

MEMORANDUM

TO: VSCS Board of Trustees

FROM: Sophie Zdatny, Chancellor *SZdatny*

DATE: October 13, 2020

SUBJECT: Board of Trustees Regular Meeting on October 16, 2020

Trustees:

The materials are now available for the upcoming regular Board meeting scheduled for **1:00 p.m. on Friday, October 16, 2020**. The meeting will take place via Zoom and will be livestreamed on YouTube.

We will be welcoming some new faces – both trustees and Chancellor Office staff – as well as bidding adieu to Church Hindes. Church has requested, and we are working on, a collage with photographs of the campuses as a gift to thank him for his many years of dedicated service to the VSCS.

Thank you for your responses to the survey on the strategic priorities. Your collective input was extremely helpful and we have created a draft statement of the VSCS Strategic Priorities for your consideration, discussion, and approval. Looking ahead, the next step in the process will be creation of the Chancellor's recommendations for strategic action to be taken this academic year to be submitted to the Long Range Planning Committee at its October 29, 2020 meeting. Given that there are only nine months remaining in this academic year, the ongoing work of the Legislative Select Committee and its external consultant, the transformation work already underway, and the limited human and financial resources available, it is not possible for the VSCS to undertake all of the priorities set forth in the VSCS Strategic Priorities this year and we need to start somewhere. The Chancellor and Presidents will be developing implementation plans for each of the selected initiatives, along with suitable benchmarks, with the goal of presenting these to the Board at its November 16th Board meeting.

Following a short break, Chief Academic Officer Yasmine Ziesler will provide an update on the charges issued by the Board at its August 12, 2020 meeting, based upon the recommendations of the VSCS *Forward* Task Force. The materials include a report prepared by the facilitator of the Castleton University/Northern Vermont University working group on duplicate and low-enrolled programs. President Judy and President Moulton will provide a brief update on the collaboration

efforts presently underway at the Community College of Vermont and Vermont Technical College.

I will provide a brief update on the final budget bill signed by the Governor, the Legislative Select Committee, and the Colleges' current plans for the Spring semester. A summary of these plans, along with a draft of the proposed revised mandatory guidance from the Governor, is included in the materials. The plans are still somewhat in flux as final details have yet to be determined – and they could change depending evolving guidance from the state and federal government, as well as local circumstances.

We will then have a presentation by VSC Social Justice on diversity and inclusion initiatives currently underway across the system. VSC Social Justice is not a formally-appointed group but includes faculty and staff at each institution who are working together on these issues.

After any additional business and public comments, there will be a short executive session at the end of the meeting to conclude the process for the evaluation and re-appointment of the Presidents.

Cc: Council of Presidents
Academic Deans
Business Affairs Council
Student Affairs Council

Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees Meeting
Zoom Meeting/YouTube Stream
Friday, October 16, 2020

AGENDA

1:00 P.M. – Board of Trustees Meeting

1. Call to order
2. Introduction of Trustee Moran and Trustee Tester
3. Introduction of Katherine Levasseur, Director of External and Governmental Affairs
4. Resolution for Former Chair and Trustee J Churchill Hindes
5. Approval of Minutes
 - a. September 28, 2020
 - b. September 19, 2020
6. Discussion of and adoption of VSCS strategic priorities
7. *TEN MINUTE BREAK*
8. Update on Four Charges stemming from the work of VSCS *Forward* Task Force
9. Update from the Chancellor
10. Presentation by VSC Social Justice on diversity and inclusion initiatives across the VSCS
11. Additional Business
12. Comments from the Public
13. Evaluation of employees (executive session)
14. Adjourn

Contact Jen Porrier at jen.porrier@vsc.edu for information on how to attend the Zoom Meeting.

➤ This will also be livestreamed on YouTube at www.vsc.edu/live

MEETING MATERIALS

- Item 1: Resolution Honoring the Service of J Churchill Hinde
- Item 2: Approval of Minutes from past Board meetings
 - a. September 28, 2020 Meeting minutes
 - b. September 19, 2020 Special Meeting minutes
- Item 3: VSCS Strategic Priorities
- Item 4: Updates on Charges stemming from work of VSCS Forward Task Force
 - a. CU/NVU report
 - b. CCV/VTC Collaborations
- Item 5: Spring Plans / Governor's draft revised guidance

ITEM 1:
Resolution 2020-019
Honoring the Service of J Churchill Hinde

VERMONT STATE COLLEGES SYSTEMBOARD OF TRUSTEES: RESOLUTION 2020-019Resolution Honoring the Service of Churchill J. Hindes

- WHEREAS, J. Churchill Hindes (Church) has served on the Vermont State Colleges' Board of Trustees for a total of 18 years from 1987 to 2000 and, subsequently, from 2015 to 2020, having been appointed by Governors Madeleine Kunin, Howard Dean, and Peter Shumlin respectively; and,
- WHEREAS, during his combined tenures, Church dutifully served on the Audit, Long Range Planning and Facilities and Finance committees, chaired the Finance and Facilities committee, and most recently served as Chair of the Board; and,
- WHEREAS, Church has completed a professional career spanning 45 years of experience in health services, higher education, nonprofit leadership and public policy, distinguished by service as Vice President of the University of Vermont Medical Center and consultant to the UVM Health Network, COO of One Care Vermont, CEO of Visiting Nurse Association of Chittenden and Grand Isle Counties, member CEO of Vermont Business Roundtable; various teaching appointments at the University of Vermont School of Medicine, St. Michael's College, and the University of Iowa; and service on the cabinets of Governor Richard Snelling and Governor Madeleine Kunin as Vermont Commissioner of Budget and Management/State Budget Director and as Deputy Administration Secretary, as well as chairing Governor Kunin's Vermont Higher Education Study Commission; and,
- WHEREAS, Church has truly personified "for the benefit of Vermont" through his service on the boards of the Curtis Fund Foundation, Snelling Center for Government, Research Center for Children, Youth and Families, Mercy Connections, Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program, and Vermont Association of Nonprofit Organizations, in addition to the Vermont State Colleges' Board; and,
- WHEREAS, the Vermont State Colleges' Board of Trustees and the VSC system has been enriched by and has benefitted from Church's professional accomplishments, public service, and community participation; and,
- WHEREAS, the Vermont State Colleges' Board of Trustees have enjoyed Church's wit, wisdom and calming presence as a fellow trustees and board chair; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED, The Vermont State Colleges' Board of Trustees expresses its sincere appreciation to Churchill J. Hindes for the benefit he has brought to the State of Vermont through his service to the VSC System, to its four colleges and universities, to its hundreds of faculty and staff; and most important of all, to its thousands of students.

Church, we are honored to have served with you. We wish you our very best.

Approved: October 16, 2020

Eileen "Lynn" Dickinson, Chair of the Board of Trustees

ITEM 2:

Unapproved meeting minutes

September 28, 2020

September 19, 2020

Minutes of the VSCS Board of Trustees Meeting held Monday, September 28, 2020, at 10:00am via ZOOM – UNAPPROVED

Note: These are unapproved minutes, subject to amendment and/or approval at the subsequent meeting.

The Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees met on Monday, September 28, 2020, via ZOOM.

Board members present: Lynn Dickinson (Chair), Adam Grinold, Bill Lippert, Karen Luneau, Linda Milne, Mary Moran, Mike Pieciak (10:51 a.m.), David Silverman, Sean Tester

Absent: Janette Bombardier, Megan Cluver, Ryan Clooney, Dylan Giambatista, Jim Masland,

Presidents: Elaine Collins, Joyce Judy, Jonathan Spiro (Interim)

Chancellor's Office Staff: Kevin Conroy, Chief Information Officer
Jen Porrier, Administrative Director
Meg Walz, Director, Program Manager
Sophie Zdatny, Chancellor

From the Colleges: Anne Wallace Allen, Reporter, VT Digger

Chair Dickinson called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

Chair Dickinson welcomed two new Trustees; Mary Moran from Rutland and Shawn Tester from Lyndonville.

Executive Session:

At 10:07 a.m. Trustee Silverman moved that the VSC Board of Trustees enter executive session, pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) to discuss the evaluation of employees. The motion stated that no formal or binding action would be taken in the executive session. Trustee Lippert seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The Board met with President Jonathan Spiro, President Joyce Judy, President Elaine Collins, and Chancellor Sophie Zdatny individually in turn during the executive session.

The Board exited Executive session at 12:56 p.m. and took no action.

Chair Dickinson adjourned the meeting at 12:58 p.m.

Minutes of the VSCS Board of Trustees Meeting held Saturday, September 19, 2020, at 1:00pm via ZOOM – UNAPPROVED

Note: These are unapproved minutes, subject to amendment and/or approval at the subsequent meeting.

The Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees met on Saturday, September 19, 2020, via ZOOM.

