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## **UNITED ACADEMICS NEWS RELEASE**

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### **UVM faculty to host author of "Wannabe U: Inside the Corporate University"**

*Part of nationwide "Take Class Action to Save Public Higher Education" April events*

Burlington, VT -- United Academics, the union representing more than 800 faculty at the University of Vermont, will participate in the national week to Take Class Action to Save Public Higher Education by hosting a talk by University of Connecticut sociologist Gaye Tuchman, author of "Wannabe U: Inside the Corporate University."

In her book, Dr. Tuchman tells the story of a state university obsessed with chasing status at the expense of students' educations. Her study uncovers the troubling trends at public universities--including the University of Vermont--as a key step toward determining what can be done to save public higher education for all.

Dr. Tuchman's talk, free and open to the public, is scheduled for 4 pm, Thursday, April 14, in 314 Dewey Hall. Co-sponsors are Students Stand Up and UE Local 267, representing UVM's service and maintenance workers.

"We believe that students and the community all have reason to share our concern that the Administration at UVM is shortchanging education," said David Shiman, president of United Academics and professor of education at UVM.

"Even as the University's student body, tuition, and budget have all grown by more than 40 percent in recent years, the share of the budget devoted to academics has been shrinking," Shiman said. "Faculty feel the squeeze with bigger classes and scores of advisees, and students feel the squeeze as they pay higher tuition yet have less access to and mentoring by long-term faculty."

The UVM event is just one of scores that will take place, from California to Massachusetts, as college and university faculty take public action to defend state colleges and universities against deep cuts, steep tuition hikes, and privatizing measures that reduce access and quality. The April actions are a prelude to the launching of a national campaign by faculty organizations planned for mid-May.

"Tuchman is a very accomplished cultural sociologist who has written extensively on both media and gender and who has recently turned her critical eye to the changes that public sector universities are experiencing," said Beth Mintz, sociology professor at UVM.

"Wannabe U, the institution that Tuchman studied, is following the same playbook that UVM is pursuing," Mintz said. "She writes, for example, that much to the faculty's surprise, class size doubled after changes that had been agreed to in their faculty senate were implemented. Wannabe U is several years ahead of UVM on their path and, thus, Tuchman has much to tell us about our future."

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