



SOLIDARITY

NEWSLETTER - NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE

Message from Your Union: Updates

We haven't been sleeping!



(Copyright—The BCRD)

Inside this issue:

New Initiative Grant & Fellowship Revival	1
Compensation Review	1
Grievance re Reduction in Health and Pension Benefits	3
Professors at the Top of the Scale	3
Negotiations on Hurricane Melissa	3

Special points of interest:

- Compensation Review Update
- New Initiative Fund & Fellowship Award Update
- Hurricane Melissa Response

This is your update on i) New Initiative Grant and Fellowship revival, ii) Compensation Review iii) Grievance re the Reduction in Health and Pension Benefits for New Staff Members, iv) Professors at the Top of the Scale, v) Negotiations on Hurricane Melissa Response.

Revival of the New Initiative Grant and Research Fellowship Programme

A revival of the New Initiative Research Grant and Research Fellowships was an item in the Collective Bargaining Agreement for 2023-2026.

The agreement states that funds should have been identified and these grants and fellowships advertised a year ago. The agreement states that successful applicants should have received the grants and fellowships during the 2025-2026 academic year. This has not happened. The University, and particularly the Mona Campus, is in breach of this item in the agreement. The Union is actively pursuing this matter. The aim is for these grants and fellowships to be advertised as soon as possible and members to benefit in the 2026-2027 academic year.

Compensation Review Negotiations? - We Are Almost There

After three years of agitation, beginning in early 2023, it looks like we are at the point where we may soon start negotiations. See letter below from Professor Densil Williams, Mona Campus Principal.

NEWSLETTER - NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES
MONA CAMPUS

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL

Senate Building, Mona, Kingston 7, Jamaica, W.I.

Tel: (876) 927-2781 / (876) 927-1660 Fax: (876) 927-2156 Email: principal.office@uwimona.edu.jm

Pro Vice-Chancellor & Principal, Professor Densil A. Williams, BSc (Hons), MSc (UWI), PhD (Manchester)

February 6, 2026

Professor Paul Brown
President
WIGUT (Ja)
WIGUT Office
The University of the West Indies
Mona Campus

Dear Professor Brown:

Re: The Opening of Compensation Review Negotiations with the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service

Further to your letter of January 28, 2026, in relation to the captioned matter, and my response of January 30, 2026, I now further advise that the Minister of Finance and the Public Service has invited the Management of The UWI, Mona Campus to a meeting on February 19, 2026. They have stated specifically that they would like to meet with the Management only at this point.

It is the Management's intention at that meeting to secure a mandate from the Ministry in order for us to recommence negotiations with WIGUT (Ja).

We commit to engaging the Unions immediately thereafter. We wish to thank WIGUT for your patience as we reaffirm our commitment to bring this matter to a speedy and amicable resolution.

Yours sincerely,

Densil A. Williams
Pro Vice-Chancellor and Principal

NEWSLETTER - NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE

The Union has replied asking that negotiations begin no later than the first week of March 2026. We have impressed upon the University Management that we are looking forward to an early favourable conclusion of negotiations. We stated that for our members, this is a matter of the utmost urgency.

At this time, we must stay alert, stay mobilised and be ready support our position in the coming negotiations.

The Proposal by the Mona Campus to Reduce Health and Pension Benefits for New Staff Members

The proposal to reduce the university contribution to health and pension for new staff members was fiercely resisted by the Union membership. Industrial action was taken on June 02, 2025. This resulted in the Ministry of Labour conciliation services stepping in. The matter was subsequently submitted to them as a grievance. The University has, as of now, not implemented its proposal.



Solidarity (image: John Hain)

The conciliation services of the Ministry of Labour are yet to report back to us and to the University.

Professors at the Top of the Scale

The Union took the University Centre to the Ministry of Labour on their failure to implement item 2 of the 2023-2026 collective bargaining agreement. This had to do with a commitment to come up with a proposal to deal with professors who end up being stuck at the top of the professorial scale. The University, by way of a letter from the University Registrar, admitted fault and has initiated a process by which the matter can be settled quickly. More on that once we have met with the University to negotiate this matter.

Melissa Response Negotiations with the University

The Union entered negotiations with the University in December over adjustments to the terms and conditions of service which needed to be made in response to the crisis produced by the passage of Hurricane Melissa. Below is the letter sent by the University to the Union arising from those negotiations.

Do You Have a Question or a Comment? Please Contact us:

W I G U T (J a m a i c a)

The University of the West Indies,

P.O Box 155

Mona, Kingston 7

Phone: 876-970-4596

Email:

wigut@uwimona.edu.jm

Visit us at:

<http://wigut.uwimona.edu.jm>

NEWSLETTER - NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

MONA, JAMAICA, WEST INDIES

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL

Senate Building, Mona, Kingston 7, Jamaica, W.I.

Tel: (876) 927-2781 / (876) 927-1660 Fax: (876) 927-2156 Email: principal.office@uwimona.edu.jm

Pro Vice-Chancellor & Principal, Professor Densil A. Williams, BSc (Hons), MSc (UWI), PhD (Manchester)

December 23, 2025

Professor Paul Brown
President
West Indies Group of University Teachers (Jamaica)
P.O. Box 155, Mona
Kingston 7

Dear Professor Brown:

Re: The UWI Mona/WIGUT (Jamaica) Meeting – December 11, 2025

Further to our meeting on December 11, 2025, during which items of concern related to the passage of Hurricane Melissa were outlined in the Union's letter dated November 10, 2025, I now write to confirm the outcome of the meeting, as set out below.

As accepted by the Union, given that a number of the issues outlined in your letter of November 10, 2025, are already addressed by way of executed collective agreements, it will not be necessary to enter into an Emergency Collective Bargaining Agreement at this time.

