


MEMORANDUM

TO: VSCS Board of Trustees

FROM: Sophie Zdatny, Chancellor 

DATE: September 17, 2021

SUBJECT: Board of Trustees Business Meeting on September 21, 2021

Trustees:

The materials are now available for the upcoming annual Board meeting scheduled for **9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, September 21, 2021**. The meeting will take place via Zoom and will be livestreamed on YouTube. We will also be making a physical space available for any members of the public who wish to come to the Chancellor's Office to view the meeting now that the Governor's emergency executive order has been lifted.

The meeting will start with a resolution honoring **Trustee Linda Milne** for her many years of service on the Board, in a variety of capacities.

Following approval of the August 4, 2021 meeting minutes, **Bruce Ortiz and Katy Campbell of VisionPoint Marketing** will provide a presentation on their recommendation for the name for the new university. They will explain the qualitative and quantitative research on the potential name and branding that has been conducted to support their recommendation. As a reminder, the Board is not being asked to vote on the recommendation at this Board meeting. We will be providing an opportunity for the submission of written public comment and a listening session with the Board on Wednesday, September 29th at 6:30 p.m., after which the Board will be asked to vote on the recommendation.

The **Finance and Facilities Committee** and **Education, Personnel and Student Life Committees** will provide reports from their recent August meetings, followed by oral **reports from the Presidents**.

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

**Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees Business Meeting
Tuesday, September 21, 2021 at 9:30 a.m.
Via Zoom Meeting/YouTube Stream and
Conference Room 101, 575 Stone Cutters Way, Montpelier, VT**

Agenda

1. Call to order
2. Resolution Honoring Trustee Linda Milne
3. Approval of August 4, 2021 Meeting Minutes
4. Presentation by VisionPoint Marketing on recommendation for name of the new university
5. Report of Finance and Facilities Committee
 - a. Approve Elizabeth Dolci Scholarship in Science and Sugarman-Sedutto Endowment Change Request at Northern Vermont University
6. Report of Education, Personnel and Student Life Committee
 - a. Approve suspension of Policy 101 reviews for 2021-2022 and 2022-2023
7. Reports from the Presidents
8. Additional Business
9. Comments from the public – sign up here: www.vsc.edu/signup
10. Adjourn

Next meeting – Special meeting of the Board to be held on **Wednesday, September 29, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.** as a virtual listening session on the recommendation for the name of the new university, to be followed by a vote on the new name.

MEETING MATERIALS

- Item 1: Resolution 2021-022 Honoring the Service of Linda Milne
- Item 2: August 4, 2021 Meeting Minutes
- Item 3: Elizabeth Dolci Scholarship in Science Endowment
- Item 4: The Kerry Sedutto Scholarship Endowment
- Item 5: Program Array Optimization Report

ITEM 1:

Resolution 2021-022 Honoring the Service of Linda Milne

VERMONT STATE COLLEGES SYSTEMBOARD OF TRUSTEESRESOLUTION 2021-22Resolution Honoring the Service of Linda Milne

- WHEREAS, Linda Milne has served on the Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees for a total of 17 years from 2004 to 2021, having been appointed twice by Governor Jim Douglas and subsequently by Governor Peter Shumlin; and,
- WHEREAS, during her tenure, Linda dutifully served on Finance and Facilities, Audit and Nominating committees, serving as chair of the Audit committee and chair of the Nominating committee; and,
- WHEREAS, during her tenure, Linda was elected Secretary and later Treasurer of the Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees thereby serving with distinction on the Executive committee; and,
- WHEREAS, during her tenure, Linda was a member of various Presidential Search committees; and
- WHEREAS, Linda has completed a distinguished professional career spanning 40 years of experience in accounting, auditing, lobbying and public relations; and,
- WHEREAS, Linda's professional affiliations include the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Vermont Society of Certified Public Accountants, and the Institute of Internal Auditors (Green Mountain Chapter); and,
- WHEREAS, Linda is a proud member of the Montpelier Rotary; and
- WHEREAS, the Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees and the VSC System have been enriched by the totality of Linda's professional accomplishments and community participation; and,
- WHEREAS, the Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees have enjoyed Linda's wit/wisdom and respected her "without fear or favor of anyone" guidance at committee and board meetings; and,
- WHEREAS, Linda has been a passionate and consistent advocate for affordable higher education; therefore be it
- RESOLVED, the Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees expresses its sincere appreciation to Linda Milne for the benefit she has brought to the State of Vermont, to its colleges and universities, to its hundreds of faculty and staff; and most important, to its thousands of students.

