

Where we can improve

1. Organizing

- Many organizers are burned out and tired.
 - We appreciate everyone's effort and we know everyone is tired. The same is true for us. Our timeline is too fast for the first contract. There could have been more time between each escalation step.
 - We could slow things down and build up power again in Spring. We have 6 months till the final of next Spring. The main thing people want for better is wage increase, which will take place next Fall.
 - For some Chinese student organizers, we are active in department phone/text banking & walkthrough, and translating union updates into Chinese, and dealing with all sorts of questions people send us on Wechat (similar to this slack). We are also burned out. But we think we can do better for the Spring. Because many younger PhD students told us they want to get involved.
- It is difficult to get a higher turn out for strike. People are not strike ready.
 - There is little time between the announcement of the strike date (Nov 13rd) and the actual strike (Nov 28th). Many organizers are ready for the strike, but many union members don't. Two weeks may not be enough for many people to prepare and save money. We also may not have enough time for one-on-one conversation.
 - After the ratification, we can spend several months getting our union members more ready to strike. We can encourage people to start saving from winter break.

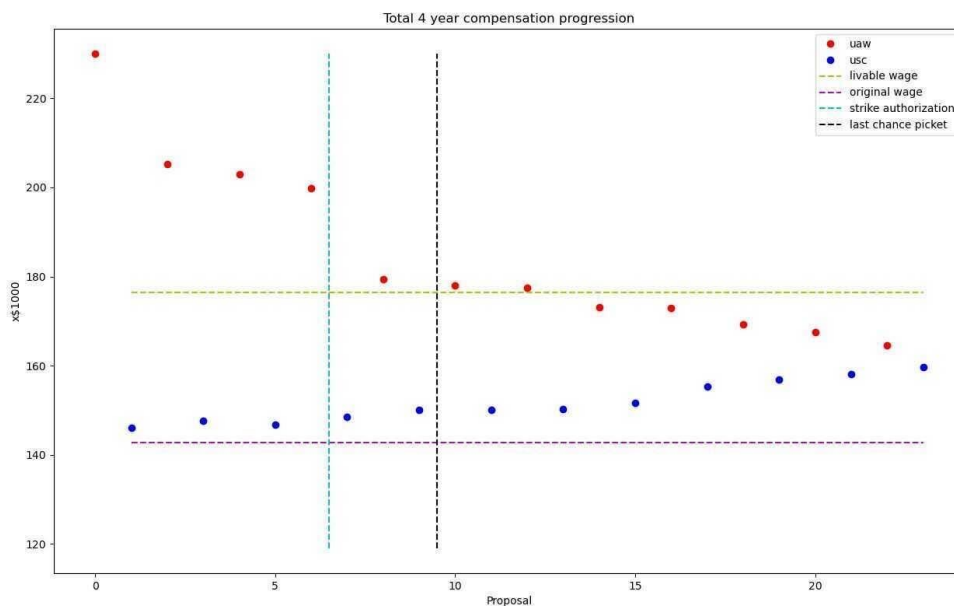
2. Decision making

- After the minimum wage in our proposal was dropped below 43k, we notice many people are less willing to go on strike.
 - We definitely need to move from our initial position at 50k. But we could send out surveys about people's expectations before it is too low to motivate people to go on strike.
 - When we have to drop our wage, we could discuss it with border union members in an open way and even vote on it. The wage proposal had mainly been discussed at departmental congress. The meeting is open to every union member, but only very few people know we've had two congress meetings.

3. Better involvement

- There is little attendance at our bargaining sessions / events.
 - We think people will become more interested in getting involved after seeing this result. They should now realize how important it is for their future years in USC.

Timeline of wage proposal



Context:

In spring 2019, a few Chinese international GSW started to mobilize Chinese students to form a union. In spring 2022, they volunteered to create a chinese wechat public account and translate many documents about forming a union from english to chinese and publish those articles. Additionally, they shared those articles in different wechat groups that are composed of Chinese international GSWs coming from different cohorts and programs. The biggest one has over 400 students. They also started the international student committee in GSWOC, to organize and advocate for international students.

Although organizers have been adding people to the union mailing list and encouraging them to join various union events, there are still many recently admitted 1st year PhD students left out. They got to know the union after the tentative agreement was reached. And they are very unhappy about being imposed a 3.5 year long contract, but haven't got a chance to get involved.

Recent Timeline

- **Nov 13rd: First year minimum 43k, following year increase 7% [[proposal](#)]**
 1. They found many GSWs were concerned that the bargaining team(BT) lowered the first year minimum from [45k](#) to [43k](#) (on Nov 7th). People were worried that BT may lower it more. (Not just international students, also at department level)
 2. They went to the bargaining session to talk with BT members, asking BT not to lower our wage proposal.

3. They don't think it was taken seriously, as one BT said haven't heard anyone in the department saying 43k is too low.
 4. During lunch break, they discussed with another BT member about doing a survey on wage. Meanwhile, they were translating the strike FAQ into Chinese.
- **Nov 15th**
[Survey](#) & the strike FAQ sent out on 3 (or more) WeChat groups.
 - **Nov 16th**
 1. Over one night, 50 people filled it in.
 2. The BT member asked for the survey result. And it was shared.
 - **Nov 19th - 20th: First year minimum 42k (9 month), 43.5k (12 month), following year increase 6.5% [[proposal](#)]**
 1. They shared insight and the survey to GSWOC slack.
 2. BT said they posted in the wrong channel and violated the slack guideline, also mentioned it is not an official way of feedback.
 3. BTs warned the person who posted it, saying they had violated the slack guideline several times. If it happens more, BT will restrict that person's permission to post on slack.
 4. BT announced to replace the name of the international student committee and the email list. Days later, the email list was taken over and archived.
 5. People are concerned about whether the wage increase is worth striking.
 - **Nov 21th: First year minimum \$41,412 , following year: 6% and 5.5%. [[proposal](#)] (\$35,700×1.16)**
 1. This [petition](#) was created. Not by international students, but many international students signed it.
 2. More and more people are concerned if the wage increase is worth striking.
 - **Nov 22th**
 The petition was delivered to BT.
 BT didn't propose any wage proposal during bargaining on that day.
 - **Nov 26th: TA reached: First year minimum 40k , following year 3%.**