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United Academics statement on abrupt cancellation of courses in UVM's College of Arts and Sciences

The United Academics' Executive Council objects to the sudden cancellation of 12 courses that had been scheduled for the coming Spring '18 semester. Our concerns are twofold.

First, the choice was to cancel courses because they were taught by part-time instructors, who have the fewest job protections. The courses were cancelled, in other words, because they were the easiest to cancel, not because they were least necessary to the curriculum approved by the faculty and for the students our courses serve.

Second, the cancellations come on top of hiring freezes and other symptoms of an ongoing budgetary squeeze on and downsizing of the College of Arts and Sciences—even though it is evident that in the big picture UVM has the resources to fund education for all its students.

What UA objects to is that there has been no discussion or public admission of this policy that is forcing the last-minute cancellation of classes by CAS. UA does not promote some colleges over others, or take positions on specific distribution of funds. But it does support transparency in decision making and faculty governance of the academic affairs of the university. If UVM's central administration has chosen to shrink the College of Arts and Sciences while growing other areas of the university, it should say so, and the administration should provide the faculty with a chance to deliberate on the consequences of that choice. If the administration does not intend to shrink the College of Arts and Sciences, then it is irresponsibly blind to the consequences of its actions. Efforts to attribute what is happening to the College of Arts and Sciences to the IBB or "Incentive-Based Budgeting" model alone are naïve or disingenuous; the model enacts the policy, but it is not a force of nature, and can be changed. UVM's budget is not the problem. Indeed, the university has enjoyed a multi-million-dollar tuition surplus for the two previous years; this year's shortfall in budgeted tuition is a short term and correctable problem. Instead, UVM's *budgeters*—the central administrators who have imposed budget constraints on Arts and Sciences—are the problem.

We call on UVM's central administration to take responsibility for their actions and to restore to UVM's faculty its proper authority over the academic affairs of the university.

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