

Vermont State University



AGENDA

Scope & Project Overview

Key Research & Discovery Insights

Brand Pillars

Personality Traits

Looking Ahead & Next Steps



SCOPE OVERVIEW

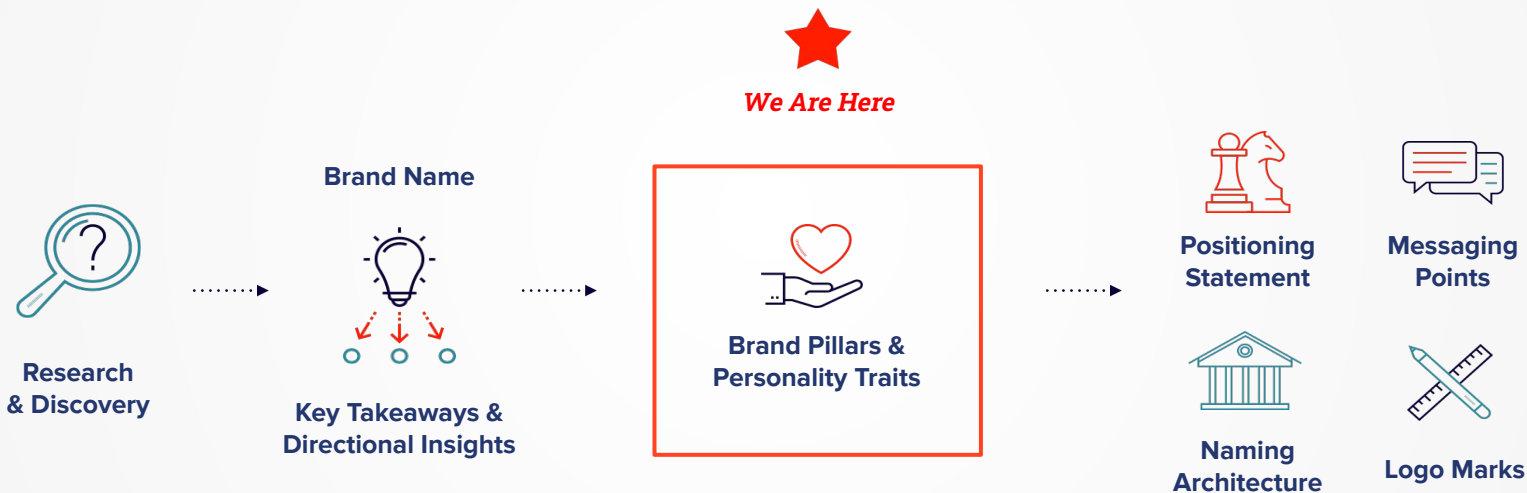


PROJECT GOALS

1. Through **research & discovery**, gain a better understanding of the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for Castleton University, Northern Vermont University, and Vermont Technical College, and for the new institution as a whole.
2. Develop a **new name** for the combined entity: Vermont State University.
3. Identify **directional insights** to inform Vermont State University's brand platform.
4. Establish a **powerful brand platform** that positions Vermont State University for growth, including naming architecture, a positioning statement, brand pillars, and personality traits.
5. Develop distinctive **visual/logo marks** for Vermont State University.
6. Provide **key messages** to be used in Vermont State University's communications.



BRAND PLATFORM DEVELOPMENT





RESEARCH & DISCOVERY



RESEARCH & DISCOVERY

- **Brand audit and marketing review** for each institution
- **Institutional research** for all three institutions
- **Listening tour sessions** with stakeholders (total of 31 sessions), plus four 1:1 interviews
- **Four-hour brand workshop** with key stakeholders across institutions
- **In-person visits to each school and campus**
- **Competitor and peer research** for nine schools and one school system
- **Brand perception study** with respondents spanning Vermont residents to stakeholders from all three institutions



QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

The following slides touch on the tasks conducted as part of the qualitative research.

Northern Vermont UNIVERSITY

REQUEST INFO VISIT APPLY ALUMNI SERVICES DONATE

About Academics Admissions and Aid Student Life Athletics NVU On

DISCOVER NORTH WITH A VISIT TO NVU

Schedule a campus visit to learn all that Northern Vermont University has to offer.

Schedule a Visit

Castleton University
A VERMONT UNIVERSITY

LIVE AND LEARN IN
Vermont

LEARN MORE

Castleton
A VERMONT UNIVERSITY

Be Our Guest!

Join us for
an Accepted
Student Day!

Sign Up
Today!

BE MORE THAN
JUST A NUMBER

Learn More

Northern Vermont
UNIVERSITY

BE KNOWN. DO NORTH.

VERMONT
TECH

Open House

30 APR WILLISTON

Meet our **faculty**. Take a tour.

Learn why **you** belong at VERMONT TECH

REGISTER NOW →

SET YOUR SIGHTS

JOSH'S STORY

SMALL COLLEGE. BIG OUTCOMES.