Board members present: Lynn Dickinson (Chair), Janette Bombardier, Megan Cluver, Ryan Cooney, Dylan Giambatista, Adam Grinold, Bill Lippert, Karen Luneau, Jim Masland, Linda Milne, Mike Pieciak, David Silverman

Presidents: Elaine Collins, Joyce Judy, Pat Moulton, Jonathan Spiro (Interim)

Chancellor's Office Staff: Kevin Conroy, Chief Information Officer
Jen Porrier, Administrative Director
Sharron Scott, Chief Financial/Operations Officer
Patty Turley, General Counsel
Meg Walz, Director, Program Manager
Sophie Zdatny, Chancellor
Yasmine Ziesler, Chief Academic Officer

From the Colleges: Nolan Atkins, Provost, Northern Vermont University
Emmett Avery, Student Reporter, Northern Vermont University
Debra Bailin, Director of Student Academic Development, Northern Vermont University
Mike Fox, Dean of Enrollment & Marketing, Northern Vermont University
Kate Gold, Director of Advising Resources, Northern Vermont University
Leah Hollenberger, University Development & External Relations Officer, Northern Vermont University
Laura Jakubowski, Chief Budget & Finance Officer, Castleton University
Karen Madden, Director of Academic Support Services, Northern Vermont University
Andy Pallito, Dean of Administration, Community College of Vermont
Patricia Shine, Faculty, Northern Vermont University
Danielle Spring, Chief Budget & Finance Officer, Northern Vermont University
Toby Stewart, Dean of Administration, Northern Vermont University

Littleton Tyler, Dean of Administration, Vermont Technical
College
Beth Walsh, President, VSCUP, Northern Vermont University

1. Chair Dickinson called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.
2. Approval of Minutes
 - a. August 17, 2020
 - b. August 12, 2020

Trustee Silverman moved and Trustee Grinold seconded the approval of the August 17, 2020 and August 12, 2020 minutes. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Discussion of priorities of VSCS

After a brief introduction, the Trustees separated into three groups to discuss the VSCS's strategic priorities as part of the system's work in transforming itself. The three groups discussed: (a) affordability and cost-effectiveness; (2) accessibility; and (3) quality and relevance of academic programs. Each group was led by a facilitator and included one or more institution Presidents, academic leaders, and any members of the public who wished to join. After 45 minutes of discussion, the groups came back together to share key points from their discussion.

Trustee Cluver shared three key takeaways from the Accessibility discussion:

1. Having an integrated, meaningful presence across the state, specifically retaining opportunities in areas that are not served by other higher education entities, such as Castleton, Johnson, Lyndon, and Randolph.
2. As a system, part of access is working to ensure that there is an adequate pool of educated talent for the VT economy.
3. A key component of access is providing students that enter our programs with the learning and support to enable them to be successful in attaining their education and life goals.

Trustee Cooney shared three key takeaways from the Affordability and Cost Effectiveness discussion:

1. Reducing the total cost of attendance for students and families.
2. Increasing access to VSCS institutions for students from low- and middle-income backgrounds.
3. Reasonable debt load relative to current family income and the future earning potential of the student.

Trustee Grinold shared some key takeaways from the Quality and Relevance of Academic Programs discussion:

1. Student degree paths are relevant to their goals and expectations of value in a career.
2. VSCS programs (and skills that students gain in them) will be aligned with projection of state needs and career demand (if programs are useful, they are of quality).
3. VSCS graduates succeed at externally recognized measures of achievement and are prepared to compete nationally and globally.
4. VSCS ensures consistent quality across institutions within the system.
5. Relevance, ease of delivery.

Chancellor Zdatny thanked the Trustees for their engagement and shared that the next step is for the facilitators to work with their groups to refine the priorities and bring these forward for the Board's consideration at the October 16th meeting.

4. Report of the Finance and Facilities Committee

Chief Financial/Operating Officer Sharron Scott provided an updated from the August 24, 2020 Finance and Facilities meeting. The VSCS is nearing completion on its financial statements and the institutions are completing FY20 more favorably than had been anticipated, largely due to the receipt of Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) and CARE Act Funds. The Audit for FY20 year is also looking favorable.

Trustee Silverman discussed the proposal to extend the previously approved temporary budget for another month through October 31st.

Trustee Silverman moved and Trustee Pieciak seconded the motion to approve Resolution 2020-016: Vermont State Colleges System Revised Transitional Budget. The Resolution was approved unanimously.

Executive Session:

At 2:20 p.m. Trustee Cluver moved that the VSC Board of Trustees enter executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(2) to discuss negotiating or securing real estate purchase or lease options. The motion stated that the Board may, as appropriate and permitted by law, take action regarding real estate during this executive session. Along with the members of the Board present at the meeting, the Board invited the Chancellor, the President of Vermont Technical College, Dean of Administration of Vermont Technical College, the President of Northern Vermont University, Dean of Administration of Northern Vermont University, the VSC Chief Financial Officer/Chief Operating Officer, and the VSC General Counsel to attend the executive session. Trustee Silverman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The Board exited Executive session at 2:45pm.

5. Annual Reports from Presidents

Castleton University President Jonathan Spiro shared that, in March, the campus was closed due to the Coronavirus and pivoted to a fully remote learning platform. The subsequent refund of room and board, resulted in a loss of revenue. CU continued with remote learning through the summer months, resulting in further loss of revenue. CU has had a successful start to the fall semester, following all policies and protocols laid out by the CDC and Vermont Department of Health. Courses are being taught remotely but there are some students residing on campus. The two asymptomatic students with positive COVID tests have successfully completed their isolation and quarantine. Next semester CU launches its fully online Master in Science Nursing (MSN) degree.

Community College of Vermont President Joyce Judy shared that CCV has a strong fall enrollment, up 3% percent from last year. Only twenty out of seven hundred courses will have a face-to-face component this fall. A similar class format will be run for the spring. Planning for the summer course schedule will begin in February, at which time it is hoped that more courses will be able to be face-to-face. CCV is moving into its new St. Albans facility soon, in a partnership between CCV, VTC and Northwest Medical Center, and is planning a virtual ribbon cutting. CCV has also been approached by the Fairbanks Museum in St. Johnsbury inviting them to explore potential co-location. The Museum has applied for a \$2 million dollar grant that would allow them to expand and to share the space with CCV. This year is CCV's 50th anniversary. There were many celebrations planned which had to be altered, but fundraising has been going very well. The McClure foundation gift to the high school graduating class of one CCV course was very well received: 646 students have taken advantage of it, making it a \$650,000 dollar gift. 41% of the students are taking 1 course, 20% are taking 2 courses, 12% are taking 3 courses, 19% are taking 4, and 8% are taking 5 courses. In past years about 300 high school graduates have enrolled at CCV, thus, this gift has doubled enrollment in this demographic group.

Northern Vermont University President Elaine Collins took the opportunity to shine a light on her team. COVID 19 and the resulting health and safety concerns have been the number one concern for most of this year. The students are grateful for the opportunity to be back with peers and have face-to-face instruction. She explained that "they don't want to mess it up for anybody." NVU has conducted 2,746 tests so far with zero positives. Masks are required on campus, with extra cleaning protocols and social distancing in place. NVU offered two professional development opportunities to its faculty, both classes were geared towards providing better online teaching experiences. NVU is also offering other ways for students to engage socially on campus in safe ways. NVU worked hard on its virtual commencement with great success resulting in 55,000 views. NVU has added a number of new degrees this year including Data Science and Digital Communications, Performance Arts and Technology, Professional Writing, and Graphic Design. The NVU Marketing Team took Best in Show at an Education Advertising competition, placing 16th out of over 2,000 competitors.

Vermont Technical College President Pat Moulton shared that VT Tech's spring semester was on track to be very successful prior to the pandemic. They have learned that remote learning can be done effectively, and that working remotely works well and has the potential to help reduce the overall physical footprint. Mental health counseling services for students were transitioned to remote options successfully, and orientation and welcome weekend were transitioned to remote delivery. Vermont Tech also launched the Transformation Advisory Task Force and the Ag and Food Systems Transformations Planning, both of which are doing great work for VT Tech. CRF funds have covered the losses from room and board and provided significant funds

that VT Tech will use strategically to plan for the future. VT Tech also added three new senior leaders this year: Dr. Ana Gaillat, Jason Enser, and Dr. Kellie Campbell.

6. Legislative Update from the Chancellor

Chancellor Zdatny shared that the House advanced a budget that included historic levels of funding for the VSCS and the Senate is now working on their version of the FY21 budget. The VSCS is on track to receive \$23.8 million in general funds as bridge funding. Our ask had been \$40.3 million to cover the projected deficit for this year, so the \$23.8 million, plus the \$5 million in general funding in the transitional budget plus the \$7.5 million in CRF bridge funding, plus our anticipated \$4 million in carry over funds from FY20 will help to close the anticipated deficit for FY21. CRF monies must be spent on goods and services received by December 2020 and so there will be unanticipated additional COVID-related costs in the spring that will not be covered by CRF, including costs associated with testing. The Legislative Select Committee, which includes Trustee Megan Cluver and President Joyce Judy plus others from the VSCS, is scheduled to have their second meeting on Monday September 21, at which time they will meet with NCHEMS, the external consulting group. NCHEMS's final report will be due April 16, 2021

7. Update Board Calendar

Chancellor Zdatny discussed the addition of Board meetings on October 16 and November 16 and rescheduling of committee meetings from October 26 to October 29. This was approved and the new schedule will be posted to the website.

8. Additional Business

There was no additional business.

9. Comments from the Public

There were no comments.

Executive Session:

At 4:13 p.m. Trustee Cluver moved that the VSC Board of Trustees enter executive session, pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) to discuss the evaluation of employees. The motion stated that no formal or binding action would be taken in the executive session. Along with the members of the Board present at the meeting, the Board met with each of the Presidents individually, commencing with President Moulton. Trustee Masland seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The Board exited Executive session at 5:01 p.m. and took no action. The Board noted that they did not complete their planned meetings with each President and would need to schedule an additional meeting to complete their business.