Linda, we are honored to have served with you. We wish you the very best.

Approved: September 21, 2021

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

ITEM 2:
August 4, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the VSCS Board of Trustees Meeting held Wednesday, August 4, 2021, at 1:00 p.m. 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 Wednesday, August 4, 2021, via ZOOM.

Board members present: Lynn Dickinson (Chair), Janette Bombardier (1:35 p.m.), Megan Cluver, Ryan Cooney, Dylan Giambatista, Shirley Jefferson, Bill Lippert, Karen Luneau, Jim Masland, Mary Moran, Shawn Tester, Sue Zeller

Absent: Adam Grinold, David Silverman

Presidents: Elaine Collins, Joyce Judy, Pat Moulton

Chancellor's Office Staff: Donny Bazluke, Network/Security Analyst
Kellie Campbell, Chief Information Officer
Wilson Garland, Director of Transformation Projects
Katherine Levasseur, Director of External & Governmental Affairs
Katrina Meigs, System Director of HR & Benefits Administration
Jen Porrier, Administrative Director
Kathryn Santiago, Assistant General Counsel
Sharron Scott, Chief Financial/Operations Officer
Toby Stewart, System Controller
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
Tanya Bradley, Director of Financial Aid, Northern Vermont University
Bobbi Jo Carter, Associate Dean of Distance Education Programs, Northern Vermont University
Sarah Chambers, Coordinator of Instructional Technology, Castleton University
Stefanie Cravedi, Faculty, Northern Vermont University
Dottie Dearborn, Officer, Financial Aid, Northern Vermont University
Greg Eckman, Assistant Athletic Director of Student-Athlete Development, Northern Vermont University
Jennifer Harris, Executive Director of Development and Alumni Affairs, Northern Vermont University

Penny Howrigan, Associate Dean of Admissions and Enrollment Services, Northern Vermont University
Laura Jakubowski, Chief Budget & Finance Officer, Castleton University
Sara Kinerson, Director of Advising & Registration Center, Northern Vermont University
Tom Mauhs-Pugh, Provost, Castleton University
Ryan McClure, Faculty, Northern Vermont University
Darcie Miles, Executive Assistant to the President, Northern Vermont University
James Nichols, Head Athletic Trainer, Northern Vermont University
Sandra Noyes, President, VSC Staff Federation, Northern Vermont University
Ann Nygard, Director or Center for Professional Studies, Northern Vermont University
Linda Olson, VP Education AFT-VT, Castleton University
Andy Pallito, Dean of Administration, Community College of Vermont
David Pasiak, Men's Head Basketball Coach, Northern Vermont University
Lauren Philie, Director of Development & Alumni Relations, Northern Vermont University
Patrick Rogers, Director of Admissions, Northern Vermont University
Deneen Russell, Bursar, Northern Vermont University
Opal Savoy, Student Reporter, Basement Medicine, Northern Vermont University
Tyrone Shaw, Faculty, Northern Vermont University
Littleton Tyler, Dean of Administration, Vermont Technical College
Beth Walsh, President, VSCUP, Northern Vermont University

From the Public:

Matt Bunting, Managing Associate, Storbeck Search
Mike Fox, Former Dean of Enrollment at NVU
Steve Leo, Managing Director, Storbeck Search
John Mills, Future Interim President of Northern Vermont University
Jim Page, Former Chancellor, University of Maine System
Alicia Weiss, Community Member

1. Chair Dickinson called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

2. Resolution Honoring Elaine Collins

Chair Dickinson read Resolution 2021-019 honoring the service of Elaine C. Collins.

Trustee Moran moved and Trustee Luneau seconded the motion to approve Resolution 2021-019 Honoring the Exceptional Service of Dr. Elaine C. Collins. The motion was approved unanimously.

Many colleagues shared their best wishes and congratulatory messages for President Collins.

