

Dear members of the United Academics full-time unit,

Below you'll find our negotiating team's reports from the six mostly day-long bargaining sessions held since mid-May. You'll also find earlier bargaining reports at [www.unitedacademics.org/negotiations.html](http://www.unitedacademics.org/negotiations.html). As always, our chief negotiator, Ross Thomson ([ross.thomson@uvm.edu](mailto:ross.thomson@uvm.edu)) is happy to hear from you with any responses, concerns, or ideas for the team.

Also at the end of the negotiations update, you'll find a statement jointly developed by UA and the administrations concerning salaries for FY09 as negotiations continue.

UA is continuing to work hard for improved faculty compensation and working conditions and to safeguard faculty governance and autonomy. Please let your colleagues who have not (yet) joined UA know what we're working for and what we've achieved. If they'd like a membership card, they can drop us a note at [info@unitedacademics.org](mailto:info@unitedacademics.org).

Best wishes for the remaining summer months,

Nancy Welch  
Professor, English  
Communications Co-Director

Negotiation Update, Sessions 14 through 19

We have had six, mostly day-long sessions since last reporting to you. After 19 total sessions, we have come to agreement with the administration on four articles and we are closing the gap on some other important issues. We are just beginning to address salary and benefits and we are making every attempt to complete an agreement without going to impasse, so the members can consider it for ratification in the fall. In light of the fact that our first two contracts both went to impasse, however, we cannot be confident that we can achieve this goal.

Since our last communication, we have tentatively agreed upon Articles 9 (Right to Information) and 17 (Personnel Files) and here we have won the right of access to all information in personnel files necessary for the union to meet its collective bargaining responsibilities or to administer the collective bargaining agreement. This we see as an important victory.

In addition, we have moved much closer to agreement on a Conflict of Interest (CoI) and Conflict of Commitment (CoC) policy. The university has agreed to treat conflict of interest and conflict of commitment separately and, for the former, faculty would continue, as is now required under the current contract, to report all outside employment obligations so that each may be either ruled out as a conflict or handled under a conflict management procedure. For CoC, the university has moved toward our position that it is the responsibility of the faculty member (rather than the administration) to manage his/her external activities so that they do not interfere with UVM responsibilities.

We have also moved closer on Article 14: Appointments and Evaluations: After much discussion, the parties will probably agree either to retain or slightly modify much of the current language. The University has withdrawn the worst features of its proposal that faculty would have to document “student learning outcomes” in RPT decisions And they appear poised to accept our suggestions for improving the criteria for evaluating teaching. The major remaining issue involves whether or not the deans can promulgate RPT guidelines without the approval of the faculty. UA strongly opposes turning this power over to the deans. The Administration appears willing to agree with our proposal that the probationary period can be extended more than once for child-rearing purposes.

We have discussed Professional Development (Article 21) and while we have moved a tad closer on dollar amounts, we believe that this will be negotiated with other “money” items. In the meantime, we are trying to come to agreement on how written department guidelines for the distribution of these funds are created.

Recent discussions of benefits have been informational: We have focused on the reasons/justifications for the administration’s proposal to have the faculty pay a larger share of medical premium costs for current faculty (proposed increases of 1-2.5% of the premium) and for faculty retiring under this contract (increase from the current 20% of the premium to 50%). We have proposed increases in dental coverage, as well as vision and hearing aid benefits, and of the three, we are most optimistic about dental. We have detailed our proposals for paid, semester-long parental and family-care leaves; the Administration has expressed some interest in parental leaves.

We discussed Salaries (Article 18) in three recent sessions. We presented data to substantiate the need for significant salary increases to help attract and retain faculty. We’re approaching the time when we and the Administration will begin packaging changes in the “money” articles. We are still far apart on Workload (article 16). TO DATE, The Administration has shown no interest in any of our proposals to alleviate workload pressures.

\*\*\*

UA and the Administration have agreed to send out this jointly developed statement regarding salaries:

FY09 salaries (and beyond) for faculty represented by United Academics (Full-time unit) will be based on the results of on-going contract negotiations and terms of the new Agreement once it is ratified. In the meantime, faculty will receive the same 9-, 10- or 12-month base salary as they had in the academic or fiscal year that just ended.

As soon as the contract ratified, we will be in contact with you about the salary provisions for FY09.