Chair Dickinson adjourned the meeting at 5:04 p.m.

ITEM 3:
VSCS Strategic Priorities

VSCS STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

VSCS Mission

“For the benefit of Vermont, the Vermont State Colleges system provides affordable, high quality, student-centered, and accessible education, fully integrating professional, liberal, and career study, consistent with student aspirations and regional and state needs.”

VSCS Strategic Priorities

The Board’s Strategic Priorities for the system articulate the VSCS’s mission and role in providing public postsecondary education in Vermont. The Board is committed to achieving success acting as a fully-integrated system that achieves financial stability in a responsible and sustainable way and ensures equitable access to and completion of a quality post-secondary education for all Vermonters, including those who have been marginalized or underrepresented historically.

Affordability: In the VSCS, affordability means that cost and debt are not access barriers for students. Affordability is thus relative to both tuition cost and Vermont student/family income, and to the post-graduation earnings needed for debt repayment.

Success on affordability will be measured by:

1. A reduction in the total cost of attendance for students and families; and
2. An increase in the number of students from low and middle-income backgrounds accessing and succeeding in VSCS programs; and
3. A manageable debt load for students relative to their current family income and future earning potential.

Accessibility: In the VSCS, accessibility means that all Vermont students (including adult learners) will have a supported pathway to meet their educational goals, regardless of their financial means, rural geography, college readiness, or technology/broadband internet access.

Success on accessibility will be measured by:

1. Increased access to VSCS programs regardless of race/ethnicity, age, educational attainment of parents, prior educational experience, family status, or place of residence; and;
2. Students receiving the academic, advising and other supports necessary to succeed in their VSCS programs as measured by their retention, persistence and graduation; and
3. The VSCS having a meaningful presence across Vermont, especially in rural areas regardless of historical access points, which includes providing economic and cultural support to its host communities.

Quality and Relevance: In the VSCS, relevance and quality of academic programs are understood in terms of student and state expectations of value both qualitatively and quantitatively. For students, expectations of value include the ability to pursue their chosen educational path, a positive “return on investment” in the cost of pursuing a particular program relative to expected earnings, successful preparation for external evaluations such as licensure exams, and preparation for lifelong career and personal success in our global 21st century. For Vermont, expectations of value include quality VSCS programs that are aligned with state workforce needs and that are offered in a fiscally responsible manner, delivered in ways relevant to today’s students’ and employers’ needs.

Success on quality will be measured by:

1. The ability of VSCS graduates to meet externally-recognized measures of achievement (i.e. licensure exam success rates) and their preparation to compete in the global workforce; and
2. Consistency of high-quality education and instruction provided by the VSCS across the system; and
3. External recognition (including accreditation) of the quality of VSCS programs.

Success on relevance will be measured by:

1. Development of degree paths that are highly relevant to student goals and expectations of value in a career;
2. Offering programs and credentials that meet Vermont’s workforce needs; and
3. Delivering programs and credentials flexibly in a modality that meets student needs and expectations.

ITEM 4a:
CU/NVU Report

October 12, 2020

Report on the work of the VSCS Combined Castleton-Northern Vermont University Academic Programs Group

STEPHANIE LAHAR, CONSULTANT/FACILITATOR AND YASMINE
ZIESLER, VSC CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER AND CHAIR OF THE
GROUP

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Executive Summary

This concentrated project engaged faculty and administrators from NVU and CU with a charge to develop evaluation criteria to review duplicate and low-enrolled programs at the two institutions, and to develop a proposal for consolidation, increased investment, and/or closure.

The two tasks represented in the charge are thoroughly interlinked, and the group identified and worked through multiple questions and issues that needed resolution. These included what data and analyses are useful and reliable, and who needs to have input to gather required information, and plan and effectively implement program decisions.

The group's primary recommendations involve taking additional time during the fall of 2020 to complete specific programmatic decisions. This group sees this as necessary to provide more adequate grounding in data than is presently available with existing data sets and analyses. It also engages faculty in ways that improve program decisions, as it increases buy-in and actively moves the work of collaboration and consolidation forward.

Through working on the charge, the group also found many intersections with system-wide structural questions and potential changes to facilitate the work of institutional collaboration and consolidation.

Primary recommendations include:

1. **NVU and CU faculty should be directed to jointly generate proposals that would increase cost efficiency, increase program quality, increase student access, or some combination of these across the VSCS.**

To facilitate discussions to generate these proposals we are providing:

- 1) A discussion guide designed to complete program assessments;
 - 2) A set of collaboration scenarios; and
 - 3) A sample arrangement of program clusters.
2. **Identify target ranges and time horizons for key performance indicators at the institution and/or macro-system level, for example in student-faculty ratios and class size averages.**
 3. **Identify obstacles to collaboration in the system and align institutional structures and incentives to support collaboration.**

Purpose and Objectives of the Project

This work was undertaken in September and early October 2020 to address the charge from the Board of Trustees to develop clear evaluation criteria for review of duplicate and low-enrolled programs, and develop a draft proposal for consolidation, increased investment, and/or closure.

Group Membership

The group consisted of the OC Chief Academic Officer, Yasmine Ziesler, who chaired the committee, Nolan Atkins, NVU Provost, Tom Mauhs-Pugh, CU Provost and the following eight faculty members, four each representing the two institutions.

Megan Blossom, CU, Associate Professor and Chair, Psychology

Isaac Eddy, NVU-J, Assistant Professor and Co-Chair of Performing Arts

Alan Giese, NVU-L, Professor and Chair of Natural Sciences

Bill Godair, CU, Associate Professor of Business

Janel Hanrahan, NVU-L, Associate Professor and Chair of Atmospheric Sciences

Helen Mango, CU, Professor of Natural Sciences

David McGough, NVU-J, Professor of Education

Michael Talbott, CU, Associate Professor and Chair of Media & Communication

Brief Summary of Process

The group met eight times (via Zoom) between September 4 and October 9, 2020 and members worked individually and in cross-institution teams to develop and test program assessment criteria and potential collaboration pathways and outcomes for programs. The group wrestled with available data sets that did not in themselves yield complete, credible or reliable assessments of programs to use as a foundation for recommendations of specific programs. They worked through this to articulate principles about the kinds of data and analysis that could produce reviews that are credible, and could serve as a stronger foundation for decisions as the VSC moves toward greater collaboration.

By generating and examining program case studies, the group developed several work products to guide a more thorough review of programs across both institutions and to move program collaborations forward.

Recommendations

Primary recommendations

- 1. Successful collaborations to decrease costs/increase efficiency, maximize program quality, and increase student access require shared decision-making with relevant program faculty and administrators.**

To that end, we recommend that NVU and CU faculty be directed to jointly generate proposals that would increase cost efficiency, increase program quality, increase student access, or some combination of these across the VSCS.

To facilitate discussions to generate these proposals we are providing:

- 1) A discussion guide** with a set of questions designed to assess the current capacity of a program as well as some relevant dimensions of access, quality, and cost; and to direct attention to potential problems that collaboration could mitigate or opportunities it could help realize. (Appendix A)
- 2) A set of collaboration scenarios** to illustrate types of collaboration that might be considered.
- 3) A sample arrangement of program clusters** that might stimulate ideas for potential collaboration. While these specific clusters are not unanimously agreed upon by this group – there are alternative groupings that also make sense – they suggest ways programs can be grouped to facilitate sharing of curriculum, facilities, and faculty both within and across campuses. (Appendix B)

Why take the time to assess programs in this manner?

This group advocates a balanced program review model that attends to cost, quality and access that enables the VSC to look at a sum total of benefits and tradeoffs in program changes and consolidations.

Data markers such as enrollment trends over time are important indicators of a program's ability to attract and retain students, but further investigation is needed to understand why those trends are what they are as well as to determine a program's actual cost, revenue, or benefits to an institution or the VSC. Faculty input is needed to build a whole picture of how programs and faculty function to support VSC's offerings. Because programmatic structures have evolved differently at different institutions, these discussions can also help identify where standardized consolidation options won't work or would have a perverse effect on costs, quality or access that aren't initially visible.

A secondary goal of the recommended discussions is to identify and begin to problem-solve barriers to collaboration in the system (see recommendation 3). This will help point to high-leverage system changes that are beyond the scope and authority of this group to design, but in our review have large impacts on the ease and scale of changes that can be made on a programmatic level.

We note also that engaging faculty in these discussions can happen relatively quickly (over the next few months), builds on conversations that are already underway across campuses, and will stimulate collaboration not yet envisioned. This provides a distinct step in moving the VSC toward whole-system thinking and operations.

2. Identify target ranges and time horizons for key performance indicators at the institution and/or macro-system level, for example in student-faculty ratios and class size averages.

These targets could be set by a task force including faculty and Provosts, reporting to the VSC Executive Team. A task force should draw from current higher education literature and practice in this area, such as the work of the Delaware Cost Project.

Why do this?

System priorities expressed in targets provide guidance about what tradeoffs may need to be made and the scale of changes required. The targets, if appropriately chosen and incentivized, can improve VSC operations in the short term while also driving strategic decisions in the long term. For example, measuring student retention and degree completion at the system level incentivizes system units to work effectively together on behalf of the student. Whereas, measuring student retention and degree completion at the program level incentivizes a zero-sum game where every program's or campus's loss of a student appears as a failure. To use a corporate example, if you go to Amazon to buy a book and end up buying a bicycle instead, that is still a win for Amazon. The book got the customer in the door; further reflection produced a change in purchase.