3. Approval of June 16, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Trustee Masland moved and Trustee Moran seconded the motion to approve the minutes from the June 16, 2021. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. Presentation by Steve Leo/Storbeck Search on search for President of new university

Trustee Cluver introduced Steve Leo and Matt Bunting from Storbeck Search, thanking them for their guidance and assistance in bringing the diverse voices that make up the community to the search process. Storbeck Search Managing Director Steve Leo and Managing Associate Matt Bunting gave an overview of the typical search process and what the market for potential Presidential hires looks like today. The presentation can be found [here](#).

5. Transformation Update – Project Management

The Director of Transformation Projects Wilson Garland gave an update on the transformation work currently underway and planned for the immediate future. Mr. Garland also presented the draft accountability matrix, the purpose of which is to align accountability to the strategic priorities that have been presented by the legislature and the Board (affordability, accessibility, quality, relevance, and financial stability). The presentation can be found [here](#) on pages 15-25.

Northern Vermont University Provost Nolan Atkins discussed the importance of developing a mission and vision for the new combined entity. These will guide the transformation work as the NCE is being created and, according to NECHE standards, the mission of the institution provides the basis upon which the institution identifies its priorities, plans for the future, and evaluates its endeavors.

Trustee Luneau moved and Trustee Cooney seconded the motion to approve Resolution 2021-020 Adopting Guiding Principles for Developing the Mission and Vision of the New University. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. Approval of federal HEERF III Grant Funding

Chief Financial and Operating Officer Sharron Scott explained the request for approval so the VSCS can receive the third round of Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds (HEERF III). These grants can be found in the materials starting on page 26.

Trustee Cooney moved and Trustee Tester seconded the motion to approve the federal HEERF III Grant Funding. The motion was approved unanimously.

7. Revision to Policy 301

General Counsel Patty Turley explained the need to revise Policy 301 in response to a change in federal legislation relating to the educational benefits available to veterans.

Trustee Luneau moved and Trustee Cooney seconded the motion to approve the revisions to VSC Policy 301 Policy on Determination of In-State Residency for Tuition Purposes. The motion was approved unanimously.

8. Additional Business

There was no additional business.

9. Comments from the Public

There were no comments from the public.

10. Board Trainings

- a. Policy 311, *Non-discrimination and Prevention of Harassment and Related Unprofessional Conduct*
- b. Policy 311-A, *Sexual Harassment, Sexual Exploitation, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking*
- c. Policy 316, *Protection of Minors and Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect*

General Counsel Patty Turley and Assistant General Counsel Kathryn Santiago presented the annual training on current Title IX regulations, Policy 311-A, Policy 311, and Policy 316 to the Board.

11. Executive Session

At 3:39 p.m. Trustee Cluver moved that the VSCS Board of Trustees enter executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(1)(B) to discuss labor relations agreements with employees; 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(E) to discuss pending litigation, and 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(F) for the purpose of receiving confidential attorney client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services because premature general public knowledge of these discussions would place the VSC at a substantial disadvantage. The motion stated that no formal or binding action would be taken in executive session. Along with the members of the Board present at the meeting, the Board invited the Chancellor, and the General Counsel to attend. Trustee Luneau seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

The Board exited executive session at 4:30 p.m.

12. Action Taken Upon Exiting Executive Session

Chair Dickinson read Resolution 2021-021 Authorizing Settlement related to EBS Licenses.

Trustee Tester moved and Trustee Jefferson seconded the motion to approve Resolution 2021-021 Authorizing Settlement related to EBS Licenses. The motion was approved unanimously.

Trustee Masland moved and Trustee Zeller seconded the motion to approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement with the NVU-Online Faculty. The motion was approved unanimously.

Trustee Cooney moved and Trustee Masland seconded the motion to approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement with the VSC Staff Federation. The motion was approved unanimously.

Chair Dickinson adjourned the meeting at 4:33 p.m.

UNAPPROVED

ITEM 3:

Elizabeth Dolci Scholarship in Science Endowment

In addition to updates on government affairs, unaudited financial results for FY2021, and an update on transformation projects, the Finance and Facilities Committee reviewed and approved two endowment requests for Northern Vermont University at their August 23, 2021 meeting.