Having reviewed and discussed the seven items outlined in the letter, the following were agreed:

1. Request for additional psycho-social support for the Montego Bay campus.

As stated by the Administration, there is an established counselling service at the University Health Centre, bolstered by the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), implemented in 2024. These services are already providing psycho-social support to our staff. In recognition of the fact that the Counsellor stationed at the Western Jamaica Campus (WJC) has been impacted by Hurricane Melissa, the Administration is prepared to consider an additional counsellor from the western region to the pool under the EAP.

2. Provision of at least one Starlink connection at the Montego Bay campus.

We note that internet and electricity have been restored to Montego Bay, with fast progress being made in restoring not only Montego Bay, but the rest of the county of Cornwall as well.

We agree that redundancy and future proofing of ICT options are important as we move forward in an environment of increasing climate volatility. The University will be

NEWSLETTER - NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE

Page 2/
Professor Paul Brown

December 23, 2025

guided by the advice and recommendations of our MITS unit as to the required standards and provisions needed, of which satellite-based internet may be an option.

3. Widening the coverage of the Book Grant and the Study and Travel Grant.

As a result of the adoption of the extended coverage within the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) for the use of the Study and Travel Grant that was previously agreed under the COVID-19 Agreement, the parties settled that there is no need to further widen the coverage of the Book Grant or the Study and Travel Grant. The University will take steps to clarify that reimbursement of payments for internet services obtained from Starlink to support working from home should be treated similarly to reimbursements paid for other internet services. Members of staff who are in doubt about this matter, or any other provision outlined in the aforementioned grants, are encouraged to reach out to the Employee Success Division for guidance.

4. Grant to members of staff who have suffered home damage from Hurricane Melissa.

Shortly after the Hurricane, the Campus formulated a multi-pronged approach (Mona Cares) to assist its employees. To this end, it has established a Fifteen Million Dollar Fund to provide grants of up to Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000) per employee. This is managed by a broad-based committee that includes a union representative. It was, therefore, agreed that this matter has been adequately addressed.

5. Minimum working conditions for staff.

The University reminded the Union that its Montego Bay campus is currently closed to staff and students, and no return-to-work instructions have been given. Additionally, the Campus is mindful of its obligation to provide its employees and stakeholders with a safe environment to operate within.

The Estate Manager and his team have already conducted an assessment of the damage sustained to the Mona Campus, including its facilities in Western Jamaica. Consequently, the University has mobilized funds and the necessary technical and professional support needed to carry out repairs where required. These repairs are expected to be done in time for the start of Semester Two in January.

6. Deadlines for submissions.

Members of staff affected by Hurricane Melissa and its aftermath (lack of water, electricity and telecommunications), who have entitlements and benefits which must be applied for by specific deadlines in a four-month period after October 28, 2025, shall have those deadlines waived to accommodate late applications. The Union specifically raised the matter of employees who are up for consideration in the Evaluation and Promotion cycle in 2026, and are expected to submit their curriculum vitae by May 31, 2026, being granted an extension of time. This was raised in particular with respect to staff at the Western Campus.

The University agreed that employees who are so affected are expected to submit their curriculum vitae no later than June 30, 2026. In addition, employees who were so affected by Hurricane Melissa, and are unable to apply for the use of their Study and Travel Grant by January 31, 2026, and are retiring in August, September or October of 2026, must apply to use the Grant no later than April 30, 2026, and utilize same by June 30, 2026. This would allow the employee some time to submit their Study and Travel Grant report before retiring. These will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. This is also

NEWSLETTER - NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE

Page 3/
Professor Paul Brown

December 23, 2025

to be noted as a one-off exercise and will not be repeated in 2026-2027.

7. Delaying the start of Semester Two 2025-2026.

The University is cognizant of the time pressures and constraints of members of staff. We have tried our best to balance the needs of all our stakeholders. This is why teaching was initially scheduled to end on December 19, 2025, but will now end on December 23, 2025 (4 days of marking time lost). In addition, the deadline for the submission of Semester One results was January 5, 2026, but has been shifted to January 12, 2026 (7 days of marking time gained). Furthermore, larger course exams, as best as possible, were scheduled between December 5 and 12, 2025, which is early within the assessment period. Teaching for Semester Two begins on January 19, 2026, and the Board of Examiners Meetings will be adjusted, having regard to the tight timeline between the deadline to submit grades and the start of teaching.

Specifically for our Western campus, teaching and learning activities for Semester One will be completed between January 5 and 16, 2026. In addition, alternative assessments will be conducted between January 19 and 25, 2026. Teaching for Semester Two could begin on January 19, 2026, within the context that much of the delivery is done by Adjunct Faculty. The Campus Registrar has called a meeting with the relevant Deans and the Director of our Western campus to further explore the arrangements.

The University asked that the Union be aware that there are significant concerns in adjusting dates for Semester Two as faculty and students have indicated plans for the summer break and therefore our approach is to have as little disruption as possible to the calendar.

The final point raised by the Union is that of the urgent negotiations with the Ministry of Finance on the compensation review. The Registrar indicated that the University has been in dialogue with the technocrats at the Ministry of Finance to get the negotiations going, being cognizant of the profound impact Hurricane Melissa has had on the time, energy, and finances of the country and the Ministry of Finance in particular. The Registrar indicated that he anticipated a meeting would be called in short order, given the needs of the Ministry to finalize a budget moving into the Government's new financial year.

Sincerely,



Densil A. Williams
Pro Vice-Chancellor and Campus Principal

Copy: Dr Donovan Stanberry, Campus Registrar, The UWI, Mona
Mr Colin Ebanks, Director, Employee Success Division