring, they have an element of rigidity which can be detrimental to employees who take up the options, e.g. not being able to go back to their original terms and conditions and the change in their working patterns becomes permanent.



A CLEAR CASE OF HARASSMENT.

In October 2006, the Age Discrimination Act will come into force. Research shows that age discrimination is widespread in UK organisations. People suffer age discrimination through job applications and in promotion exercises. UNISON will be consulted on this new policy with HR and will be monitoring the policy along with all the other HR policies.

I will continue to attend the Committee for Equal Opportunity and the Joint Consultative Committee with Human Resources to ensure that equality issues are addressed properly.

WHO'S WHO IN UCL UNISON BRANCH

Branch Officer Posts:

★ Black Members Officer	(VACANT)	unison@ucl.ac.uk
★ Chair	Wendy Biggin	w.biggin@ucl.ac.uk
★ Communications Officer	Cinzia Polese	c.polese@ucl.ac.uk
★ Disabilities officer	Ann Tucker	ann.tucker@ucl.ac.uk
★ Education officer	Cristina Gardini	c.gardini@ucl.ac.uk
★ Entertainments	Alex Molade	unison@ucl.ac.uk
★ Equalities	Sarah Alleemudder	s.alleemudder@ucl.ac.uk
★ Health and safety	Sam Atack	s.atak@ucl.ac.uk
★ International	Joan Brennan	unison@ucl.ac.uk
★ Manual Staff Coordinator	Cleveland Davies	unison@ucl.ac.uk
★ Membership	Stephanie Smith	s.smith@public-health.ucl.ac.uk
★ Minutes	Andre Burbidge	andre.burbidge@lshtm.ac.uk
★ Lesbian, Gay , Bisexual and Transgender	Gerry Cummings	g.cummings@ucl.ac.uk
★ Retired members officer	(VACANT)	unison@ucl.ac.uk
★ Recruitment Officer	Alex Molade	unison@ucl.ac.uk
★ Secretary	Tom Silverlock	t.silverlock@ucl.ac.uk
★ Treasurer	Andre Burbidge	see above
★ Vice-chair	[VACANT]	
★ Welfare (joint)	Wendy Biggin	see above
★ Women Members (joint)	Wendy Biggin	see above
★ Women Members (joint)	Carol Blackburn	c.blackburn@ucl.ac.uk
★ Young person's	[VACANT]	

Shop Stewards

Library Services	Wendy Biggin	see above
★ LSHTM	Andre Burbidge	see above
★ Porters/Post	Rob Connell	r.connell@ucl.ac.uk
★ Student Residences (joint)	Marcela Wanasen	unison@ucl.ac.uk
★ Student Residences (joint)	Yassin Benserghin	y.benserghin@ucl.ac.uk
★ Security	Isaac Aresa	unison@ucl.ac.uk

★ Refectory	Mary Guidera	unison@ucl.ac.uk
★ ICH Porters	Ivan Beckett	unison@ucl.ac.uk

Workplace reps:-

★ HCS	Sarah Alleemudder	see previous column
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Safety Reps

★ Civil Engineering	Marie Parker	m.parker@ucl.ac.uk
★ Library Services	Bill Martin	bill.martin@ucl.ac.uk
★ Estates and Facilities	Tom Silverlock	see previous column
★ HCS	Sarah Alleemudder	see previous column
★ Residences	Sam Atack	see previous column

Accredited Learning Reps

★ Sarah Alleemudder	see previous column
★ Wendy Biggin	see previous column

Delegates to Committee for Equal Opportunities

★ Sarah Alleemudder	see previous column
★ Wendy Biggin	see previous column

Health & Safety Co-ordinator

★ Sam Atack	See previous column
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HERA Reps

Sarah Alleemudder, Andre Burbidge, Hazel Crossley, Jane Ferrie, Wendy Biggin, Maria Cotera, Marie Parker, Bill Savill, Rob Connell

If you have any news or views you would like to see in **UNI news**, send them to:

unison@ucl.ac.uk

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