1. **Create the Elizabeth Dolci Scholarship in Science Endowment.** This endowment, created in honor of Dr. Elizabeth Dolci, will support needy students in the sciences attending the Johnson Campus of Northern Vermont University.
2. **Modify an existing endowment.** The donor, Kerry Sedutto, requests changing the name of The Sugarman of Vermont, Inc. Endowment to The Kerry Sedutto Scholarship Endowment. Additionally, Ms. Sedutto requests the addition of “agriculture” to the list of preferred fields the recipient may aspire to work in upon graduation.

Supplemental information on both requests follows.

The committee requests the review and approval of these requests by the Board of Trustees.

NorthernVermont.edu**Office of the President**

Johnson Campus: 802.635.1240

Lyndon Campus: 802.626.6404

August 10, 2021

Sophie Zdatny, Chancellor
Vermont State Colleges System
PO Box 7
Montpelier, VT 05601

Dear Chancellor Zdatny,

I am pleased to send you the New Funding Source Document for establishing a new endowment at Northern Vermont University-Johnson.

Leftover indirect grant funds totaling \$20,666.69 will be used to establish the **Elizabeth Dolci Scholarship in Science Endowment**. Professor Liz Dolci joined the Johnson State College faculty in 1992 after spending 15 years as a research scientist in cell biology at Yale University and the University of Vermont. Over the years, Professor Dolci has accumulated indirect grant funds from her work as a funded investigator with Vermont Biomedical Research Network (VBRN), as NVU's coordinator for VBRN, and as the program coordinator for this grant to UVM. She used these funds to compensate students for full-time research over the summers and to send students to conferences to present their research findings.

Professor Dolci has recently retired and she would like to carry on her support of students by establishing a scholarship for a hard working science major with financial need. The **Elizabeth Dolci Scholarship in Science Endowment** will fund the *Elizabeth Dolci Scholarship in Science*, which will be awarded to returning undergraduate students who meet the following eligibility requirements:

1. Recipient must be majoring in a scientific discipline at the Johnson campus.
2. Recipient must demonstrate unmet financial need.
3. Preference will be given to students who are hardworking and show grit.
4. GPA will not be a consideration when awarding this scholarship.

We look forward to the Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees' approval for the establishment of this new endowment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elaine C. Collins".

Elaine C. Collins, Ph.D.
President

Attachments: Funding Source C document

- NEW FUNDING SOURCE DOCUMENT - ENDOWMENTS ONLY

NORTHERN VERMONT UNIVERSITY

(College Name)

Submit to Chancellor's Office for all activities based upon a new funding source.
Place copy in front of any applicable master file.

1) Name of endowment: (type in all CAPS)

THE ELIZABETH DOLCI SCHOLARSHIP IN SCIENCE ENDOWMENT

2) Granting agency/donor/other funding source: (Attach supporting Documentation)

Professor Elizabeth Dolci, using indirect funds from Vermont Biomedical Research Network (VBRN)

3) Purpose of endowment: (Attach supporting Documentation)

Professor Dolci has recently retired and she would like to carry on her support of students by establishing a scholarship for a hard working science major with financial need. The **Elizabeth Dolci Scholarship in Science Endowment** will fund the *Elizabeth Dolci Scholarship in Science*, which will be awarded to returning undergraduate students who meet the following eligibility requirements:

1. Recipient must be majoring in a scientific discipline at the Johnson campus.
2. Recipient must demonstrate unmet financial need.
3. Preference will be given to students who are hardworking and show grit.
4. GPA will not be a consideration when awarding this scholarship.

4) Proper accounting fund:

☒ Regular Endowment

☐ Term Endowment

5) General Ledger Activity Code(s): (as proposed or assigned)

TBD

6a) Date Endowment Reach Endowment Status:

August, 2021

7) Reporting requirements: (format/to whom/frequency/other)

Annual reporting to Elizabeth Dolci.

8a) Funding amount:

\$20,666.69

8b) ☐ One-time - OR

☒ Ongoing funding (indicate timeframe:)

9a) Is principal use allowed:
(w/Board OK?)

No.