A GREAT COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

Study at NVU

LEARN MORE

Northern Vermont
UNIVERSITY

BE KNOWN. DO NORTH.

Castleton
A VERMONT UNIVERSITY

ABOUT CASTLETON ACADEMICS CAMPUS LIFE COMMUNITY ARTS ATHLETICS ADMISSIONS

Top Bachelor's
College

In its national list of four-year institutions that award bachelor's degrees, Washington Monthly has ranked Castleton No. 28 overall.

A Lasting Legacy

Attend an
OPEN HOUSE

Tour our Johnson and Lyndon campuses, meet faculty, and learn about our majors, degrees, and financial aid options.

Northern Vermont
UNIVERSITY

REGISTER FOR NOV. 9 or 10



BRAND & MARKETING AUDIT

We examined the creative qualities of each school, their communications and marketing materials, and the ways in which each institution articulates the value of their experience.

Areas of review included:

- Websites
- Social media platforms
- Print and digital publications
- Digital ads
- Photography and videography
- Visual identity & brand guidelines
- Brand positioning
- Messaging
- Previous brand explorations and research



Castleton



Northern Vermont
UNIVERSITY

VERMONT TECH



LISTENING TOURS



LISTENING TOUR STAKEHOLDERS

31 group sessions and four 1:1 interviews with individuals representing the following groups:

- Leadership
- Deans/Department Heads
- Faculty
- Staff: Marketing
- Staff: Admissions
- Staff: Student Life & Student Services
- Community Members
- Current Students
- Alumni



LISTENING TOUR STANDOUT QUOTES

“

Students who are looking for a personal, meaningful educational experience are drawn here. They don't want to be just a number.

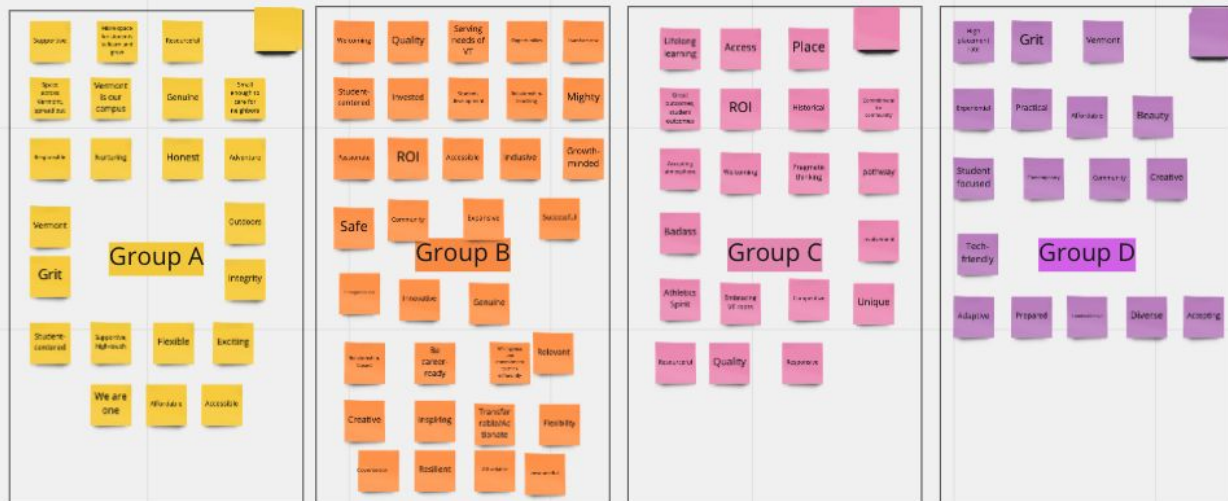
*We listen to our employers. We produce what they need.
That's why we have such a high job placement.*

*We solve a problem – meet a need. All of the things the institution does.
Encouraging students to learn how to serve the local community.*

”



BRAND WORKSHOP



Student-centered	Student-focused	Student-centered
------------------	-----------------	------------------

Nurturing	Supervising	Supportive relationships	Training, encouragement
-----------	-------------	--------------------------	-------------------------

Page 10 of 10

A diagram with three colored squares: a yellow square labeled 'Grit', a purple square labeled 'Grit', and an orange square labeled 'Resilient' positioned below the yellow 'Grit' square.

eclusive	Community	We learning	individual
We learning	Small enough to transfer the glitters	Serving the children	...
Commitment to community	Accessing	Community	Serving needs of VT

Exciting Advertisers

Shouldn't we be taking care for the globe?

We are one

Quality Quality

Lifelong learning

A 3D grid of colored cubes with text labels. The cubes are arranged in a 2x2x2 grid. The top row of cubes (from left to right) are: orange with 'Sensing needs of VET', orange with 'Willingness to embrace change', orange with 'Empowered', and orange with 'Innovative'. The bottom row of cubes (from left to right) are: orange with 'Creative', purple with 'Creative', purple with 'Engaged', and pink with 'Growth minded'. A pink cube with 'Resilient' is positioned below the 'Growth minded' cube.

