

What can we do to defend ourselves?

- Talk to your colleagues and other workers. Find out how the cuts will affect them and if there's anything that can be done about it.
- Share information with others about how the cuts are affecting you and your workmates e.g. by posting anonymously on the blog or by emailing the Sussex Stop the Cuts account
- Join the union and tell them what you want the union to do. Push for co-operation between the union branches on campus, as well as between staff and students.
- Push for and get involved in a cross-campus campaign uniting staff and students so that collective decisions and actions can be undertaken by those affected by the cuts.
- Find out what's happening at other universities and organise in solidarity with all education workers - this is an attack on education workers nationally.
- Stand up for yourself, your workmates and students; demand decent working conditions; and don't put your faith in bureaucrats be that the VC and other senior management, Senate or Council. We should make the decisions that affect our lives ourselves.
- We're strongest when we use collective direct action - this can take the form of work-to-rule; go-slows; walk-outs; or strikes.

Upcoming Action:

Protest outside the Senate meeting on Wednesday 9th Dec. Assemble at 12.45pm in Library square, then march to Bramber House.

Mass meeting on Thursday 10th Dec for all those affected by the cuts to come together, co-ordinate action and discuss ways forward. Meet at 5.30pm in Mandela Hall, Falmer House.

Our Jobs under threat

Defending Ourselves Against Cuts

Across the country, education is under attack. In the past month, job losses have been announced in many places, including 200 at the University of Cumbria, 130 in Manchester MMU, £35m cuts at Leeds university, and of course 116 redundancies at Sussex. Politicians from all parties are united in wanting to make ordinary people pay the costs of capitalism in crisis, and they are starting with higher education.



But not only are cuts being made to universities, the very nature of such institutions is being remodelled. The government are using the economic crisis to press ahead with the marketisation of higher education - which means a view of students as 'clients' and teaching staff as 'service providers', increasing privatisation of services, an infringement on academic freedom, and the rise of managerialism. In this way universities become businesses to be run competitively in opposition to the values which universities are meant to embody.

To implement these destructive policies, the government relies on



university senior management. Careerist to the core, these bureaucrats know their job is to impose cuts that will make us work longer hours for less money ; to

overcome resistance from students and workers ; and to explain these harmful changes as beneficial and inevitable. Since few people are prepared to do this dirty work, they are paid 6-figure salaries, and advance in their careers if they succeed.

If senior management had the interest of Sussex University at heart, they would fight government policies and oppose the budget cuts. Instead they are undertaking to destroy Sussex as we know it. Michael Farthing and his colleagues have little attachment to this university. They have been here for less than 2 years, sitting in Sussex House, fiddling the numbers, spin-doctoring their proposals and inflating their emoluments and self-importance. To these bureaucrats, we are mere human resources and students are just a numerical measure of income streams. It is therefore not surprising that they hold on to the realities of teaching and research is tenuous, and that they are ignorant of the fact that their plans will destroy the very basis of what makes Sussex such a great university.

We education workers can see that the proposed plans will be a disaster, because we know exactly how this university functions: we are the ones who do the teaching, the student support, the cleaning, the admin, the research, the catering, the technical support , the child care - we do everything that is needed to keep this university going. So as education workers we understand that it is impossible to increase student intake while simultaneously sacking those academics who do the teaching, sacking the support staff who maintain the running of the institution and destroying student advice and child care. Senior management can't understand that we do our jobs well because we care about the people we work with and because we take pride in what we do. This motivation is undermined when many of us now have to worry about losing our jobs and those who remain will have to work that much harder to make up for it.

Yet as education workers we run this university day in day out, and this is what gives us power – **we are the university**. There is no way

uni bosses can impose these cuts on us against our will. VCEG know this and they are scared to death that we get organised. Their childish attempt to stop an anti-cuts meeting last week shows this clearly. Of course they'd like us to take part in their sham consultation or put our faith in representative bodies like Senate – as the VC demonstrated last week these are entirely toothless and designed to waste our time and energy. Instead, education workers and students need to stick together, and work together across departments, union branches, pay scales and other divisions. The mass meeting on Thursday 10th December must become the start of education workers and students organising together against the VCEG's cuts. We need to show the reality of the situation: **they need us, but we don't need them.**

Some of us may hope that all this might just go away, or that someone else may lose their job. Make no mistake: we will all be affected, those who get to keep their job will have to work harder, under worse conditions, without affordable childcare facilities. This will be the first battle in a long war on ordinary people's livelihoods, so let's stand up for ourselves and fight these cuts. Though nobody can tell if we will win, the simple fact is that the stronger our resistance now, the more restrained their attacks will be in future .

Inform yourself:

- <http://defendsussex.wordpress.com/> (sussex stop the cuts campaign blog with links to individual campaigns)
- <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=209057155759> (facebook group)
- <http://twitter.com/stopsussexcuts> (twitter account)
- <http://groups.google.co.uk/group/sussex-stopthecuts-discuss> (discussion list)
- <http://groups.google.co.uk/group/sussex-stopthecuts> (announcements list)
- <http://www.sussex-ucu.org.uk/sucu/> Save Sussex education cross-union campaign)