

## **UAlbany a year later a hot topic of debate**

Marc Parry's article accurately describes many of the obstacles facing UAlbany as it strives to achieve the excellence envisioned by its late president Kermit Hall. One such obstacle—the shortage of full-time faculty—deserves a closer look.

Education experts know that students excel in smaller classes, where they have more interaction with their instructors. One way to ensure smaller class size is through the hiring of appropriate numbers of full-time faculty. But from 1994 to 2005, the ratio of full-time faculty to full-time students at UAlbany moved in the wrong direction: from 21-1 up to nearly 25-1.

But the tide is turning. Thanks to strong advocacy efforts by members of United University Professions, additional funds for more full-time faculty were included in the past two state budgets. That's begun to have an effect at UAlbany, where last year the faculty/student ratio dropped from nearly 25-1 to 23-1. And the 2007 ratio will reflect a further improvement, as more newly-hired faculty arrive for the start of the academic year Aug. 27.

This trend must continue if UAlbany hopes to maintain the momentum and vision of Hall's administration.

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