Proven thinking	Practical	Successful
High classroom rate	Great customer student experience	Pay in class
No	Transfer	

Accessible	Access	Accessible
------------	--------	------------

Thema	Relevant
-------	----------

Tech-friendly



BRAND WORKSHOP TOP DESCRIPTORS

Student-centered

High-quality

High return on investment (ROI)

Nurturing and supportive

Outcomes-oriented and practical

Accessible

Spacious, outdoorsy, room to grow

Welcoming and inclusive



BRAND WORKSHOP STANDOUT QUOTES

“

Our students are brilliant. They have exciting ideas and are transforming themselves.

We prepare students for jobs. And not just their first job.

We know students so well that our relationships continue beyond graduation.

There will be so many more opportunities for students in this larger, expansive university.

”



CAMPUS VISITS












Apply **FREE**
Now
Through
June 15

APPLY TODAY



You'll be on to
something
ambitious

RIT | Rochester Institute of Technology

Get started >

IF YOU HAVE THE WILL,
WE HAVE THE WAY.

Earn your undergraduate degree with
UVM's fully online Guaranteed
Admission Program.

NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

LEARN MORE

THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
CONTINUING AND
DISTANCE EDUCATION



EXPLORE
LIFE AS A
FLYER

Attend an
Open House →




Earn your
ECONOMICS
DEGREE ONLINE

CHAMPLAIN
COLLEGE
BURLINGTON, VERMONT

Explore today's most
in-demand careers

SEE ALL
MAJORS



Oregon State
University

Apply now

It's not too late to start
college in the fall.

Apply Now

OVER 90% OF OUR STUDENTS RECEIVE
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.



CHAMPLAIN
COLLEGE

Where learning
and experience
converge



Reinvent
Business as
a Force for
Good

LEARN MORE



Keene
STATE COLLEGE



APPLY NOW

Plymouth State
UNIVERSITY

Explore today's most in-demand careers:



THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
GROSSMAN
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Sustainable Innovation MBA

COMPETITOR REVIEW



COMPETITOR AND PEER INSTITUTIONS



University
of Dayton

RIT

Rochester
Institute of
Technology



Maine's
Public
Universities

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM



The University of Vermont



Middlebury



Oregon State
University



CHAMPLAIN
COLLEGE



QUALITATIVE RESEARCH KEY TAKEAWAYS



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- All campuses uphold excellence, exhibiting **high standards for academics and career preparation**, and offering prominent programs that prepare students for fulfilling, lifelong careers.
- All three schools exhibit an **investment in the future, in sustainability, and green initiatives**.
- **All campuses prize community**, emphasizing the importance of authentic relationships that enrich personal growth and success.
- The campuses offer more than degrees — they offer **transformative educational experiences** that lead to opportunity, financial stability, and more enriching lives.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The brand workshop, listening tours, and brand & marketing audit indicate that there are **common aspects of the institutions' cultures** including:
 - resourcefulness and a determination to achieve and grow;
 - a sense of vibrance, energy, and adventure;
 - a humble confidence;
 - a commitment to think and problem-solve differently;
 - and a desire to embrace differences and to thoughtfully listen to and learn from others.



QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

The following highlights key slides and takeaways from the Brand Perception study that was conducted as part of this project.



