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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 20, 2007

United University Professions, New York state reach tentative contract agreement

United University Professions (UUP), the union that represents 34,000 academic and professional faculty on 29 State University of New York (SUNY) campuses, has reached a tentative agreement on a new four-year contract with New York state.

UUP Acting President and Chief Negotiator Frederick G. Floss hailed the terms of the agreement and thanked Gov. Spitzer for his support.

“This agreement meets our goal of a fair and equitable contract for all our members-- academic and professional, full-time and part-time,” he said. “The agreement provides competitive salaries and strong benefits that will attract and retain top-quality faculty.”

The agreement would replace the contract that expired July 1, 2007.

Highlights of the tentative pact include the following salary increases:

- 3 percent retroactive to July 1, 2007 or September 2007;
- 3 percent beginning in July 1, 2008 or September 2008;
- 3 percent beginning in July 1, 2009; or September 2009; and,
- 4 percent beginning in July 1, 2010 or September 2010.

The agreement runs from July 2, 2007 to July 1, 2011. It features other benefits, including:

- A one-time \$500 salary advance to employees who will receive permanent or continuing appointments, or a second, five-year appointment at their current campuses during each year of the contract;
- A lump-sum \$500 payment to part-time employees who have worked at least eight consecutive years at their current campus;
- Location stipends increasing up to 3,026 for employees in the downstate area and up to \$1,513 for employees in the Mid-Hudson region;
- Discretionary salary increases of 1 percent in each year; and
- A \$250 contribution per eligible employee by the end of the contract to the UUP Benefit Trust Fund, which covers dental and vision benefits.

There will be no percentage increases in employees' share of the cost of health insurance premiums, with only small increases in their co-pays.

The agreement also features a Pre-Tax Transportation Program that would reduce employee commuting costs, and a continuation of support for the Employee Benefit Fund, Inconvenience Pay, and Labor Management Committees.

The union's 19-member Negotiations Team, led by Floss, worked diligently with the state to come to an agreement.

"The Team visited each campus prior to the start of negotiations to gauge members' concerns," Floss said. "The terms of this agreement reflect those concerns, and we are pleased the state heard them at the bargaining table."

The agreement is subject to ratification by the union's membership.

UUP represents 34,000 academic and professional faculty on 29 New York State-operated campuses, and is an affiliate of New York State United Teachers, the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association and the AFL-CIO.