# UC Santa Cruz Academic Workers Set to Strike Over Worker Rights and Free Speech Allegations



Academic workers at the University of California Santa Cruz are set to strike on Monday over alleged worker rights and free speech violations. The union, representing 48,000 academic workers at UC's 10 campuses, has authorized "rolling" strikes after 79% of members voted in favor this week. The strike aims to address alleged unfair labor practices linked to pro-Palestinian protests. UC officials have called the strike illegal, citing a no-strike clause in the union’s contract ratified in 2022. Internal investigations are underway at UCLA regarding police actions against protesters.

In a separate event, the United Auto Workers (UAW) union is awaiting the results of a vote on whether workers at a Mercedes-Benz plant near Tuscaloosa, Alabama, will join the union. The National Labor Relations Board will announce the decision this afternoon. The UAW has been focusing on organizing auto workers in the southern U.S., recently securing wins at a Volkswagen plant in Tennessee and a deal with Daimler Truck in North Carolina. The union has dedicated $40 million to organizing efforts through 2026 as the electric vehicle sector grows. Alabama's Governor Kay Ivey opposes the union and has proposed legislation against companies recognizing labor unions.