BRAND PERCEPTION STUDY



RESEARCH OBJECTIVES & GOALS

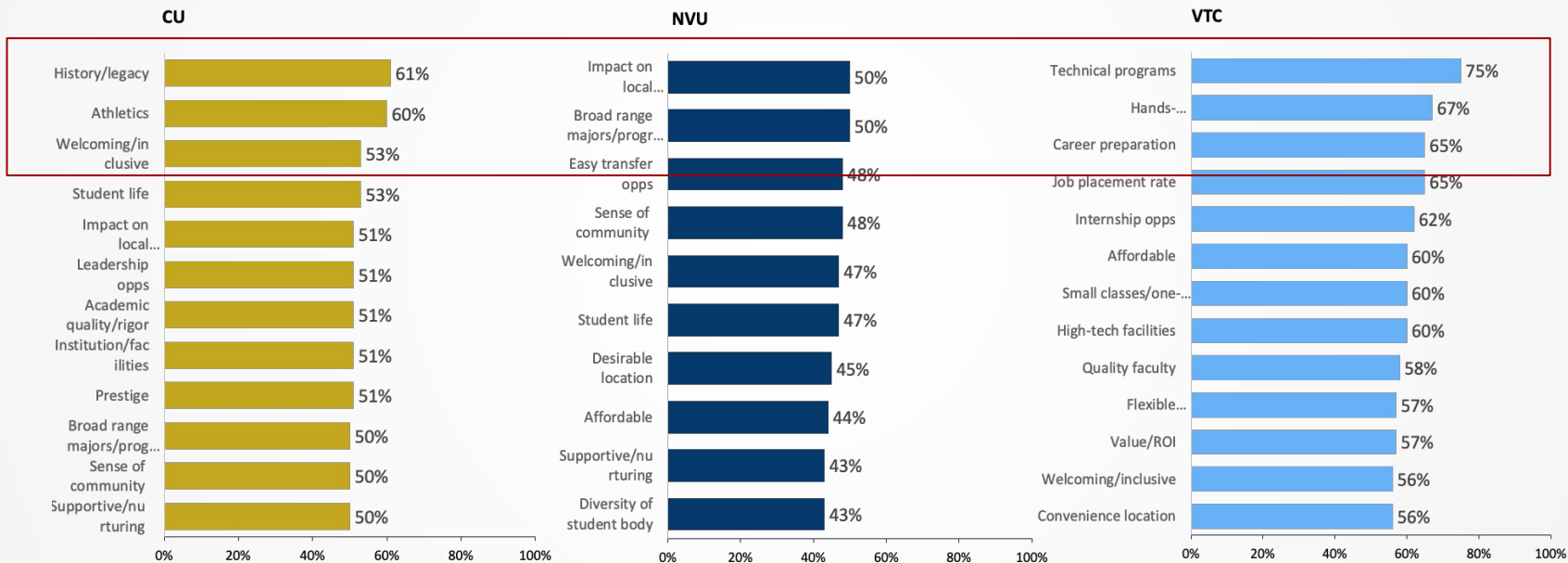
The purpose of the research was to collect and understand community and key stakeholder opinions to inform the creation of the new combined entity.

Topic areas explored included:

- Category drivers
- Competitive landscape including awareness, reputation, consideration, and performance across key attributes
- Perceptions regarding the strengths and challenges of each institution
- School pride and net promoter scores
- Top-of-mind associations
- Top qualities to be maintained
- Naming concepting testing



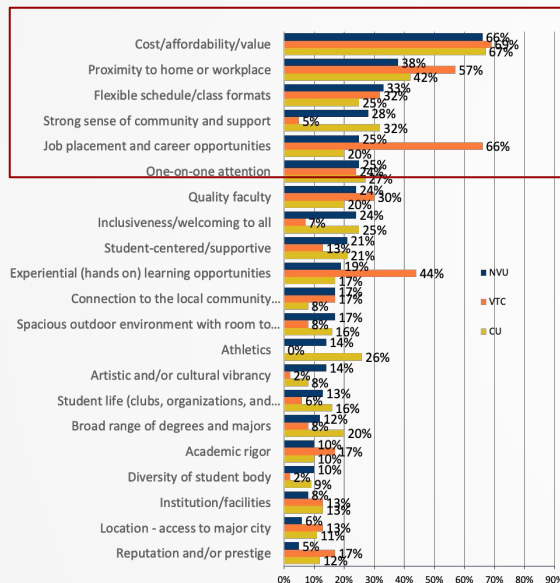
TOP INDIVIDUAL STRENGTHS (VT RESIDENTS)



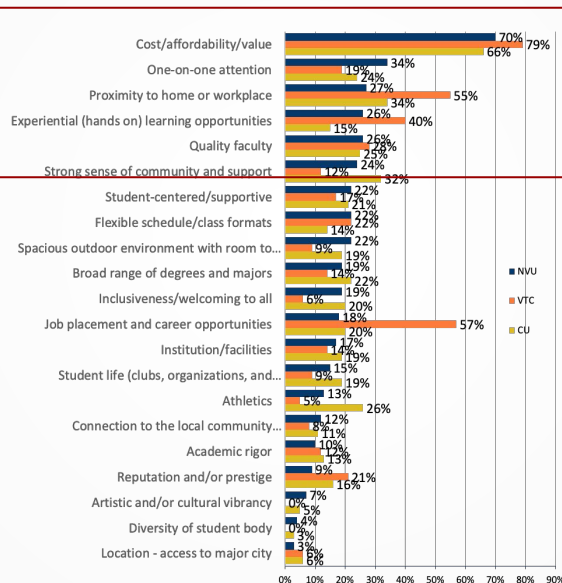
Q. What are the top five strengths you associate with each of the institutions?

