

I'm David Feurzeig, Professor of Music and member of United Academics, UVM's faculty union. While Staff United is bargaining its first-ever contracts, the Part-Time Faculty is negotiating its fifth. In both negotiations, management is following the same tired playbook: delay, dissemble, and divide. They say that if staff get more, there will be less for faculty, and vice-versa; that if we win fair compensation and manageable workloads, students will pay more; that faculty and staff are focused on narrow self-interest and not the larger mission of UVM.

This is false. We work here, often for less than we could earn in the private sector, because we choose to serve the UVM's mission and students. And also—people **used** to say—because of a community-minded and supportive workplace. I don't hear that much anymore, because UVM's administration has been steadily destroying it. Morale is at an all-time low as staff are asked to do more and more for less. People leave, are not replaced, and those left behind have to pick up the slack. These reductions are happening as enrollments and **revenue** go to record highs.

Contrary to the false austerity message management uses to divide faculty and students, **UVM brings in more money every year than it spends**. While crying poverty to students and staff UVM has been turning a huge profit every year according to its own audited financial statements: **\$34M** in 2018, **\$38M** in 2019, **\$21M** in 2020, and **\$187M** in 2021. To put this in perspective: UVM could give every single worker represented by Staff United a one-time bonus of \$140,000 and still have exactly as much money as it did one year earlier.

Unfortunately, there **is** an us and them here, but the dividing line is not between staff and students or faculty. It is between all of us and an out-of-control, corporatized, overpaid administration.

Students and faculty know that a staff that is overworked, underpaid, disempowered, and disrespected cannot fulfill UVM's mission. Our solidarity is the only counterweight to a misguided administration whose interests no longer align with UVM's.

Students, faculty, and staff: we are the university. And we need to stand together to claw back UVM's ample resources for UVM.

