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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UVM Part-Time Faculty Negotiations Reach Impasse *Part-time faculty seek access to benefits and job security*

Burlington, Vt: Following nine months of contract negotiations, the University of Vermont administration and United Academics, UVM's faculty union, reached a state of impasse on Thursday for a new part-time faculty contract. Part-time faculty at UVM are currently working under the terms of a contract that was set to expire in June 2021, and nearly 18 months later, they are still operating in a state of uncertainty based on pre-pandemic working conditions with unprecedented inflation and cost of living increases.

The part-time bargaining unit at UVM includes over 100 lecturers, as well as part-time research, clinical, extension and library faculty. **"We are seeking basic job security and access to benefits for part-time faculty at UVM,"** explained Brian Tokar, a part-time lecturer in environmental studies at UVM for 14 years. **"Many of us have been teaching for ten years or more, offering a wealth of knowledge and professional experience to our students, and still have no job security, nor access to fair benefits."**

The union seeks four weeks of prorated paid parental leave for part-time faculty, who currently have no access to this benefit. **As a result, said union lead negotiator Katherine Elmer, "We have members who have had to forgo a full semester of teaching and income because they are pregnant, and we have members who have had to return to work just days after having a baby."**

Other benefits sought by the faculty union include consistent application of UVM's annual appointment provision, which is intended to provide job security to lecturers with seniority. Part-time faculty teach essential courses, but most are hired on a semester-by-semester basis, regardless of their years of teaching experience and demonstrated excellence. State universities from Massachusetts and Connecticut to California commonly offer year-long and multi-year contracts to experienced part-time faculty members.

The union also seeks modest employer retirement contributions for part-time faculty – currently, UVM offers none – and a wage increase that more closely reflects the current rate of inflation. **“I have taught every semester at UVM for 27 years, and UVM has never contributed toward my retirement,”** said Clyde Stats, a part time faculty member in music. **“Having recently retired from a position at another institution which included a matching employer contribution to retirement, it has become abundantly clear to me how important this benefit is. The Vermont State Colleges offer this benefit to part-time faculty; it’s only right that UVM part-time faculty should have this benefit as well.”**

The parties have one further session scheduled with a federal mediator to assist with negotiations. The next stage of negotiations after mediation involves a fact-finder to determine fair contract terms.

About United Academics: UVM United Academics represents over 700 full-time and 100 part-time faculty at UVM and is affiliated with AFT Vermont, which represents 5000 higher education and healthcare professionals in Vermont, and AAUP: unitedacademics.org.

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