SELECTION DRIVERS

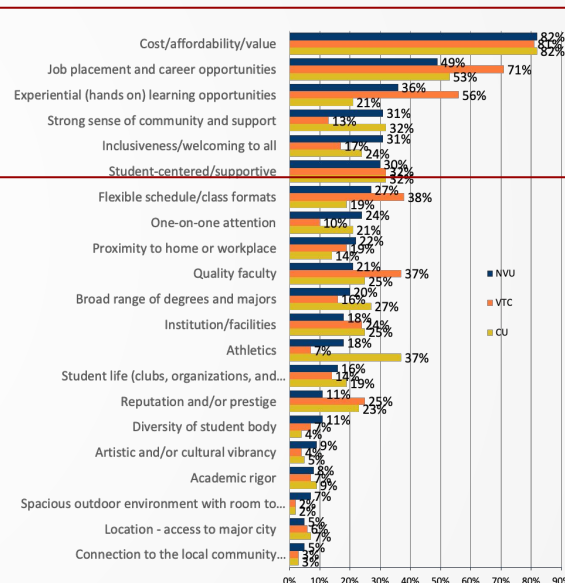
Students



Alumni



Faculty/Staff

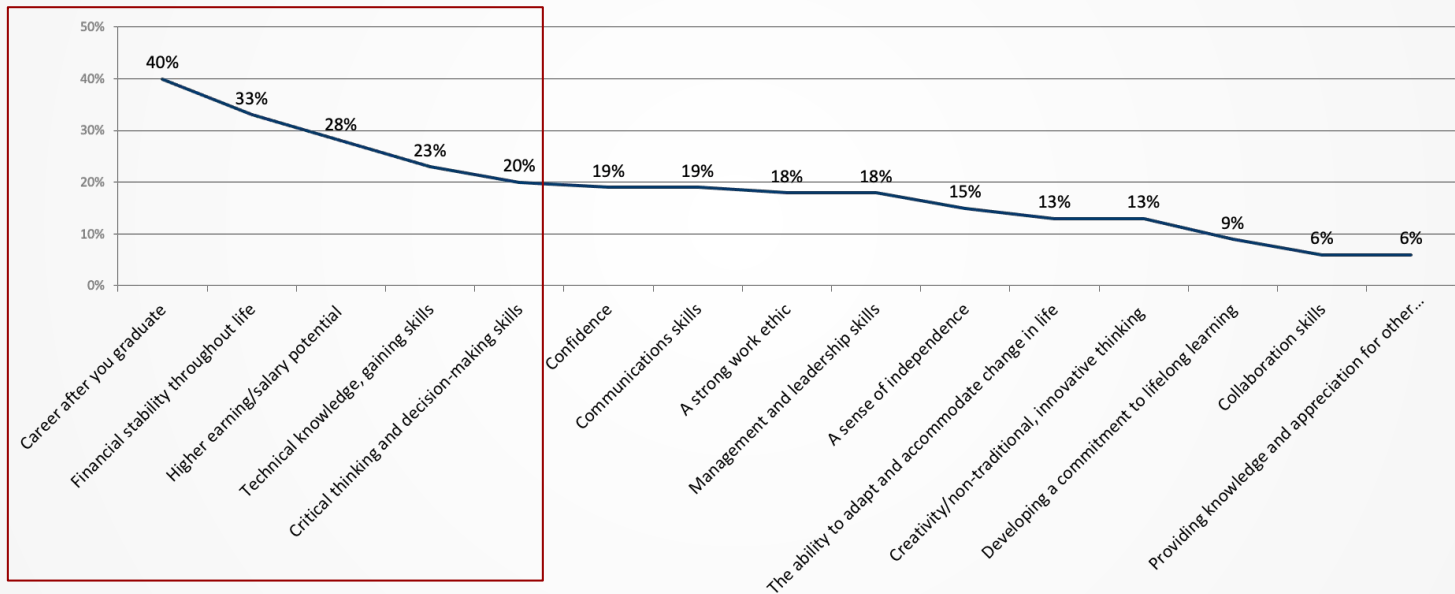


Q. If you were making a college decision today, which five of the following would be most important to your selection process?



RESULTS DRIVERS (VT RESIDENTS)

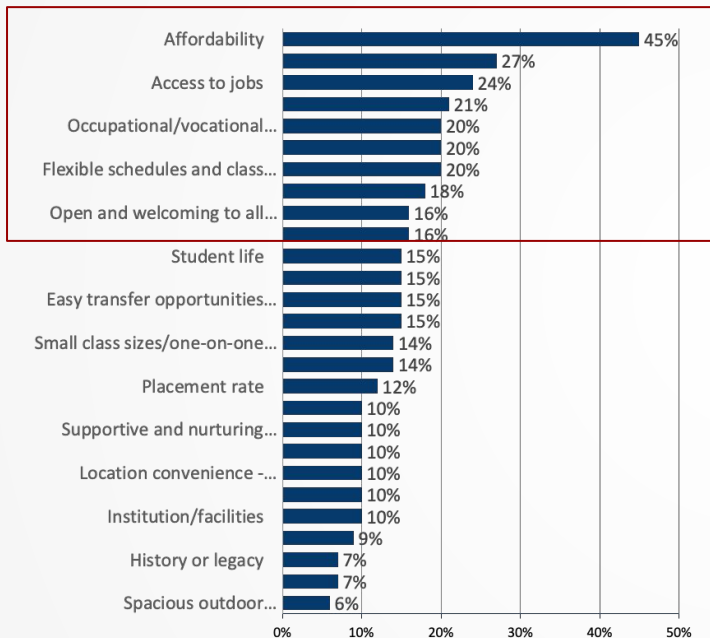
What Vermont residents seek most out of college include careers, financial stability, and higher earning potential.