9b) If yes, is replenishment of principal allowed or required:

Not Applicable

- NEW FUNDING SOURCE DOCUMENT - ENDOWMENTS ONLY

NORTHERN VERMONT UNIVERSITY

(College Name)

10) If investment proceeds generated, indicate intended disposition:☒ Per Board Approved Spending Procedure☐ Fully expend for program as prescribed☐ Increase principal for inflation and expend remainder☐ All Investment earnings added for ____ years before expending for endowment purposes begins☐ Other (describe:)11) President:

See memo

12) Date to Ch's Ofc:

August 16, 2021

13) Date Board Approved:

Version 4/17/2008

ITEM 4:
The Kerry Sedutto Scholarship Endowment

[NorthernVermont.edu](https://www.NorthernVermont.edu)**Office of the President**

Johnson Campus: 802.635.1240

Lyndon Campus: 802.626.6404

July 1, 2021

Sophie Zdatny, Chancellor
Vermont State Colleges
PO Box 7
Montpelier, VT 05601

Dear Chancellor Zdatny,

In 2017, a generous gift was made by alumna Kerry Sedutto to establish The Sugarman of Vermont, Inc. Endowment.

Ms. Sedutto was the owner of The Sugarman of Vermont, Inc., but recently sold her successful business and, therefore, wishes for the name of her endowment to be changed. Her proposed new name is The Kerry Sedutto Scholarship Endowment.

The original intent of this fund will not change substantially, except to add "agriculture" to the list of preferred fields the recipient might aspire to work in.

The Kerry Sedutto Scholarship will be awarded to a full-time undergraduate student attending classes on the Johnson and/or Lyndon campus, who is either employed or has been employed by The Sugarman of Vermont, Inc. or to students enrolled in a business or accounting degree program who aspire to work in a business, agriculture, or manufacturing setting, or have experience in those fields. Preference will be given to those who demonstrate leadership skills, participate in community service, and enjoy the outdoors.

We look forward to the Vermont State College Board of Trustees' approval of the proposed changes to this wonderful endowment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elaine C. Collins".

Elaine C. Collins, Ph.D.
President

- NEW FUNDING SOURCE DOCUMENT - ENDOWMENTS ONLY

NORTHERN VERMONT UNIVERSITY

(College Name)

Submit to Chancellor's Office for all activities based upon a new funding source.
Place copy in front of any applicable master file.

1) Name of endowment: (type in all CAPS)**CURRENT:** The SUGARMAN OF VERMONT, INC. SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT**PROPOSED:** The KERRY SEDUTTO SCHOLARSHIP

2) Granting agency/donor/other funding source: (Attach supporting Documentation)

Kerry Sedutto, Alumna '06

3) Purpose of endowment: (Attach supporting Documentation)

CURRENT: The Sugarman of Vermont Scholarship will be awarded to a full-time undergraduate student attending classes on the Johnson and/or Lyndon campus. Priority will be given to students who are or have been employed by The Sugarman of Vermont, Inc. If there are no applicants who are or have been employed by The Sugarman of Vermont, Inc., the scholarship will be available to women enrolled in a business or accounting degree program and who aspire to work in a business or manufacturing setting, or have experience in those fields.

PROPOSED: The Kerry Sedutto Scholarship will be awarded to a full-time undergraduate student attending classes on the Johnson and/or Lyndon campus, who is either employed or has been employed by The Sugarman of Vermont, Inc. or to students enrolled in a business or accounting degree program who aspire to work in a business, agriculture, or manufacturing setting, or have experience in those fields. Preference will be given to those who demonstrate leadership skills, participate in community service, and enjoy the outdoors.

4) Proper accounting fund:☒ Regular Endowment☐ Term Endowment

5) General Ledger Activity Code(s): (as proposed or assigned)

033-37060

6a) Date Endowment Reach Endowment Status:

Gift made in December, 2017 and endowment approved in 2018.

7) Reporting requirements: (format/to whom/frequency/other)

No change to reporting requirements.

