

Negotiating Team Update – Sessions 2 & 3

In sessions Friday, Feb. 15, and the following Monday, the team for United Academics' full-time faculty and the administration presented proposals on remaining articles other than salaries, benefits, sabbaticals and a new article the administration plans to propose at a later date on Conflict of Interest and Commitment. The main points of the articles that were presented are summarized here.

If you'd like to read and critique the contract language on any of these issues, please e-mail Ross Thomson, our Chief Negotiator, at ross.thomson@uvm.edu.

We also urge all departments to send a representative to this Friday's (February 29) Delegates Assembly meeting with Ross Thomson, our chief negotiator, 3:30-5, in the Dean's Conference Room, Bailey-Howe Library. Contact Nancy Welch (nwelch@uvm.edu or info@unitedacademics.org) if you don't know the representative for your department or would like to volunteer for this role for your colleagues.

Appointments and evaluation of faculty. The sides contrasted greatly on these basic issues. We argued for longer contract terms and greater job security for faculty in the libraries and extension and for lecturers. We also wrote language to ensure that only criteria in RPT guidelines are used in RPT decisions, and to allow probationary faculty to extend the probationary period more than once for reasons of medical, parental, or family care responsibilities.

The administration proposed fundamental changes. The most significant is that the Deans, with approval by the Provost, will make final decisions about RPT standards. The faculty will be consulted, but would have no decision-making powers. They also proposed that college guidelines be established. Criteria on teaching would include familiarity with pedagogy and evidence about "student learning outcomes."

Workload. We proposed limits on class size, limits on the overall student-faculty ratio, a minimum share of tenure-track faculty among all instructional faculty, and the formation of a faculty investment fund, which would hire tenure-track faculty in departments where instructional obligations impaired educational quality or the capability of faculty members to complete their teaching, research, and service obligations. The administration proposed some changes to be able to reduce faculty FTEs and to enable them to schedule library faculty at their will and on weekends.

Professional development. We proposed \$2,500 per year; the administration suggested no change in the current \$875.

Grievance and Discipline. Our proposals aimed to make grievances procedures fairer and to establish a clearer definition of just cause in discipline cases.

Harassment. We proposed that any form of harassment by a supervisor be made grievable.

Union Security. We proposed that all bargaining unit members who are not union members pay an agency fee.