Q. Overall, what types of RESULTS are/would you most looking for upon graduating from college? In other words, what should college prepare you for? (Select up to three).



TOP QUALITIES TO BE MAINTAINED



Vermont residents place an overwhelming emphasis on the importance of maintaining affordability with the new university.

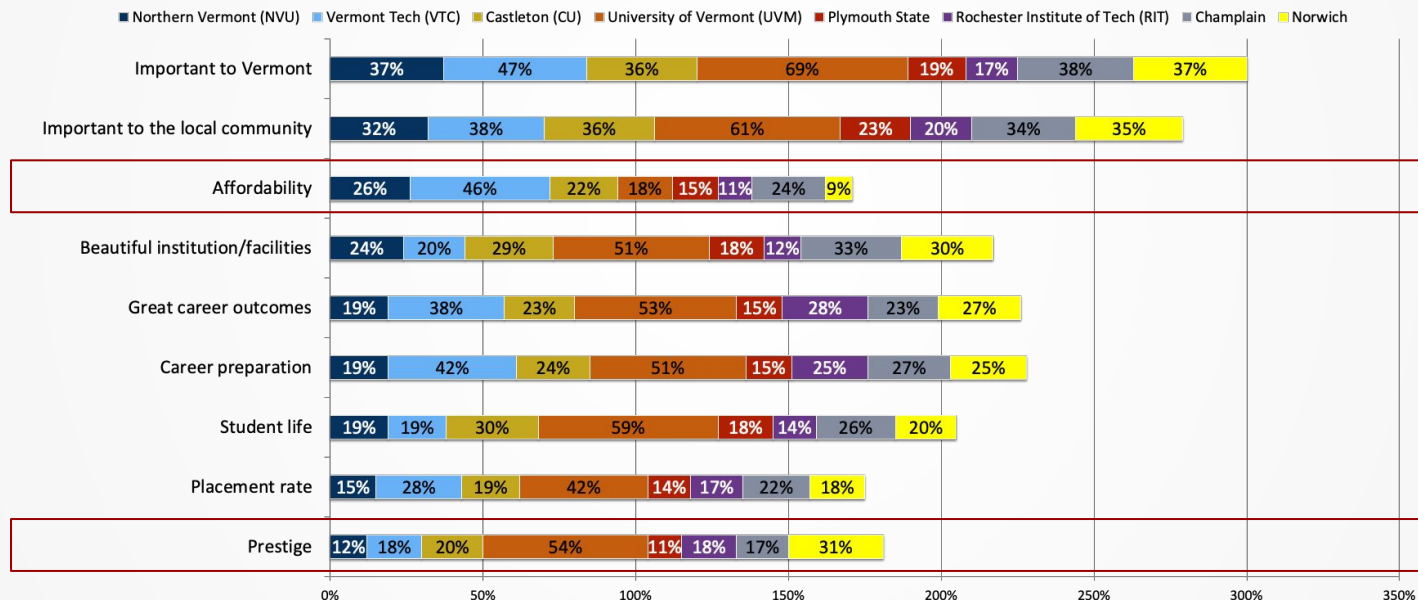
The next grouping of important qualities to be maintained includes career preparation and job placement, occupational/vocational programs, flexibility, and accessibility.

Q. With the understanding that these three institutions are combining to form a new university, what are the top qualities that are most important to retain or keep in the new university? (Select up to five).



ATTRIBUTE ASSOCIATION (VT RESIDENTS)

The length of each bar is a direct representation of how crowded the competitive space is for each attribute.



Q. Which of the following attributes do you associate with each of these institutions? (Select all that apply for each)



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The current institutions are a **trifecta of complementary elements**: Athletics, student life, prestige, and history; service to the local rural community, accessibility; hands-on learning and workforce preparedness.
- There are **shared expectations of Vermont State University** surrounding quality, student-centeredness, affordability, service to the local community, and accessibility.
- **Constituents prioritize**: Affordability, flexible schedules and class formats, job placement & career opportunities, quality, hands-on education, proximity to home, and strong community and support.
- **Outcomes that audiences want most** revolve around creating successful careers and greater earning potential... ultimately, lifelong financial stability.
- There's a **competitive opportunity** to position Vermont State University as a “university of the people”: Accessible and flexible, meeting students where they are, and supporting their pathways to success.



BRAND PILLARS



Brand Pillars

Brand pillars focus on what Vermont State University delivers, the value it offers, and the things that make it distinct. Think of these as the cornerstones of your brand promise.



