

PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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UArts Faculty Union Ratifies First Contract

Three-Year Deal Will Bring Raises, Work Stability to Over 300 Educators at University of the Arts

PHILADELPHIA, PA – FEBRUARY 14, 2024 – Following three years of negotiations and over 70 bargaining sessions, unionized faculty at the University of the Arts (UArts) have voted to ratify their first union contract. 89% of union members voted in the ratification process, with an overwhelming 99% approval. The agreement will expire in June, 2026.

“This contract will realize double-digit raises for most faculty at UArts, with adjunct faculty seeing average gains of 13%,” said Daniel Pieczkolon, President of United Academics of Philadelphia (UAP), AFT Local 9608, the union joined by UArts Faculty in 2020. “Eighty five percent of UArts faculty are part-time and have worked at rates well below nearby schools, without benefits or long-term contracts. This is a step in the right direction after three years of stalling from UArts administrators.”

Full-time faculty members will see 11% average raises as a result of the contract, along with guaranteed annual wage increases, protections for healthcare and retirement benefits. Part-time faculty will receive a signing bonus, an on-ramp for longer-term contracts, and a healthcare stipend for long-serving adjuncts.

UArts Faculty elected to form their union with UAP in a 99% vote in November, 2020. Bargaining on the agreement began in March 2021, with a deal reached late in the day on February 4, 2024. The UArts Faculty Union had announced a strike vote, set to begin on February 5th if no agreement could be reached beforehand. The Tentative Agreement was reached hours before the strike vote would have begun.

UAP President Daniel Pieczkolon added, “This contract represents several years of intense & thoughtful organizing & bargaining work from the UArts faculty that will begin to correct years of institutional inequity & undervaluing of its faculty. It will improve the lives of faculty at University of the Arts who demonstrate incredible dedication to their students and communities, and we're looking forward to getting back to the table to finish a contract for the UArts Staff Union members that will achieve similar goals.”

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United Academics of Philadelphia, AFT 9608, is a union representing workers in higher education in the Philadelphia metropolitan area. It represents adjunct faculty at Arcadia University, and faculty and staff at University of the Arts. For more information on the UArts UAP bargaining units and campaigns, visit uartsfacultyunion.org, uartsstaffunion.org, or unitedacademicsphilly.org