3. Identify obstacles to collaboration in the system and align institutional structures *and* incentives to support collaboration.

This could be a project led by the Provost of NVU and CU and involve joint work with Deans and faculty feed-ins from collaboration discussions.

Why break this out?

As this group worked through collaboration scenarios through case studies of programs, it became clear that there are a number of barriers that regularly present themselves on collaboration paths. Many of these have structural implications, for example:

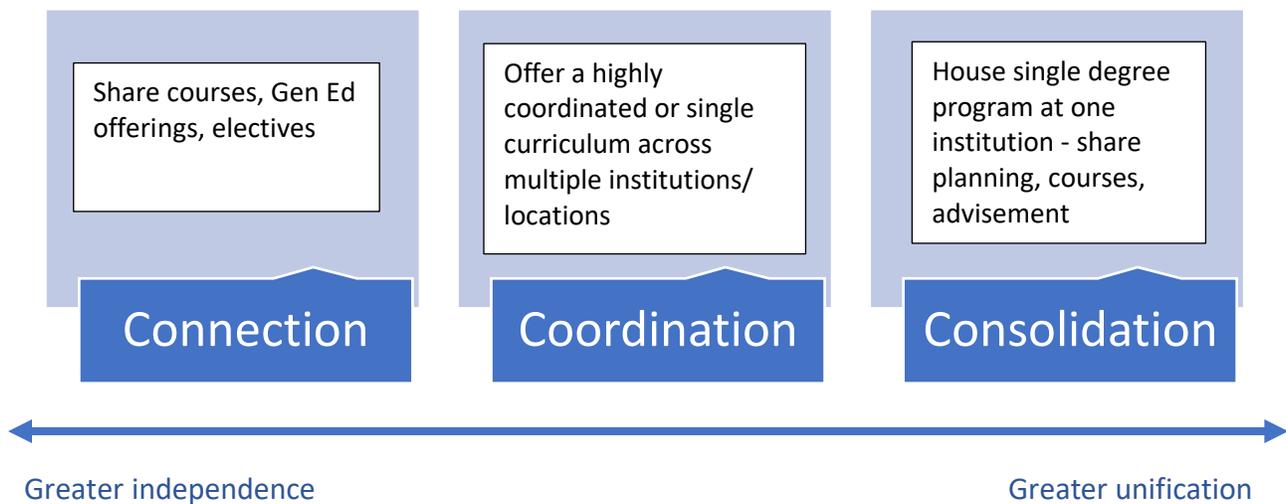
- Different registration procedures at institutions.
- Budgets and enrollment incentives. Sharing students, courses, or majors between campuses, as well as having faculty time be shared across campuses, creates problems under the existing accounting structures which promote defending turf.
- Access to relevant and adequate information/data, able to be easily interpreted and applied by a variety of academic personnel.
- Faculty governance. If the VSC institutions are to move toward program unification, any program changes that need to be common across more than one campus will need to move through more than one governance process. This will be challenging at best, and raises a sequence question – should we align governance processes before making larger-scale changes across our campuses?
- Credit transfer policies and practices, e.g. who makes a determination of whether a course taken at one institution can fulfill a requirement in a program at another.
- Separate accreditations, resulting in inefficiencies and inconsistencies in handling issues such as credit transfer, above, and duplicating time and resource-consuming re-accreditation studies and processes.
- Library holdings and access. Library collections are generally built around a campus's academic programs. Shared curriculum and access to shared majors across campuses create library resource access issues.
- Modes of delivering instruction. Online instruction can facilitate sharing courses between campuses, which is necessary in most collaborative arrangements. However, high quality online courses require substantial professional development for faculty as well as investments in technology and expertise. Students also vary in their preferences for online versus face to face instruction. Some courses are quite difficult to effectively put online, or require such transformation as to make them, effectively, a different course from the face to face version. Hence, we should anticipate that some new collaboration will include funding expenses associated with curriculum development and instructional design.
- Finally, a barrier is simply a varied engagement of faculty with collaboration projects. This is hard to de-couple from “change fatigue” and coming up against barriers such as those listed above that can block innovative work. This points to

the need to both align incentives to reward innovative cross-institution or system-wide collaboration; and to set, monitor, and to provide feedback against target KPI’s that we refer to in recommendation 2.

While these barriers are substantial, we note also there are current practices and initiatives within the system to mitigate some of these, including the current work on a common general education core, exploration of centralized library services, and the many cross-VSC groups, such as CAOs, Registrars, librarians, etc. that further this work of creating a more unified system.

Collaboration scenarios

What are the collaboration scenarios we envision across institutions and campuses?



Three Scenarios Across Collaboration Continuum

Descriptions and examples of three scenarios

I. Connection

Programs that make connections are able to share resources for program activities, for example offering a single course that fulfills a requirement in both programs. Such connections are already common among closely related programs on the individual campuses; making such a connection among programs on multiple campuses and/or institutions would require distance learning, or innovative hybrid models. Building more connections also has potential to increase class sizes by enrolling students from more than one program, campus, or institution.

Connections could be well-suited for larger-enrollment programs at multiple locations that wish to offer a greater diversity of specialty courses to students than can be achieved by a single program and location. Stronger connections would allow more modestly-sized programs to maintain offerings by utilizing more shared courses. Stronger connections can allow a very small program to be offered to students by utilizing faculty expertise and course offerings in larger programs.

Examples of such connections already exist within CU and NVU, where some newer degree programs such as NVU's Climate Change Science were created from existing courses taught by existing faculty.

II. Coordination

Coordination of programs involves stronger connections, including for example two programs agreeing to any necessary curriculum revisions and alignments such that both programs share a common curriculum core. For example, the core, introductory courses in Environmental Science programs on all three campuses are already remarkably similar. The programs may then have potentially with different specialty concentrations in different locations. Such coordination has already taken place, for example, with the Johnson and Lyndon programs in Business, and is a hallmark elsewhere in the system of the CCV-VTC and CCV-CU Allied Health pathway to nursing that relies on a small core of preparatory courses.

Coordinated programs could serve larger programs seeking to maximize flexibility for students transferring within the system or to provide specialty learning experiences, such as Business majors at Castleton being able to take advantage of the unique program in Music Business and Industry at NVU. Both larger and smaller programs can benefit from coordination as a strategy to maximize enrollment efficiency and consistency for students in course offerings by leveraging more shared courses via distance delivery.

III. Consolidation

Consolidation of programs can be achieved in several ways, including consolidating multiple existing programs into one, as has been accomplished at NVU with its new Integrated Performing Arts program, which consolidated existing programs in music, dance, theater arts, and technology. There is also a proposal currently under consideration within NVU to build the Integrated Liberal Arts and Social Science (ILASS) that would consolidate four or more programs. In addition to cost savings, consolidation of programs can also improve the diversity of faculty expertise available to students in a program, as many smaller programs such as Political Science or Computer Information Systems currently only have a single full-time faculty member per institution. A strategy

to maintain disciplinary expertise such as Chemistry available within the system might be best achieved with a consolidated approach in which students enroll for a one-semester focused residency to take advantage of program offerings and specialized resources available only at that one location.

Consolidating programs requires creating a single curriculum, planning for online or remote synchronous delivery if consolidation is across multiple locations, and developing governance, advising, budgeting, and other structures necessary to support a program distributed across multiple locations.

Longer-term recommendations

- This group is aware that this work has a systemic context, and the large question that requires more information-gathering, longer deliberation, and greater authority to make decisions is, ***What is the appropriate efficient, effective and sustainable structure of the VSC going forward?*** Answering this question will need to include not only NVU and CU but VTC and CCV as well. This group directs readers of this report to recent recommendations regarding systemic questions done by other groups, including the Labor Task Force and the VSCS Forward Task Force.
- Revise the Policy 109 process to incorporate metrics for a balanced review attending not only to cost, quality and access (see Appendix C for a sample), but also other parameters identified in program review literature such as relevance and external demand.¹ Identify and develop internal expertise in institutional research for the VSC in cost and efficiency analyses.

¹ See, for example, Robert Dickeson, *Prioritizing Academic Programs and Services: Reallocating Resources to Achieve Strategic Balance*, 2010.

Appendix A: Program Considerations Guide for Faculty

Intent: This guide is meant to support faculty in having collaborative conversations with similar discipline colleagues across locations and individual degree programs.