THE HEART OF VERMONT

We are the heart of Vermont — a university of the people. Our love for Vermont and its citizens, its arresting landscapes, its imaginative business community, and its unique culture drives our efforts to provide a high-quality education and a strong workforce that sustains it.

Being integrated in the lives of our communities means that we have real, meaningful relationships throughout the state and a close pulse on its needs. Partnering with local organizations to offer applied learning opportunities is central to our mission and foundational to the training that leads students to become thoughtful learners and engaged citizens. Through these internships, service learning, research, and co-op experiences, we're doing more than just offering hands-on education; we're contributing to the economic development and vitality of our rural regions for our collective future.

We prepare the next generation of leaders who, by way of education and partnerships, are invested in charting these communities forward into new phases of growth and prosperity that will flow through the state and carry it to greater heights.



FEARLESS EXPLORATION & INNOVATION

Vermont has a storied history of intrepid adventurers and curious people with a knack for ingenuity and resourcefulness. We fearlessly ask “what if,” identify challenges, drum up new ideas, and take action. In fact, we *thrive* on the frontlines of ideation, and we savor the act of coming together to build fresh solutions.

This proactive spirit of discovery is ever-present in the education we provide. Given our expertise in areas like applied technology, engineering, sustainability, and computing, we’re well-prepared to develop students in becoming relevant, future-thinking leaders. In the process, we spark entrepreneurial spirits and imaginative thinking not just in our students, but also in communities across the entire state.

With a past rooted in bold discovery, we look ahead to anticipate what the world will need tomorrow. We’re proud to offer academics relevant to the needs of the future and we’re proud to take part in shaping innovation that moves us forward.

At Vermont State University, we boldly venture out into the unknown, literally and figuratively.



DOERS AND THINKERS

In a world where education outcomes are too often split into distinct lanes — where you're either a doer OR a thinker — at Vermont State University, our students are taught to think AND do. Here, we produce highly-capable, action-oriented graduates who are trained to get the job done while thinking critically about their impact on the world around them.

In our students, we cultivate a mindset of deep analysis and independent thought through a holistic education that pushes them to develop not only great imaginations but also the ability to bridge connections. Whether it's through studying history or horticulture, psychology or science, or music or math, our students become problem-solvers. They learn to write and communicate effectively. And they discover the richness and rewards of being able to examine ideas from a range of perspectives.

Our graduates excel because they learn to effectively apply the knowledge they learned in school to challenges in commerce, politics, technology, science, healthcare, the arts, and beyond. This approach serves as the foundation upon which they learn and continue to grow in their lives and careers.



EXPANSIVE, YET INTIMATE

With a presence felt throughout the state, Vermont State University is an extraordinarily expansive and comprehensive force in the nation's higher education landscape. We offer a broad range of credit and non-credit bearing courses, programs, and credentials. Unified yet localized, our model affords our students more access and flexibility. And our cross-campus collaboration allows us to bring the very best of our faculty and staff to those who value an incredibly high-quality and affordable education.

As we evolve as a university, we hold to the cornerstone of our mission to serve students in a way that maintains the high-touch, personalized approach to teaching and instruction upon which we have built our reputation. Our students are more than numbers to our faculty and staff. They are an integral part of our close-knit communities, each with their own personal learning styles, their own unique stories, and their own education and life goals.

Yes, we may be expansive, but we'll never lose sight of the fact that we do what we do for the benefit of individual human beings.



DREAM BIG, DREAM DIFFERENT

Dreams sometimes get a bad rap. They can be seen as unrealistic, a waste of time, the stuff of children or for those not grounded in reality.

But every great reality began as a dream. As a vision of something new, something different, something that did not yet exist but that was desperately needed.

At Vermont State University, we are in the business of dreams.

Here, we not only encourage the act of dreaming, we provide the education, the experience, the support, and the vast resources to turn dreams into realities. Embedded across our state, our campuses are epicenters of innovation, expert instruction, technological prowess, and shrewd ideation that serve the primary purpose of helping students make their dreams come true.

We inspire and empower all of our students to dream of better lives, of rewarding futures for their families, of a better world for themselves, their communities, and future generations.



DREAM BIG, DREAM DIFFERENT

As an institution, we also dream big. We dream of a world where education is appreciated and where students of diverse backgrounds are celebrated — where students of *all* identities are equitably supported to thrive. We dream of a world where technological advances save the environment, feed the hungry, and heal the sick. One where we hold ourselves to a higher standard by continuously evaluating the relevance, quality, and sustainability of our offerings. A world where every individual who passes through our doors becomes equipped to not just get a better job or an exciting career but also to carry out truly heroic accomplishments.

Our world needs this. It needs us. Because making these dreams come true — pursuing them relentlessly, campus by campus, by way of education, technology, research, and sheer will — is what we do at Vermont State University.

Yes, we are educators, but at the end of the day, we're in the business of dreams.



