

CALL FOR PAY EQUITY FOR CONTINGENT ACADEMIC LABOR IN HIGHER EDUCATION

1 Whereas, New York’s colleges and universities have long been recognized as world leaders in
2 higher education, both in instruction and in research; and
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4 Whereas, access to and success in higher education are more important than ever to ensure that
5 students reach their fullest potential and that New York continues to develop as a just society, a
6 vibrant democracy and an engine of opportunity; and
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8 Whereas, frontline academic workers—college faculty—are central to the mission of providing a
9 high-quality education to students; and
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11 Whereas, the promise of higher education is under attack in New York State by those who
12 demand and pursue austerity, polarization, privatization and deprofessionalization; and
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14 Whereas, state appropriations for public higher education in New York State have still not
15 recovered to pre-recession levels even as enrollments continue to rise especially among first-
16 generation, low-income and minority students, an ongoing disinvestment that disproportionately
17 impacts the public institutions they serve; and
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19 Whereas more than 75 percent of the jobs in the statewide instructional workforce are
20 contingent, and there is a growing trend of replacing full-time faculty with underpaid contingents
21 to save money and to balance college budgets; and
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23 Whereas contingent faculty in some areas of New York State are paid as low as \$2,500 for a
24 three-credit course; and
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26 Whereas the Modern Language Association has advocated for \$7,000 for teaching a three-credit
27 course; and
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29 Whereas contingent faculty teaching the same three-credit course as a full-time faculty member
30 should be paid proportionally (taking into account other factors like college service and
31 committee work and research that full-timers perform); and
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33 Whereas, many contingent faculty still face precarious employment situations from term-to-term,
34 uncertainty about their prospects for being rehired, and uncertainty or late notifications about
35 which courses they will be teaching when they are rehired, adversely affecting their ability to
36 prepare for these courses; and
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38 Whereas the reliance on contingent labor hurts not only adjunct instructors but the entire
39 institution because their commitment and hard work notwithstanding, the low pay, lack of
40 benefits and job insecurity make it extremely hard for adjuncts to offer their best to students
41 inside and outside the classroom thus hurting the quality of education; further, adjuncts are
42 unable to contribute meaningfully to work beyond classroom teaching like curriculum

43 development and student advising, and the lack of a career track and paucity of funding for
44 professional development makes it very difficult for adjuncts to contribute through their research
45 thus depriving institutions of both pedagogical work and diversity of research initiatives.

46 Whereas, polling data show that almost half of contingent faculty would prefer full-time, tenure-
47 track positions; therefore be it

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49 **RESOLVED, that NYSUT reaffirm its commitment to improving the lives of contingent**
50 **faculty by ending the rank exploitation of the majority of the higher education**
51 **instructional workforce; and be it further**

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53 **RESOLVED, that NYSUT will continue to work with its affiliates and promote their**
54 **successes in collective bargaining to bring about:**

- 55 • **Pay equity, including compensation for class preparation time and office**
56 **hours;**
- 57 • **Equitable access to employee benefits;**
- 58 • **Access to and compensation for opportunities for professional development;**
- 59 • **Meaningful job security, including job security comparable to tenure, long-**
60 **term academic appointment contracts or certificates of continuing**
61 **employment, which guarantee the presumption of rehiring;**
- 62 • **Opportunities for career advancement, including conversion opportunities to**
63 **full-time, tenure-track positions;**
- 64 • **Enforceable standards for the timely notification of teaching appointments;**
- 65 • **Protections for academic freedom, regardless of tenure status; and**
- 66 • **Full inclusion in and compensation for participation in all institutional work,**
67 **including service, protection of contingent staff, research and governance;**
68 **and be it further**

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70 **RESOLVED, that NYSUT will continue to work with and mobilize its affiliates to increase**
71 **funding for instruction and student support services and ensure that funds are used to**
72 **build a stable faculty corps and expand access for contingent faculty to healthcare,**
73 **retirement and unemployment insurance; and be it further**

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75 **RESOLVED, that NYSUT will continue to engage in collective action with our affiliates,**
76 **our members, our students and our communities to build a movement that educates people**
77 **about the impact of contingency on the lives of teachers and their students and effectively**
78 **advocates for high-quality, student-centered public colleges and universities that are**
79 **grounded by a stable, fair and equitably paid instructional workforce,; that is, guided by**
80 **the concept of equal pay for equal work among the whole instructional workforce; and be it**
81 **further**

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83 **RESOLVED, that NYSUT will work toward these ends in unity with students, parents,**
84 **faculty, staff and the community to reclaim the promise of higher education.**