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For immediate release:

## **UVM Faculty Union Charges Administration with Unfair Labor Practice**

*Burlington, Vt:* United Academics, the faculty union of the University of Vermont, has filed a formal Unfair Labor Practice complaint against the UVM administration. The union filed the charge with the Vermont Labor Relations Board in response to the UVM administration's decision to increase faculty workload without fulfilling the required bargaining process.

In addition, United Academics filed a grievance with the UVM Provost contesting the UVM administration's failure to compensate faculty for substantial time needed for training and preparation, including withholding agreed-upon compensation for summer work.

For background: Last May, UVM announced that it would require all faculty members to transition to a new Learning Management System by Fall 2023. Both the administration and the union recognized at the time that the trainings and the transition of all courses to a new platform would require significant additional work and time from faculty members.

Bargaining teams from United Academics and the UVM administration began the process of negotiating fair terms for the impact of this transition. After the administration's team repeatedly showed up to scheduled meetings with unreasonable offers, United Academics requested, and the administration agreed, to proceed with the assistance of a federal mediator.

Then, after the mediator had been contacted, the administration suddenly claimed there was no need to bargain the transition impact, suggested the union could grieve this uncompensated change in workload, and refused to attend next-step mediation sessions or participate further.

In addition, contrary to fundamental principles of union collective bargaining, the administration informed UVM deans and department chairs that faculty members might

negotiate their own transition time and compensation individually. However, to date, nearly all faculty members' requests to negotiate transition time or compensation within their departments have been ignored or denied.

"This UVM administration precluded the possibility of a collective and equitable solution, put the responsibility on individuals to negotiate for themselves, and then denied individual requests," stated United Academics president, sociology professor Eleanor Miller. "This is an intentional attempt to undermine union solidarity and to further demoralize a faculty already seriously demoralized," said Miller.

**About United Academics:** UVM United Academics represents approximately 700 full-time and 100 part-time faculty at UVM and is affiliated with AFT Vermont, which represents 9000 higher education and healthcare professionals in Vermont, and AAUP.

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