Your Bargaining Team has been working diligently over the last month researching and drafting articles to craft our Collective Bargaining Agreement. On Friday, March 27th, after several days of back and forth, UNM administration finally agreed to convene our seventh bargaining session online via an encrypted and secure video platform. The session began with the Administration’s proposal of new ground rules for online bargaining but then after a 90 minute caucus, they arbitrarily ended the meeting.

Before each side left to caucus to discuss the proposed rules, we submitted four proposals for review: 1) Safe Working Conditions, 2) Progressive Discipline for Just Cause, 3) Grievance and Arbitration Procedure, and 4) Shared Governance.

Based on the topics of these proposals, particularly Shared Governance, we invited as our guests a number of leaders from faculty governance. Despite the ground rules agreed upon by both sides at the beginning of the year allowing for experts to be called, the administration never returned to the online meeting. Rather, after a 90-minute wait, the administration withdrew from the bargaining session, falsely citing we were in violation of the closed meeting rules by having representatives of UNM’s faculty governance present. In effect, the administration denied us the opportunity to give our response to the presented online ground rules, to formally present our four new proposals, and to receive a response to our March 6th proposal on fiscal year 2021 salaries.

To this last point, the administration stated instead that they are going to wait for further legislative action, potentially putting our salary raises at risk. Our next bargaining session is scheduled for Thursday, April 2nd. We hope the administration will return to the table to bargain in good faith.

If you have questions or concerns or would like to help us move our union forward, please email us at info@uaunm.org. And you can always visit us at https://uaunm.org/. Be safe. Be well.
I am a native *nuevomexicana*, an *hija* of New Mexico born and raised, and an adjunct faculty member at The University of New Mexico. I believe adjunct faculty members should receive a raise in pay for several reasons. First, we must receive the same academic training as full-time faculty members. Second, adjunct faculty members are currently ineligible for benefits that full-time faculty receive. Third, adjunct faculty require the same responsibilities as full-time members. Fourth, adjunct faculty members spend the same amount of time (or more) preparing for each class.

I, as an adjunct faculty member, always attempt to obtain more classes to teach, but my request is seldom granted. I possess no benefits and struggle to pay my bills. My student debt is huge, and I was required to pay the same amount of money for my education as full-time faculty. Because of my low income, I am unable to purchase necessary items such as a reliable vehicle or a new computer necessary and required for my work.

Teaching is my passion, and my studies form my main academic credential. I prefer to work in a position that allows me to use my studies. In the past, I taught up to four classes per semester. As I worked toward my doctorate degree, this aspect changed and now that I am fully credentialed, I am allowed only one class per Fall and Spring semester, two courses per year.

Sometimes, I am able to teach a field class in the summer if the department budget permits. My understanding is that some of this previous work is currently assigned to full-time faculty. I tried teaching at the branch campuses, but the pay disparity offered only half of what the Albuquerque campus offers. While I would like to give back to the community in which I grew up, I cannot live on branch campus wages.

Sometimes I like to offer short term and intersession courses but this is currently not offered to me. My classes always reach capacity, and instead of offering a second section, UNM students are placed on a waiting list and are not allowed the opportunity to register for my class. Large classes, especially those with graduate students, require much work on the instructor’s part, and a second section would compensate me for time and effort, not to mention opportunity for the students and equitable distribution of students who may wish to switch for the second class instead of remaining in the first section.

In the end, I possess credentials, but I feel the heavy disparities regarding respect, pay, and the availability to grow and contribute more to the university. I’ve been an adjunct faculty member with my Master’s degree since 2002. In 2012, I received my doctorate degree. Any help from my union is much appreciated not only by me, but for the many adjunct faculty members struggling with many of the same issues at the University of New Mexico.
As we adapt to the new and ever-changing situation brought about by the COVID-19 virus, new challenges arise. Not only in our teaching and our parenting, but also in the way we access and utilize our union, and how we mobilize our solidarity.

Our lives are migrating to online platforms everywhere. Now more than ever, the grievances we have as faculty, the needs we have as people and as employees, the concern we have for our students, and the expectations we have of our institution have become even more apparent, more dire, and more urgent.

Far from distracting or detracting from our union, this crisis has made us stronger. Members have come together to help one another! From social gatherings (albeit via Zoom, or Skype, etc.) to help with making the transition to online teaching, UA-UNM is here for us! This is OUR space. We have assembled a resource page for parents including links and information for education and entertainment as well.

We invite you to join us in the AFT Academics webinars for help with the online transition, and as always we have been hard at work fighting for the things we need from our institution. Don't hesitate, reach out! Our union is a resource, and a platform for change, and a place to advocate for your needs and the needs of our campus communities. Social distancing must not mean social apathy: the fight is still on, and as we struggle to cope with COVID we are—always—stronger together! **Unity! Power! Voice!**

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**April 2020 Events**

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**Member Leader Spotlight: Peninah Wolpo**

Coping with Covid: **We are Stronger Together!**

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Every week, UA-UNM will be sharing new online resources and tools from our national affiliates, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), giving us hundreds of thousands of allies in times of crisis.

You can find lists of resources and information about the best ways to help your students (and yourself) as we transition to a remote learning model for the rest of the semester online by clicking here.
Adjuncts are essential to the university. We teach nearly 30% of the classes at UNM and are all too often left out of department, school, college, and university level discussions about the students we teach and the trajectory of our campus.

Adjunct starting pay has not increased in nearly ten years. Starting pay for many adjuncts has not increased in ten years. Despite doing excellent work for the same pay, our earnings per class now purchase about $825 less than they would if we had received cost of living adjustments, due to inflation since 2009.

Adjuncts at Branch campuses are treated unfairly with respect to their counterparts at Main. At UNM Main, a 3-credit class is considered .25 FTE while at the Branch campuses, the same course is considered .20 FTE. UNM administration thinks teaching the same class (that students get full credit for) is less at the Branch campus than it is at the Main campus. To teach full-time at UNM Main you would have to teach four classes, but at a Branch campus you would have to teach five classes, and likely for less pay compared to Main. This is especially insulting to faculty who travel between Main and other campuses to teach. In many cases, hard working faculty are being paid less money to teach the exact same material. The only difference is location.

The number of hours an adjunct is expected to complete all of their teaching duties is ridiculously low. Federal guidelines deem it “reasonable” that a 3-credit class can be taught in 7.75 hours a week. This is inclusive of pre-semester class prep, lecture, discussion, lab/studio prep, lab time, studio time, teaching time, grading, meeting with students outside of office hours, office hours, outcomes assessment and all other duties in the line of teaching. How many hours a week do you spend completing all teaching duties per class?

Adjunct pay is too low for the excellent work we do. Starting pay can be as low as $2300 per class. Adjuncts on Branch campuses would have to teach 8 classes a year (for $18,400 a year) to qualify for benefits. For a family of three, this would put them below the federal poverty guidelines.

Adjunct working conditions are student learning conditions. We deserve equitable pay across all campuses! We deserve a reasonable living wage and cost of living adjustments!