BRAND PILLARS

The Heart of Vermont

Fearless Exploration & Innovation

Doers AND Thinkers

Expansive, Yet Intimate

Dream Big, Dream Different



PERSONALITY TRAITS



Personality Traits

*Personality traits give institutions the “human touch.”
They flavor the Vermont State University experience and
guide the tone and voice of its messaging and creative.*



PERSONALITY TRAITS

Vermont State University is an institution made up of people who are explorers and risk-takers. We're **adventurous**. Instead of sitting on the sidelines, we dare to jump into action.

We're also a curious and entrepreneurial bunch. We look at things a bit differently, and in the absence of something needed, we figure it out. We tinker, innovate, and create because we're **inventive**.

We're of the people. We're **down-to-earth**, practicing humility and good old fashioned common sense.

We're also open to possibility, all peoples, all ways of learning. Our **open-minded** nature leads us to find joy in the richness of diverse thought, background, and perspective.

We persevere and get things done. Sure, we can boldly venture into the unknown and explore all day long, but here, we hustle, too. Our **tenacious** determination drives us to achieve with hope and conviction.



PERSONALITY TRAITS

Adventurous

Open-Minded

Inventive

Tenacious

Down-to-Earth



SUMMARY

Brand Pillars

The Heart of Vermont

Fearless Exploration & Innovation

Doers AND Thinkers

Expansive, Yet Intimate

Dream Big, Dream Different

Personality Traits

Adventurous

Inventive

Down-to-Earth

Open-Minded

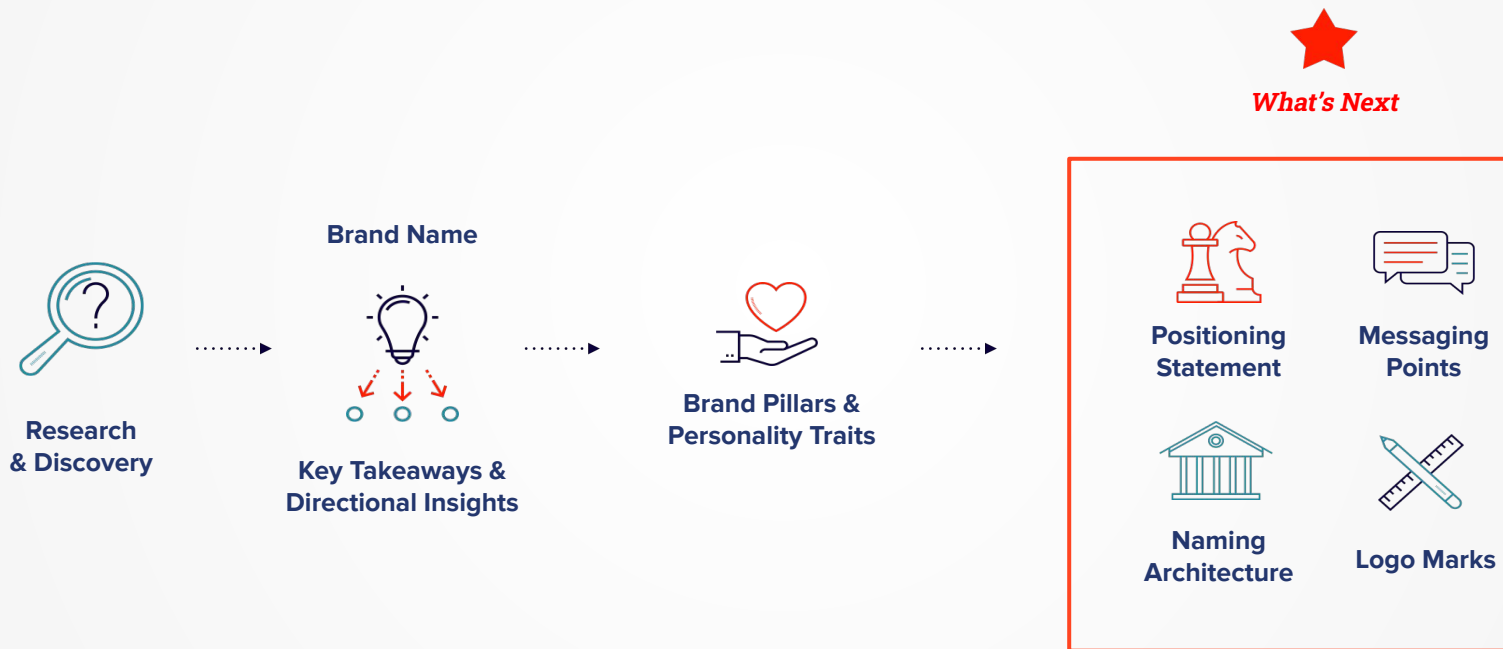
Tenacious



5 **LOOKING AHEAD**



LOOKING AHEAD





Thank you!