1. What is the degree program instructional capacity efficiency of each program (measure this as the total # majors/total # FTF by program or total departmental majors/total departmental FTF)?
2. What clustering of programs might best manage low program enrollments? You might, for example
 - a. determine a suitable clustering of degree programs in similar disciplinary fields to form a department with a suitable efficiency (Appendix B)
 - b. determine a suitable clustering of degree programs in similar disciplinary fields to form an integrated degree program (like ILASS)
 - c. determine a suitable clustering of degree programs in similar disciplinary fields to form a new degree program with contributions from across departments and institutions
3. What pathways might best manage duplication or support quality and innovation?
 - a. connection .. determine if there are opportunities for shared courses in existing plans of study, shared GE offerings, shared electives
 - b. coordination ... discuss suitable shifts in curriculum to enable a high percentage of shared cores, shared concentrations, shared outcomes or assessments, shared opportunities
 - c. combination .. (as with Business between Johnson & Lyndon) ... create, essentially, a single curriculum across institutions, even while students matriculate to campuses under separate assemblies and accreditations
 - d. consolidation .. create a single degree program at one institution under a single assembly and accreditation, with an MOU to share curricular decision-making, course offerings, and advisement across different institutions
4. Other questions to explore:
 - a. identify program features, distinctions, objectives, etc.; note if the program receives external accreditation, is aligned with external standards, is unique to the VSC, region, or nation, etc.; program history, etc.
 - b. identify FTF disciplinary specialty areas and developed areas of expertise, along with areas of interest for ongoing development
 - c. identify opportunities via PTF: availability, specialties,
 - d. identify possibilities for learning formats: remote, online, flexible, competency-based, experiential, etc.
 - e. identify post-graduate pathways: profession, grad school, work-area
 - f. identify academic pathway arrangements with CCV, other degree programs (shared core), GE, etc.
 - g. identify partners for advancing student growth via career preparation, civic engagement, community service, and personal development (for NVU, which of these partners might be able to co-locate to campus?)
 - h. identify parameters of openness to curricular redesign work, cross-unit collaboration, cross-institutional collaboration, etc. (possibilities, and problems)

Appendix B: Sample Arrangement of Program Clusters

This is offered to stimulate ideas for potential collaboration. While these specific clusters are not unanimously agreed upon by this group – there are alternative groupings that also make sense – they suggest ways programs can be grouped to facilitate sharing of curriculum, facilities, and faculty both within and across campuses.

CU Programs		NVU Programs	
Business/Accounting			
Accounting	C.BS.ACC	Accounting	J.BS.ACC
Business Administration	C.BS.BUS	Business Administration	J.BS.BUS
Management	C.BS.MGT	Accounting	L.BS.ACC
Marketing	C.BS.MKT	Business Administration	L.BS.BUS
Resort and Hospitality Management	C.BS.RHM	OELT - Resort Management	L.BS.OEL
Accounting (GRAD)	C.MSA	Music Business & Industry	L.BS.MBI
Business Administration MBA (GRAD)	C.MBA		
Communications/Journalism			
Media & Communication	C.BA.MDC	Journalism	J.BA.JOU
		Digital Communications	L.BS.DCO
		Broadcast & Digital Journalism	L.BS.BDJ
		Cinema Production	L.BA.CNP
Criminal Justice			
Criminal Justice	C.BA.CRJ	Criminal Justice	L.BS.CRJ
		Criminal Justice	J.BS.CRJ
Art			
Art	C.BA.ART	Art	J.BA.ART
		Media Arts	J.BA.MDA
		Media Arts	J.BF.MDA
		Studio Arts	J.BF.STA
		Studio Arts (GRAD)	J.MF.STA
Graphic Design	C.BA.GDS	Graphic Design	L.BFA.DES
		Graphic Design	L.BA.GDS
		Animation & Illustration	L.BFA.ANI
		Photography	L.AS.PHO
Biology			
Biology	C.BS.BIO	Biology	J.BA.BIO
		Biology	J.BS.BIO
Athletic Training, Exercise and Health Sciences			
Kinesiology-PreATR	C.BS.KIN		
Exercise Science	C.BS.ESS	Exercise Science	L.BS.XSC
Health Promotion	C.BS.HLP		
Health Science	C.BS.HLT	Health Sciences	J.BS.HSI

Athletic Leadership (GRAD)	C.MS.ATL
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Computer Information Systems			
Computer Info. Systems	C.BS.CIS	Computer Information Systems	L.BS.CIS
		Data Science	L.BS.DSC

Education			
Early Childhood Education	C.BA.ECE	Early Childhood Education	L.BS.ECE
Multidisciplinary Studies	C.BA.MDS	Elementary Education	L.BS.EED
Education (GRAD)	C.MA.EDU	Special Education	L.AS.SPE
Post-Bacc/EDU.CAI.LIC (GRAD)		Childhood Education	J.BA.CED
Center For Schools - non matric (GRAD)		Education (GRAD)	J.MA.EDU
		Education (GRAD)	L.ME

Environmental and Natural Sciences			
Environmental Science	C.BS.ENV	Environmental Science	J.BS.ENV
Ecological Studies	C.BA.ECS	Environmental Science	L.BS.ENV
Wildlife & Forest Conservation	C.BS.WFC	Natural Sciences	L.BS.NAS
Environmental Studies	C.BA.SSC	Sustainability Studies	L.BS.SUS

Global Studies			
Global Studies	C.BA.GLB	Global Studies	L.BA.GLB

History			
History	C.BA.HIS	History	J.BA.HIS

English and Creative Writing			
English	C.BA.ENG	Creative Writing	J.BF.CWR
		English	J.BA.ENG
		English	L.BA.ENG

Mathematics			
Mathematics	C.BA.MAT	Math	L.BA.MAT
	C.BS.MAT	Math	J.BS.MAT

Music			
Music	C.BA.MUS		
Music Education	C.BM.EDU	Music Education	J.BME.MUE
Music Education (GRAD)	C.MM.Ed		

Political Science			
Political Science	C.BA.POS	Political Science	J.BA.POS

Psychology			
Psychology	C.BA.PSY	Psychology	J.BA.PSY
	C.BS.PSS		
Forensic Psychology	C.BS.FPS	Applied Psychology & Human Services	L.BS.APH
School Psychology (GRAD)	C.MA+CAGS		

Sociology			
Social Science (contract)	C.BA.SSC		
Sociology	C.BA.SOC	Anthropology & Sociology	J.BA.ANS
Social Studies	C.BA.SST		
Social Work	C.BSW.SWK		

Theatre			
Theatre Arts	C.BA.THA	Performance, Art, & Technology	J.BA.PAT
		Technical Theater	J.AA.TTH

2019 Policy 109 Low-Enrolled Program

New Program (2019 or 2020)

Note:

Programs Unique to CU

Archeology, Geog, & App Anthro

Chemistry

Nursing

Philosophy

Physical Education

Spanish

Sport Management

Women's & Gender Studies

Programs Unique to NVU

Atmospheric Sciences

Climate Change Science

OELT - non Resort Manage Concentrations

Wellness and Alternative Medicine

Woodworking & Furniture Design

Mental Health Counseling (GRAD)

Leadership Studies (GRAD)

Liberal Studies (GRAD)

...

Appendix C: Sample Balanced Program Review

Note: This sample is one way to organize a balanced program review, offered by NVU-CU Program Review Group Member David McGough, NVU-J Professor of Education.

BALANCED PROGRAM REVIEW FORM: UNDERGRADUATE (QUICK REVIEW FORMAT)

Draft, 09.14.20

The table below provides a template for collecting annual raw data related to a degree program with an existing major. The table on the following page provides a methodology and accompanying criteria for conducting a review of the degree program.

Degree Program: _____ Institution: _____ Year of Review

DATA TABLE

1.	When was the first year, beyond a pilot period, students began enrolling for the degree program with the existing major? An estimate is fine.	
2.	What is the total count of students enrolled in the degree program, and graduating from the program, in the review year?	
3.	What are the total count of students enrolled in the degree program, and graduated from the program, in each of the previous four years, by year?	
4.	What is the count of FTF assignments for instructional, advisory, and administrative duties for the degree program (major + disciplinary electives) for the review year (proportion by workload: 8 of 8 assignments to the degree program = 1 FTF; 4 of 8 assignments to the degree program = 0.5 FTF)	
5.	Same as #4, in each of the previous four years, by year?	
6.	What is the number of credits in the approved major, for the review year?	
7.	What is the total number of delivered credits for all courses in the degree program (major + disciplinary electives) for the review year [(CRS 1: #credits * enrollment)+(CRS2: #credits * enrollment)+CRS3+CRS4 etc.]?	
8.	What is the total number of credits required for the institution's General Education Program plus those required for Graduate Requirements in the review year?	

9.	What is the total number of credits in the major that were shared with another unit through a formal arrangement, by unit (number of credits accepted from CCV through a designated pathway agreement; number of credits for cross-listed courses with another department; number of credits obtainable through a sister department in another institution in the System; etc.)?	
10.	What is the total number of credits of the major that were earnable through high-impact learning experiences (internships; co-ops; community service; applied research; ect.)?	

REVIEW TABLE

1. Has the degree program been in existence for five or more years?
That is, beyond a pilot phase, have students been matriculating into an approved and coded degree program with the expectation of earning a titled degree for five continuous academic years?
YES NO

2. Does the degree program have 5 or more graduates or 25 or more active majors in the most recent year or a running three-year average?
 YES NO

First Layer of Review		
Cost	Disciplinary Cost Category. See below.	...
Cost & Quality	Count of students enrolled in the degree program per total FTF assignments dedicated to instructing, advising, and overseeing the major. Compare the overall percentage and the percentage delivered by FTF with disciplinary expertise (terminal degree and appropriate academic training) corresponding to the content.	Target range: 1:25 to 1:40
Access 1	Percentage of General Education and Graduation Requirement credits that could be satisfied within major coursework in the review year:	Target Range: 30-60%
Access 2	Percentage of a major's <i>shared credits</i> through shared coursework with other degree programs, both horizontal (e.g. Bachelor-to-Bachelor), and vertical (e.g. Associate-to-Bachelor-to-Master-to-Advanced Study) in the review year:	Target Range: 30-50%
Quality	Degree Program Distinction Category. See below.	...