- NEW FUNDING SOURCE DOCUMENT - ENDOWMENTS ONLY

NORTHERN VERMONT UNIVERSITY

(College Name)

8a) <u>Funding amount:</u> Established in 2017 with \$10,000	8b) <u>One-time</u> - OR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Ongoing funding</u> (indicate timeframe:)	
9a) <u>Is principal use allowed:</u> (w/Board OK?) No Change	9b) <u>If yes, is replenishment of principal allowed or required:</u> Not Applicable	
10) <u>If investment proceeds generated, indicate intended disposition:</u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Per Board Approved Spending Procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Fully expend for program as prescribed <input type="checkbox"/> Increase principal for inflation and expend remainder <input type="checkbox"/> All Investment earnings added for ____ years before expending for endowment purposes begins <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe:)		
11) <u>President:</u> See Memo	12) <u>Date to Ch's Ofc:</u> August 16, 2021	13) <u>Date Board Approved:</u>

Version 4/17/2008

ITEM 5:
Program Array Optimization Report

Program Array Optimization Project
Report to Education, Personnel, and Student Life Committee
August 19, 2021

Project Summary

The goal of this project has been to develop a comprehensive first draft of an aligned and streamlined academic portfolio for the new combined institution that prioritizes student success, statewide access, and financial sustainability. With support from the Davis Educational Foundation, the academic portfolio optimization project launched on June 24th with over 85 faculty participating. Academic programs and faculty were organized into 13 working groups with an academic affairs liaison providing support to each group; subsequently faculty self-organized into smaller subgroups and consulted additionally with colleagues beyond the working groups.

The charges to the working groups were as follows:

- Develop a single major or a single major with concentrations where enrollments are sufficiently robust;
- Identify opportunities to share courses, including general education service courses, across multiple programs;
- Expand access to programs and courses through delivery modality changes; and
- Design programs that incorporate “meaningful work” (civic engagement, service, internships, research) opportunities for our students to learn within and contribute to our communities.

Working groups submitted completed proposals on August 9th documenting the existing programs encompassed by the proposal and details of the optimized programs being proposed. These details included draft learning outcomes, projected enrollments, projected statewide access using new delivery modalities, projected access pathways from CCV, and preliminary curriculum designs. Proposals also addressed investment and elimination recommendations made by rpk GROUP.

Results

It is impossible to overstate the effort and accomplishment in a very short timeframe by the faculty involved in this summer’s project. Collectively, they have produced a robust first draft of an array of quality, strengthened programs for the new combined university that is on track to meet the optimization goals. From a starting point of 250+ programs and concentrations across the three institutions—evaluated by rpk GROUP as 128 distinct “rolled-up” programs—the current proposals encompass a portfolio of approximately 101 programs, plus concentrations and minors, for the new combined university.

Among the optimizations proposed for the design of the new institution's academic portfolio are:

- Single (i.e. unduplicated) academic programs designed for students to progress successfully through a program at any of the campuses;
- Coordinated offerings and schedules to make it easier for students to choose from a wide variety of electives;
- Upper-level classes offered via a planned rotation of faculty across campuses;
- Distance learning technologies to enable students in smaller programs to be part of a larger cohort and benefit from a wider variety of faculty instructors;
- A plan to merge into a single statewide teacher education department committed to pre-service and in-service teacher development in optimized programs centered on inclusive education;
- Expanded access to non-traditional students via online sections in high-enrolled programs such as business and psychology and hyflex delivery options for engineering programs; and
- Improved instructional efficiencies by sharing courses across programs and concentrations and reducing total sections offered.

Faculty Concerns and Recommendations

Several of the proposals submitted included these introductory caveats:

- We respect faculty governance and expect that any proposal will work itself through the established processes, giving our peers the opportunity to discuss, debate, and consider the proposal in full light of day;
- We believe that curriculum development is a long-term project that requires more than the two months provided by the "optimization" schedule;
- We are guided by our respective disciplines that have developed over many years basic guidelines for what it means to be an undergraduate major in each discipline;
- We are committed to a liberal arts education which recognizes value in education beyond contributions to possible job needs, and we believe that communication and journalism are critical to a liberal arts education;
- We also believe that the liberal arts, and higher education generally, contribute immensely to economic development, and that a hyper-focus on a limited state-wide jobs-projection neglects that contribution;
- While understanding the fiscal constraints which propel the VSC toward "optimization," we believe that the major contributing cause of our current economic deficit is not failure of the faculty to be frugal and resourceful but rather a long history of underfunding from the legislature that is required to support the VSC "in whole or in substantial part with State funds," (16 V.S.A. § 2171).

