



December 2, 2020

Dear colleagues,

We are all reeling from this latest unilateral decision made by the administration today. However, it is important to remember that, at this point, what has been presented is a proposal for program eliminations. Any program to be eliminated must go through a Faculty Senate process, including review by the Curricular Affairs Committee and the full Senate. The announcement of this plan as though it is final is completely inappropriate, as this has not been developed or reviewed by the Faculty Senate. Article 7.1 of our faculty Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) states that the "Faculty Senate is responsible for the **review and establishment of policies** in...all curricular matters, including establishment, dissolution and substantial changes of degree programs". The Faculty Senate has a longstanding formal process with an explicit timeline for all academic program terminations - contested or not: (https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/ProposalToTerminateAcademicScholarlyServiceEndeavor_Jan2017.pdf). This process is being discussed at the Curricular Affairs Committee tomorrow afternoon, Thursday December 3rd.

The current administration has once again delivered a top-down decision without collaboration of the Faculty Senate, United Academics, or faculty in general. We will be carefully scrutinizing this process to ensure faculty participation through the Senate as this proposal goes forward. We encourage all faculty to reach out to your faculty Senators about next steps in the Senate process. Please also continue to communicate with UA leadership about any changes that appear in your units and to seriously consider attending all relevant meetings to express your opinions.

While many faculty may be considering how this restructuring could impact jobs, we want to emphasize that this is a proposal and that it has yet to be reviewed by, approved by or even presented to the Faculty Senate. Article 15.4 of the CBA addresses retrenchment due to reasons other than financial exigency. We will all be fighting in every way possible to avoid job losses and the hollowing of our institution and we will need your help. Regardless of the ultimate implications, we are deeply disturbed by the loss that this proposal represents and the damage that it would do to a liberal arts education at UVM. The loss of these majors would be a tremendous blow to students, faculty, staff, alumni and other community members.

We deplore this administrative action, particularly as it comes at the end of the second pandemic-centered semester, which has required the heroic efforts of all of us to maintain the quality education and support our students have come to rely on.

In solidarity,
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