Additional Program Notes:

Degree Program Cost Categories

Per NCES, 2003

<p>A. Low Cost Degree Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Geography •Mathematics •Sociology •History •Psychology •Philosophy •Political Science •Economics •Communications (unless equipment is needed) •Anthropology •Geology 	<p>B. Mid-Cost Degree Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Science • Business • Biology • Foreign Language • Education • Physics • Art • Chemistry 	<p>C. High-Cost Degree Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engineering • Nursing
--	--	--

Degree Program Distinction Categories

The faculty should establish various designations for identifying program distinctions.

SIGNATURE PROGRAM: Degree programs that are only available at one institution within the VSCS that serve particular career, community, civic, and, or, self-in-society ends. These are not just programs with titles that vary from those at other institutions; these programs have learning objectives, curriculums, and life pathways that are notably unique and socially valuable. Currently, for example, it appears that NVU has at least ten on-campus and two primarily online undergraduate Signature Programs (see the table below). Each institution hosts a similar array of programs.

<p>Anthropology & Sociology Atmospheric Sciences Creative Writing Data Science (new) Human Services (Applied Psychology) Music Business & Industry</p>	<p>Outdoor Education & Adventure Leadership Performance, Arts, & Technology Professional Publishing (new) Woodworking & Furniture Design Professional Studies Wellness & Alternative Medicine</p>
---	--

CHOICE PROGRAM: Degree programs that are rare in higher education and notably meticulous in design and implementation at a VSCS institution. That is, for example, programs that have a highly specialized curriculum constructed in accordance with scholarly, professional, industry, or accreditation standards, which is instructed primarily by FTF with discipline-specific credentials, extensive experience, recognized public service and activism and/or notable scholarship. Terminal degrees should be a factor. Degree programs with outside accreditation will general earn this identity.

RISING or BUILD PROGRAM: An established or new degree program targeted for development. A fresh curriculum, new faculty or faculty newly organized in a collaborative team, innovative instruction or format, and ambitious prospects. These are intended to be high-craft specialty programs that attract a small collection of dedicated, creative, and diligent students.

IDENTITY PROGRAM: A program that helps to identify the institution’s character, such as Outdoor Education at NVU.

STEADY PROGRAM: Popular programs that maintain steady enrollment and recognition over time.

ITEM 4b:
CCV/VTC Collaborations

CCV/VTC Collaborations

Community College of Vermont and Vermont Technical College are working on collaborations in four major areas:

1. Co-location and shared space.
2. Hartness Library expansion adding Castleton University and Northern Vermont University.
3. Certificates and pathways from CCV to Vermont Tech.
 - a. Expand on success of the Certificate in Allied Health looking at engineering and other opportunities.
4. Collaborations on business operations.
 - a. Assessing future opportunities.

Current Collaborations:

Space

- Co-located in Brattleboro and St. Albans.
 - St. Albans is a major expansion for both CCV and VTC nursing.
- VTC rents space from CCV in Upper Valley, Newport

Hartness Library

- Shared library between CCV and VTC
- Shared staff and resources. The budget is collaboratively developed and budget contribution by institution on an FTE basis.

Business Operations

Deans of Administration collaborating on business operations.

Programs

Allied Health

- CCV AHP certificate pathway from CCV to VTC (70% of nursing grads started at CCV); students also use this as pathway for Dental Hygiene and Respiratory Therapy programs
 - Next steps: collaboration on a pathway between AHP and Radiography program
- CCV summer Microbiology courses serve VTC students around the state as they transition from PN to RN programs
 - Next steps: collaboration on the registration process for summer

Certificate and Degree Direct Admissions pathways

- Business pathways between CCV Accounting & Business to VTC's Applied Business Management, Business Technology & Management, and Entrepreneurship
 - Next Steps: Pathways need updating

- Computer Information Technology
 - Recent efforts: CCV changed JAVA programming course sequence to align with VTC
 - Next steps: Create pathways from CCV's Information Tech degree to VTC's bachelor programs in technology, adding to the pathways that already exist between CCV and VTC in STEM
- Manufacturing Engineering Technology
 - Next steps: pathway needs updating
- Renewable Energy Technology
 - Next steps: pathway needs updating
- Software Engineering
 - Next steps: pathway need updating

Courses

- 150 VTC students taking CCV courses this Fall semester, 2020.
- CCV provides many pre-requisite courses for Vermont Tech including allied health.

Non-Credit Trainings

- CCV registrar been working closely with VTC to launch Enrole for non-credit trainings. CCV/Northern Lights and VTC are norming ways to leverage the platform, agreement of registration language (trainers, trainings, etc.). CCV/NL has been using Enrole since August and we just started collecting fees for fall trainings using Enrole.

Workforce Collaborations

- Northern Borders grant funding manufacturing opportunities in Franklin County from 2018-2020
- SWFI - Certified Production Technician collaborations. Four-year collaboration funded by USDOL grant to support custodial parents in industrial skills training. This includes support services including childcare, transportation, career counseling and emergency supports.
- Nursing/apprenticeship partnership – Central Vermont Medical Center/CCV/VTC
- USDOL/VDOL apprenticeship grant expansion: Bookkeeping CCV, Construction VTC, Manufacturing both CCV and VTC, Practical Nursing VTC, Medical Assisting CCV
- Ongoing collaboration on employer specific training, grant opportunities, apprenticeship and more.

ITEM 5:
Spring 2021 Plans

SPRING 2021 PLANS¹ – as of October 13, 2020

Castleton University

Castleton's spring semester will look somewhat different to the fall semester as Castleton will be seeking to provide instruction in a number of different formats. Approximately one-third of the Spring courses will be taught in-person, one-half will be taught online (primarily synchronous), and the remainder will be hybrid (a combination of in-person and online).

- The January Term will run from Jan 4th-22nd, online only.
- The spring semester will begin February 1st (two weeks later than normal).
- The two week-long breaks will be canceled; instead, there will be three instructional break days on Feb 26th, March 16th, and April 12th.
- The semester will end as scheduled on May 14th.

Community College of Vermont

CCV's spring semester will look very similar to this past fall. Spring 2021 classes will be offered in the same formats as this current semester. The semester begins on Monday, January 25, 2021.

Students may choose from more than 700 courses in 5 different formats.

1. Standard online courses – 100% online, with no required in-person or zoom meetings.
2. Synchronous courses – online classes that include regularly scheduled Zoom sessions.
3. Flex courses – self-paced online classes.
4. Accelerated courses – provide the same content as standard courses, but in a condensed time frame.
5. Hybrid courses – combine online learning with limited in-person meetings. The courses offered in this format are primarily lab courses

¹ These plans are subject to revision and change depending on evolving guidance from the Governor, the Vermont Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the federal government, *etc.*

where it is very difficult to stage all of the labs in a virtual environment.

Northern Vermont University

Northern Vermont University's spring semester will look very similar to NVU's fall semester. We will welcome our students back to our campuses to begin classes February 1st (two weeks later than normal).² Instruction will take place in a variety of formats, including in-person, hybrid, remote, and online, with the breakdown in delivery following the same percentages as the fall.

- The Winter Term will run from January 4th-29th, online only.
- The spring semester will begin February 1st (two weeks later than normal).
- The two week-long breaks will be canceled. Based on feedback from students, we will build in some instructional breaks during the semester. Those dates are being finalized.
- The semester will end as scheduled on May 14th.

Testing and self-attestation: All students, staff, and faculty will be tested (Day 0 + 7) and may be selected for random testing throughout the spring semester. Additionally, the NVU community will continue to self-report on COVID-19 symptoms throughout the semester.

Vermont Technical College

Vermont Tech delivery will be identical to the fall. Remote lectures and lab weeks sporadically throughout the semester with each student having up to 3 lab weeks. We are still finalizing plans.

- Classes commence February 1st (two weeks later than usual) with remote delivery for the first two weeks to enable residential students to quarantine.
- Testing of residential students on day 0 when they arrive and quarantine until their second test again on day 7.

² The February 1st start date is still being finalized.

- Commuting students obtain a test before coming to campus for their first lab week.
 - Any commuters from a region with 400 or more cases per 1 million or equivalent test prior to each lab week.
- Lab weeks begin the 3rd week.
- There will be no “traditional” spring break.
 - We will have two weeks in the semester with two consecutive days off mid-week to avoid the temptation to travel.
 - Residential students must remain on campus although we may loosen travel restrictions to 30 miles from campus to enable travel beyond Randolph.
- Shift all classes and exams to remote delivery after the end of classes May 7th or 14th, TBD.
 - Send students home May 7th or 14th.
- Last day of exams on May 21st.³

There will be variations to this calendar for our health occupations, veterinary technicians and professional pilots’ students to accommodate lab, clinical and flight time. Some may be returning to the residence halls by January 15, 2021.

³ The final schedule to be determined.

Safe and Healthy Return to Campus

1

Published:
July 6, 2020

UPDATED: October 15, 2020

Mandatory Guidance for College and University Campus Learning

Higher education institutions are an important component of Vermont's economy, workforce development system, culture and vitality. The State of Vermont aims to make Vermont the safest place to go to college in the country during this public health emergency by establishing strict safety protocols that all institutions must follow. Administrators, faculty, staff and students must comply with this guidance to protect the health and safety of themselves and the communities that house these institutions.