Need for technology support was a common theme. Specific to the computer science programs, there is a need to provide access to specialized software to students beyond those accessing the software available in labs at the VTC Randolph and Williston campuses. The graduate programs in psychology identified the following as necessary to provide courses using a variety of modalities:

- IT support any time a course is running to address unexpected technological challenges
- Technology in the classrooms that will provide for a great virtual distance learning experience (quality internet service, exceptional audio and visual equipment such as cameras that follow who is speaking, audio at each seat to capture conversations and speakers to distribute sound sufficiently, display so students can see the other class members at distance learning locations, etc.)
- Training for students and faculty
- Accessibility for students with disabilities (audio and visual)
- School psychology program would need access to training materials if certain courses (assessment courses in particular) are offered in various locations. Also, there would need to be someone to supervise practice of test administration.

Additional individual concerns and recommendations included the following:

- Even though no programs in Mathematics were recommended for investment, we seek a Board of Trustee and Chancellor directive to initiate a system wide project on improving MAT 2021 Statistics I, including at CCV. The 5-year course data set provided by rpk Group indicates that 1.5% of all student credit hours produced by the VSCS were in MAT 2021, making it the second most taken course (by student credit hours) in the system. This course is a critical aspect of being an informed and educated member of society, and it is the recommendation of this workgroup that a project—led by the math faculty and with the support of the Board—be undertaken to improve and systematize this course.
- We believe all labs should be in person. Flexibility and accessibility among campuses can be achieved through hyflex options in courses without labs.

Preliminary Evaluation & Recommendations

Over the past week, the optimization proposals have been reviewed by the Chief Academic Officers' Group (CAOs), who have reached an initial consensus determination as follows:

46 programs as proposed meet the optimization charges and should move forward through the work of the VSCS transformation project teams and faculty governance processes, including a review for alignment with the mission of the new institution and financial sustainability.

39 programs require additional analysis and probable revisions to the current programs proposed in order to meet the optimization charges. Our projection is for the CAOs to work with faculty on this analysis and revision in the next two months before moving forward through the mission alignment and financial sustainability reviews and then faculty governance.

16 programs are projected to require significant additional work and review.

Rpk GROUP Recommendations for Program Investment

Among the programs recommended for investment in rpk GROUP's analysis were Business, Computer Software Engineering, Counseling Psychology, and Nursing. Common priority investments proposed for these programs included filling replacement faculty positions, targeted hiring incentives, and resources and support for marketing, recruitment, and program promotion activities. Computer software engineering also identified support strategies to boost enrollment, particularly women and BIPOC students historically underrepresented in this field, and nursing identified support for creative ways of delivering clinical experiences such as enhanced simulations.

Rpk GROUP Recommendations for Program Elimination

In the course of the optimization project, working groups were asked to comment on rpk GROUP's elimination recommendations in the "rolled up" analysis. Upon closer review, working groups identified that most of the underlying programs represented in this analysis were either already closed or incorporated into a newly optimized program or concentration. Of those programs not otherwise addressed, Sports Psychology was confirmed to be eliminated, the Master's in Music Education was recommended to be put on hiatus until after the new unified institution is launched, and the Master's in Software Engineering was recommended for continued improvement action and close evaluation.

Next Steps and Recommended Board Actions

With the launch of the VSCS Transformation project teams, the work on the academic program array will begin to transition into this project structure. Already project core teams and subteams have identified dependencies with the work to define the academic program array, and the proposed optimizations will serve as important points of information in the discovery work of sub-teams including programs and teaching and learning innovation. Work begun this summer by faculty governance leaders will also be critical to supporting the volume of proposed curriculum changes through the faculty governance process within the upcoming 2021-2022 academic year.

As the curriculum design, development, and implementation process will require significant time and attention over the next two years, we are also looking for all appropriate ways to expedite and otherwise stage the workload. For this reason, we are recommending that the Board take several actions. First, we recommend the Board adopt an expedited approach to its [Policy 102 Approval of New Degrees and Majors](#) for all optimized programs that have met optimization goals and charges and have been reviewed for alignment with NCE mission and financial sustainability. We project that by the next EPSL meeting scheduled for October 15, 2021, the vast majority of proposed programs will have met optimization goals and been reviewed for mission alignment and financial sustainability. We therefore propose to bring to EPSL this full slate of proposed programs with summary details for review and approval.

