



protecting academic quality

**United Academics Announces Full-Time Faculty Contract Campaign Kickoff:
“Working for the Good of UVM”**

Kickoff Rally and Press Conference:

Monday, Jan. 27 at 1:15 PM

Steps of Bailey-Howe Library, UVM Central Campus, Burlington

Contacts:

Denise Youngblood, President, United Academics
denise.youngblood@uvm.edu 802-656-4497 (office) 802-238-8785 (cell)

Beth Mintz, Lead Negotiator, UA Bargaining Team
bmintz@uvm.edu 802-656-2163 (office)

United Academics, UVM’s faculty union, will mark the start of negotiations for the 2014-17 full-time faculty contract with a rally showcasing the wide variety of essential workers who keep UVM running. The roster of speakers includes representatives from across this spectrum, from professors and lecturers in classrooms, research labs, and libraries, to administrative assistants, maintenance staff, and food service workers.

According to Beth Mintz, sociology professor and lead negotiator for the faculty, “In meetings across campus, the Provost and Deans have stated that maintaining benefits, or the least salary increase, even below inflation, would necessitate cutting courses and staff positions. But in those meetings, the Administration did its math incorrectly: for example, by counting financial aid twice, both as a loss in revenue and as an outlay, and by calculating the ‘cost’ of replacing courses taught by a faculty member who takes a research leave, even though the majority of these courses are not in fact offered while the professor is away.”

But more importantly, says history professor and UA President Denise Youngblood, the basic premise of the Administration’s claim—that fair treatment of faculty will be borne on the backs of UVM’s other key workers—is simply not true.

“Past experience has shown otherwise. Going back to UA’s first contract in 2003, the benefits and protections negotiated by faculty have become the model for other workers across campus: faculty and staff, union and non-union. What we achieve in bargaining will benefit all workers at UVM—and also help to raise academic quality by attracting and retaining the best faculty, at a time when UVM seeks to enhance its reputation. We are in this together.”

Meanwhile, as UVM administrators plead poverty in advance of faculty negotiations, the compensation awarded to these same administrators continues to skyrocket. From 2001-2007, UVM’s spending on executive pay rose 152% (i.e. to 252% of its 2001 level).

Since then, a new President, Provost, and several Deans have been hired at salaries between 30% and 43% higher than their immediate predecessors', while several ex-administrators continue to draw extraordinarily high salaries, far more than their teaching colleagues. Just these administrative salary increases, which far outpace any growth in UVM's student population or overall budget, would be enough to pay for many of the recently threatened cuts in instruction and staffing.

One of the faculty's chief goals is to improve job security for the almost 1/3 of full-time faculty who are not eligible for tenure. Last year, many lecturers saw the terms of their appointments shortened, and their workload reduced from full-time to "no less than 75%"—a change which can slash their benefits. The administration says this was done in the name of "administrative flexibility," despite the fact that some of these lecturers have taught full-time, regularly, for decades. Other faculty are teaching full-time loads of 6-8 courses but are counted as part-time workers (with substantially lower benefits) simply because their courses are in different administrative units across the University.

Another concern is administration overreach in setting UVM's teaching and research agendas without adequate faculty input. Says Mintz, "We have many upper administrators, including our President and Provost, who are new to UVM, who do not and have never taught a single course here. Yet these administrators are trying to push through profound changes in programs and in allocation of resources with only token attempts to consult the Faculty Senate, which has authority to 'review and establish policy...on all curricular matters, research, and scholarship' according to the constitution."

United Academics Full-Time Contract Bargaining Team is:

Beth Mintz, Chief Negotiator (Sociology, CAS)
Jane Alsofrom (Medical Laboratory & Radiation Sciences, CNHS)
Sheila Boland Chira (English, CAS)
Nick Danigelis (Sociology, CAS)
Anis Memon (Romance Languages & Linguistics, CAS)
David Shiman (Leadership & Developmental Sciences, CESS)
Steve Finner (Consultant to UA)
Brian Larson (AFT Vermont Field Representative)