This guidance is in addition to – not a substitute – for the existing [Work Safe Guidance](#). In the event these two documents contradict one another, this document supersedes the Work Safe Guidance. These guidelines are aimed to minimize the likelihood of an outbreak, and strictly following these guidelines will reduce both the likelihood of an outbreak and the severity of an outbreak. Institutions must follow both sets of guidance and operate any campus facilities that fall under the Work Safe Guidance in accordance with that guidance (for example, a gym or retail operation must comply with the corresponding Work Safe Guidance).

The State recognizes each institution is unique. Therefore, each institution shall adopt a written restart plan and keep it on file at the institution available for inspection by any employee, student or State Agency upon request. These plans must, at a minimum, outline how they will comply with this guidance. This guidance serves as a minimum standard for safety. Institutions are encouraged to exceed these baseline recommendations.

This document was created in collaboration with the state's colleges and universities, the Vermont Department of Health, the Vermont Department of Public Service, the Vermont Agency of Education and the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development.

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1) Decrease risk of individuals infected with COVID-19 from entering the campus through effective public health prevention

a. Health Safety Contract:

All students, faculty and staff shall sign an institution specific health safety pledge that affirms the individual is familiar and willing to comply with the state's COVID-19 restrictions and the institution's health policies. Institutions shall enforce this contract, and immediately remove any student who violates major public safety components of the contract (such as quarantine requirements) from campus for the duration of the COVID-19 crisis. Because of public health, existing judicial processes must err on the side of public health and remove a student from potentially further endangering the community by immediately removing the student from the campus. Faculty and staff who choose not to wear a face covering or follow existing public health safety standards shall face immediate disciplinary action.

b. Quarantine:

In order to protect the health and safety of students, faculty, staff and the community, all institutions must implement strict quarantine procedures for students returning to campus **at the beginning of semesters, after breaks, or after out-of-state travel by students to places requiring quarantine** using one of the following health protocols:

HOME STATE: If traveling to Vermont in a private vehicle without making a prolonged stop (avoid gatherings such as restaurants, limit gas stops, if overnight travel is required – reduce social contacts), quarantine at home for 14 days immediately prior to traveling to Vermont (individuals may complete a shorter quarantine if they receive a negative COVID-19 test after day 7 and travel directly to Vermont without breaking the quarantine); OR

IN VERMONT AFTER MASS TRANSIT TO VERMONT: If traveling to Vermont with people from multiple households, via bus, rail or commercial airlines, individuals must quarantine for 14 days upon arrival to Vermont (after day 7 the individual may get a COVID-19 test and upon receiving a negative result, end their quarantine); OR

NON-QUARANTINE COUNTIES: Students traveling to Vermont from a non-quarantine county as identified by the [Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development](#) **as of three weeks before in-person instruction begins on the campus**, who travel in a private vehicle without making a prolonged stop, may arrive without completing a quarantine.

Institutions must verify that students who need to complete a quarantine in Vermont do so. Students may quarantine in one of the following locations:

- At a private residence in Vermont, including the student's Vermont apartment; OR
- At a lodging property in Vermont including hotels and short-term rentals; OR
- In a college residence hall, under the following conditions:
 - **Campus-wide quarantine:** Students required to quarantine are brought back 14 days earlier than non-quarantine students and the entire quarantine cohort quarantines on the campus together for 7 days through negative COVID-19 test results. Institutions must ensure strict social distancing between staff while the students are on campus quarantine. Students are confined to the campus but may leave their residence hall for meals and activities. They shall practice strict social distancing from other quarantining individuals; OR
 - **Residence hall quarantine:** Students required to quarantine are isolated in the smallest groupings possible, and all services are provided to the students in their residence hall, including meals, learning, orientation, etc. The quarantine shall be 14 days or may end if a negative COVID-19 test result is received after day 7. The students have no interaction with individuals outside their quarantine cohort during the quarantine. Campuses may have more than one quarantine cohort on campus.

These quarantine policies will allow the Department of Health to work with colleges to implement isolation and quarantine policies for ill students and any individuals who have had close personal contact with those students.

For students who have a positive test on day 7, isolation procedures and contact tracing must be immediately initiated as in section 3.

c. Health Screenings:

All students must conduct a health screening prior to or upon campus arrival. This screening survey shall require an individual to verify that he or she has no symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, congestion or runny nose, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea). It is strongly recommended that a temperature check be conducted by the individual at home or a non-contact temperature check be conducted by the institution. Institutions may create systems that work best for their unique operations, including conducting the survey electronically or over the phone, but institutions must be able to demonstrate, if asked by employees or State health officials, how the system ensures employees have been pre-screened for symptoms before they enter the campus.

d. Register for Sara Alert:

Institutions shall ask students, faculty and staff to register with [Sara Alert](#) to get daily reminders via text, email or phone from the Vermont Department of Health to check for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 upon return to campus. Institutions may alternatively implement their own equivalent health screening tool in the place of Sara Alert.

e. Curtail Visitors:

Students may have two guests with them on move-in day. The guest must meet State of Vermont travel restrictions OR conduct a contactless drop off and quarantine during their visit to Vermont. Colleges should limit outside visitors and have no visitors to residence halls.

During a contactless drop off, guests may not enter any college facilities, must limit activities outside the car to helping the student unload at the curb, and must avoid contact (within 6 feet of any individual) with anyone outside their household. Those guests unable to complete a day trip to conduct the drop off may stay at a lodging property only if they quarantine at that property for the duration of the stay. Quarantine means they do not leave the room or house in which they are staying and make no trips to the grocery store, restaurants or any other places where they may come in contact with others. Using lodging property amenities such as pools, spas, gyms, recreation equipment or other general use facilities is also not permitted. If a guest traveling from a quarantine county stays with family or friends at a private residence, the individuals hosting that guest must quarantine upon the guests departure.

f. Testing:

The institutions shall ensure that all students (no matter where they come from) will undergo a COVID-19 testing protocol arranged for by the institution **upon a student's return to campus for the semester, upon return from a break, or if they travel out of state to places requiring quarantine by the state's travel requirements.** This testing requirement does not eliminate the need for quarantine. The cost of the testing protocol will be the responsibility of the institution or individual. The State will consider the requirements of Section 19 of H. 965 in collaboratively working with the institutions to identify a mechanism to pay for the cost of testing.

- i. All students from a quarantine county as identified by [ACCD's travel policy](#), or out-of-state students from any county who arrive in Vermont through mass transportation (commercial air travel, bus, train), must have a "zero day" test conducted within 48 hours of arrival at campus. Those receiving tests 48 hours before coming to campus must travel directly to campus in personal vehicle.
- ii. **Students coming to a campus from Vermont, who have not traveled within the past 14 days outside of Vermont, do not need a "zero day" test.**
- iii. All students (including Vermonters) **must have a day 7 test.**

This testing protocol is for both residential campuses and non-residential campuses.

g. Travel:

All institutional out-of-state travel by faculty, staff or students shall be suspended except with institutional leadership permission. Students should only travel to and from non-quarantine counties pursuant to the [ACCD travel policy](#) or plan to quarantine. Upon return from breaks, students, faculty and staff will follow ACCD travel quarantine policy, and will be required to complete the return to campus quarantine and testing protocol contained in this document.

h. Change Academic Schedule:

Institutions must modify their academic calendars to reduce the instances of students traveling outside of Vermont and returning to the campus. **When students participating in in-person instruction depart campus for Thanksgiving break, institutions must halt all on-campus learning through February 1. This includes in-person short January terms or short-term residencies. Residence halls can open to students who leave campus for the break no earlier than January 15 to allow students who need to quarantine to do so before February 1 in-person instruction begins. Limited exceptions may be made for students who must stay on campus or return to campus early if the institutions put systems in place to accommodate necessary quarantine requirements in section 1 (b) of this guidance for both returners and students who return on or after January 15.**

Institutions that have students remaining on campus during and after Thanksgiving due to clinical rotations, graduate research, medical students, personal hardships, hosting international students, athletics, and working students may continue in-person instruction for only for those students that did not leave campus. These students must remain in Vermont or only visit counties and states that do not require quarantine upon their return for the duration of in-person instruction.

Institutions shall eliminate traditional “spring breaks” by eliminating breaks from the spring semester calendar that would encourage out-of-state travel by students, faculty or staff. Alternative breaks that encourage students to stay in Vermont and on campus are allowed.

Institutions that are unable to accommodate these requirements must get approval from the Agency of Commerce and Community Development.

i. Reduce on-campus events:

Institutions shall reduce on-campus programming from outside speakers, presenters and community members, including reducing events that would encourage large crowds such as parents weekend and alumni weekend. All on campus events must comply with [ACCD event guidance](#).