Second, as we project the curriculum transformation work to require significant effort for the next two academic years, we recommend that the Board suspend [Policy 101, Program Review and Continuous Improvement Process](#) or “PReCIP,” reviews for the 2022 and 2023 review cycles. While we expect existing programs to continue ongoing assessment of student learning outcomes, the full five-year assessment cycle culminating in external program evaluations reported to the Board will best be re-established once the new array of programs have launched.

Summary of Proposed Program Array and CAOs Preliminary Evaluation

Note: programs are organized by summer optimization working groups designed to facilitate faculty collaboration.

Agriculture, Plant & Animal Sciences: 5 programs

Veterinary Technology: review and refine proposal.

Landscape, Agriculture & Food Entrepreneurship, Forestry, Diversified Ag: significant additional work and review anticipated.

Athletic Training, Exercise, & Health Science 6 programs

Health Science, Exercise Science, Holistic Health, Health Promotion, Physical Education, Athletic Training: review and refine proposal.

Business & Accounting: 7 programs, 9 concentrations

AS Business, BS Applied Business (+2 degree), Killington program: meets optimization goals.

BS Business, AS/BS Music Business & Industry, MBA: review and refine proposal.

Communications & Journalism: 2 programs, 8 concentrations

BA Media & Communication, BS Digital Communications: review and refine proposal.

Counseling & Psychology: 8 programs

AS and BS in Psychological Science, BS Forensic Psych, AS Human Services and BS in Applied Psych and Human Services, MS Clinical Mental Health Counseling, MA Counseling: meets optimization goals.

MA/CAGS in School Psychology: significant additional work and review anticipated.

Education: 5 programs with 10 licensure and non-licensure tracks for graduate program

Early Childhood Ed 2+2 Program, B.A. Inclusive Childhood Education: meets optimization goals.

Early Childhood & Special Education, B.A. Inclusive Adolescent Education, M.A. Education, 10 licensure and non-licensure tracks: review and refine proposal.

Engineering: 12 programs, “stacked” as 6 associate and 6 bachelor’s programs

AAS/BS Architectural Engineering Technology, AE Civil & Environmental Engineering Technology, AE/BS Computer Engineering Technology, AE/BS Electrical Engineering Technology, BS Electromechanical Engineering Technology, AAS General Engineering Technology, AE Mechanical Engineering Technology, BS Manufacturing Engineering Technology: meets optimization goals

BS Renewable Energy: review and refine proposal

Graphic Design, Fine & Performing Arts: 13 programs

B.A. and B.F.A. in Art, BME Music Ed, BA Music, BA Theater Arts, BA Performance, Arts, & Technology: review and refine proposal

BA/BFA Media Arts, BA/BFA Graphic Design, BA Visual Communication Design, BFA Animation Illustration, MFA Studio Art: significant additional work and review anticipated

Health Professions: 8 programs

PN-AS Nursing, RN-BSN, 4-year BSN, MS Nursing, AS/BS Radiologic Science, AS Respiratory Therapy, BS Dental Hygiene: meets optimization goals

Confirmed additional optimization question: maintain 2 separate accreditations for nursing

Note: new program in Dental Therapy pending

Humanities: 5 programs and 1 minor

BA History with minor, BA Interdisciplinary Studies, AA General Studies, BA Literature & Writing, BFA Creative Writing: meets optimization goals.

Math & Sciences: 17 programs, with 7 concentrations and one minor

BS Atmospheric Sciences: meets optimization goals.

BS Biology, BS Wildlife & Forest Ecology, BS Environmental Science, BS Climate Change Science, BS Natural Science for Secondary Education, AS/BS Mathematics, BS Statistics, BA Management of Information Systems, BS Computer Information Systems, BS Data Science, AS/BS Information Technology, AS/BS/MS Software Engineering: review and refine proposal

Professional Programs: 5 programs

BS Professional Pilot: meets optimization goals

AAS Automotive Technology, AAS Diesel Power Technology: significant additional work and review anticipated

AS/BS Construction Management: no optimization proposal submitted

Outdoor Education and Leadership: 1 program, 2 concentrations

Outdoor Education and Leadership: meets optimization goals

Social Sciences: 7 programs and one concentration

BA Political Science, BA Sociology, BSW Social Work, BA Anthropology, Archaeology, and Geography ("AAG"), AS/BS Criminal Justice: meets optimization goals

BA Global Studies: review and refine proposal