2) Decrease transmission of COVID-19 among staff and students once on campus through effective public health measures.

a. **Face Coverings:**

Face coverings shall be worn by all faculty, staff, students and visitors when in the presence of others and in public. A residence hall is not considered a public space. When outdoors, and more than six feet apart from one another, masks are not absolutely required, but discretion must be exercised, and masks should be carried on the person in the event circumstances warrant their use

b. **Health Screenings:**

All students, faculty and staff must complete a daily health screening prior to interacting with anyone on the campus, including going to class, going to a dining hall, or participating in any campus activity. This screening survey shall require an individual to verify that he or she has no symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, congestion or runny nose, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea). It is strongly recommended that a temperature check be conducted by the individual at home or a non-contact temperature check be conducted by the institution. Institutions may create systems that work best for their unique operations, including conducting the survey electronically or over the phone – but the institution must be able to demonstrate, if asked by employees or state health officials, how the system ensures employees have been pre-screened for symptoms before they enter the campus.

c. **Contact Tracing Journal:**

Students, faculty and staff should consider keeping a contact journal – a list of other people who you have been in close contact with each day. If you do get sick, this would make it easier to get in touch with those people so they can take proper precautions to prevent further spread of COVID-19.

d. **Hand Hygiene:**

Students, faculty and staff must have easy and frequent access to soap and water or hand sanitizer. Handwashing or hand sanitization is required frequently.

e. Cleaning and Disinfecting:

All common spaces (when open to students, faculty and staff) and equipment, including bathrooms, frequently touched surfaces and doors, tools and equipment, and vehicles must be cleaned regularly and, when possible, prior to transfer from one person to another, in accordance with CDC guidance

f. Physical Distancing:

Students, faculty and staff must observe strict social distancing of 6 feet while on campus. Limit the occupancy of designated common areas, so that occupants maintain strict social distancing of no less than 6 feet per individual.

g. Dining Halls:

Institutions shall reduce the density of dining halls by establishing methods such as a meal “shift” system, creating regular tables to reduce interaction, and providing take-out service so students may eat in their rooms.

h. Classrooms:

Institutions must reduce density of classrooms to ensure at least 6 feet of social distancing between students (such as leaving seats empty between students). Students must have cloth face coverings on during classes. Institutions should consider an assigned seating policy to assist in the event of contact tracing.

i. Residence Hall Density:

Institutions should consider limiting shared living spaces to no more than 2 people per room. Common areas shall remain closed or restricted to a capacity that allows for physical distancing.

j. Libraries:

College and university libraries shall operate at a reduced capacity to allow for a reduction in density. This shall not exceed 50 percent of fire capacity, or if a fire capacity is not listed, 1 person per 100 square feet. Library operations must ensure that patrons can physically distance from one-another, including reducing the number of chairs at a table, closing every-other study cubby to facilitate distancing, and reducing the density of computer labs and other areas where patrons may congregate for extended periods of time in the presence of others. At no time should more than 75 people be in any one discrete area of a large library – such as on the same floor, in a single room, or in an event space. Libraries must follow CDC and Department of Health guidelines to clean and sanitize frequently touched and used tables, furniture and other high-touch surfaces. Cloth face covering must be worn by patrons and staff.

k. Athletics:

Institutions must follow all COVID-19 related health and safety guidance issued by the NCAA and the institutions' corresponding athletic conference guidance/rules. In addition, all collegiate sports teams traveling from or to Vermont must comply with the [state's cross state travel guidance and quarantine requirements or have a testing, discipline, and student-athlete code of conduct in place and approved by the Agency of Commerce and Community Development.](#)

Institutions that conduct athletic competitions only within the state's cross state travel guidance and quarantine requirements must limit competitions and travel to competitions with Vermont-based teams or teams that do not require quarantine under the state's cross state travel guidance. A team from outside of Vermont only meets the definition of "team that does not require quarantine under the state's cross state travel guidance" if it too only plays teams that meet Vermont's cross state travel guidance. For example, a team from a Maine "green county" would only be eligible to play a Vermont team if the Maine team adhered to Vermont's cross state travel map when playing other teams.

An institution's alternative plan, which may allow the school to travel more freely and host schools from beyond green counties, must include: three PCR tests weekly for all athletes, coaches and support staff participating in athletic matches; an enhanced social contract in place for all student-athletes, coaches, and support staff that commits students to reducing their social circles; and an actionable plan to remove student-athletes, coaches and support staff from competition and campus if they violate the code of conduct. A positive test from a member of the team community will require the school to cancel or delay any imminent games, practices or travel for the entire team, and will require active consultation with the Vermont Department of Health. This guidance will be reevaluated on or about January 1, 2021.

Institutions that host collegiate sports teams from outside of Vermont will be held accountable for visiting teams' adherence to the state's collegiate athletics COVID-19 policies. Visiting teams must be participating in a three-test-weekly testing protocol (PCR preferred) for high contact sports or at least once-per-week testing protocol (PCR preferred) for low-contact sports. Visiting teams must adhere to strict isolation when coming to Vermont. Game day travel to and from Vermont is encouraged, hotel stays are only to occur when absolutely necessary, and when they do occur, the teams must quarantine while at the hotel, avoiding contact with other guests and staff. Visiting teams may not dine out, sightsee, or participate in any events outside from the athletic competition.

No spectators are allowed at competitions in Vermont. When competing in away games, teams must work with the host team to reduce or eliminate spectators at the host venue. The Vermont team must ensure there is no contact between athletes, coaches and staff and the spectators / the public at the host venue.

I. Performing Arts:

Only performing arts (dance, singing, bands, etc.) that allow for social distancing should occur. Any performances shall comply with ACCD guidance on events.

m. Transportation:

Private charter buses and large multi-passenger vans should only be used if density is reduced to allow for social distancing. This includes reducing capacity to 50 percent, leaving every other seat empty, and every other row open. Cloth face coverings must be worn.

When charter buses and vans are used for the transportation of groups that usually have close contact, such as an athletic team or those from the same household, the institution may exceed the required capacity reductions, but shall ensure facial coverings and social distancing is practiced as practicable.

n. Protect At Risk Faculty, Staff and Students:

Implement strategies and policies to address the needs of faculty, staff and students who have underlying health issues. These include options, where necessary, for remote instruction, special living situations, and course reassignment.

3) Quickly identify individuals with COVID-19 and put containment procedures in place to minimize the impact on students, staff and education

a. Adequate Health Services:

Ensure your institution's health services is prepared with adequate personal protective equipment, access to testing capacity and a COVID coordination plan.

b. Isolation Procedures:

Institutions must have an isolation and quarantine plan in place in the event of a positive test and multiple exposures. This shall include having an arrangement in place to accommodate 5 percent of the college population in isolation and/or quarantine.

c. Campus Contingency Plans:

Institutions need to develop a procedure in the event the Department of Health determines there is an outbreak on campus, including considering for remote learning and quarantining portions or all of the campus.

d. Contact Tracing:

In the event of a positive case, the Vermont Department of Health will coordinate and conduct contact tracing.

Racial Justice Presentation Summary for Board of Trustees Meeting

In summary, we believe that the Vermont State Colleges system should be educators and leaders in advancing inclusivity that raises awareness of social injustice; enhances ethical courage; promotes critical thinking about power, privilege, and equity; and encourages action and equitable solutions. The steps that have been taken by each Vermont State College institution shows that the foundation of this work has been laid.

The Vermont State College Social Justice Partners recommends a 3-Step Equity and Inclusion Action Plan. The Equity and Inclusion Action Plan would allow the Vermont State College system to increase student retention, and increase the recruitment of faculty, staff, and students. The Equity and Inclusion Action Plan would also lead to the development and implementation of proactive diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives which would support the Vermont State College system's strategic plan.

The Equity and Inclusion Action Plan would play a pivotal role in addressing three of the six main priorities of the VSC strategic plan. Strategy 2: Improve the retention and graduation rates at our colleges. Strategy 5: Operate as a more integrated system to expand student opportunities and achieve operational efficiencies. Strategy 6: Increase state financial support and other supplemental revenues. As we grow to become more diverse and inclusive on our campuses, and as a system, we will also need to incrementally invest in this transformative future.

We ask that the Board of Trustees support the following recommendations which would help the VSCS to become more innovative and inclusive of all forms of social justice

3-Step Equity and Inclusion Action plan

1. Engage with the Board of Trustees to support work in all Vermont State College institutions to evaluate potential barriers and develop strategies focused on recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce and student body. A data analysis focused on access, retention, excellence, and institutional receptivity would be applied, supporting the need to move to the next step. We strongly believe that applying what we learn from the data will lead to growth in becoming a more diverse and inclusive Vermont State College system. With this growth, as with any growth, we will need additional means and commitment from the Board of Trustees to support the diverse and inclusive community that develops.
2. Support hiring a Coordinator of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for the Vermont State College system. This position would directly serve all campuses but would be housed at a particular campus. This position would work with an advisory group comprised of staff, students, and faculty from each campus. This position would report directly to all presidents.
3. Support hiring a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer for each campus within the Vermont State College system.

All steps focus on the development of a vision and effective strategy that advocates for the importance and value of a diverse and inclusive college environment. Each step will also engage faculty, staff, and students to build a welcoming and inclusive culture for all Vermont State College institutions.

The foundation has been laid for this work to be done. Our 3-Step Equity and Inclusion Action Plan will not happen overnight. It is a process that the VSC will need to continue to build. We know that transforming a community will take work both through revision of policy and systems, as well as meaningful self-reflection on our culture. Each step of the plan will support both initiatives: the task-oriented work of analyzing and revising policy, and the process-oriented work of self-reflection and cultural change. If a cultural shift is to be expected, the process must have the visible and unwavering support from the Board, the Chancellor's Office and the administrative teams, so that the campus communities know this work is a priority.

Creating and sustaining equitable means of access and opportunity for all people, through understanding and addressing the root causes of social injustice and developing ground-breaking solutions, will allow the Vermont State College System to create transformational and innovative experiences for faculty, staff, and students on all campuses.