

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee  
Shirley Jefferson , Chair  
Ryan Cooney  
Bill Lippert  
Karen Luneau  
Jim Masland  
Mary Moran

FROM: Kathryn Santiago, Associate General Counsel *K. Santiago*

DATE: May 4, 2022

SUBJECT: DEI Committee Meeting May 9, 2022

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The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee of the Board of Trustees is scheduled to meet on Monday, May 9<sup>th</sup> from 1:00pm to 2:00pm by Zoom.

The focus for this meeting will be for the committee to receive updates from the DEI Transformation Work Group regarding various initiatives, presentation of a updated proposed VSCS Diversity Statement from VSC DEI Transformation Work Group, and to receive an update on the proposed anti-racism pledge from the Student Diversity and Inclusion Task Force.

In preparation for the committee's discussion, in the accompanying materials please find the DEI Committee meeting minutes of March 7, 2022, Summary of Feedback for the VSCS Diversity Statement, Summary of Revisions for the VSCS Diversity Statement and an updated draft VSCS Diversity Statement,

I can be reached directly at (802) 224-3012 if you have any questions. Thank you.

Cc: VSCS Board of Trustees  
Council of Presidents  
Academic Deans  
HR Council  
Student Affairs Council

**Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees  
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee Meeting**

**Zoom Meeting/YouTube Stream  
1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday May 9, 2022**

**AGENDA**

**1:00 P.M.** – Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee Meeting

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of March 7, 2022 Meeting Minutes
3. Update from VSC DEI Transformation Work Group
4. Presentation of updated proposed VSCS Diversity Statement by VSC DEI Transformation Work Group
5. Update on proposed anti-racism pledge from Student Diversity and Inclusion Task Force
6. Additional Business
7. Public Comment – sign up here: [www.vsc.edu/signup](http://www.vsc.edu/signup)
8. Adjourn

## MEETING MATERIALS

- Item 1: March 7, 2022 Meeting Minutes
- Item 2: Summary of Feedback for the Diversity Statement
- Item 3: VSCS Diversity Statement v2.0 Revision Comments
- Item 4: VSCS Diversity Statement v2.1

ITEM 1:  
March 7, 2022 Meeting Minutes

**Minutes of the VSCS Board of Trustees Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee meeting held Monday, March 7, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. via Zoom - UNAPPROVED**

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

The VSCS Board of Trustees Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee met on Monday, March 7, 2022 via Zoom.

Committee Members present: Shirley Jefferson (Chair), Ryan Cooney, David Durfee, Bill Lippert, Jim Masland, Mary Moran

Absent: Karen Luneau

Other Trustees Present: Lynn Dickinson

Presidents: Joyce Judy, Pat Moulton

Chancellor's Office Staff: Donny Bazluke, Network/Security Analyst  
Kellie Campbell, Chief Information Officer  
Wilson Garland, Director of Transformation Projects  
Kathryn Levasseur, Director of Government & External Affairs  
Jen Porrier, Administrative Director  
Kathryn N. Santiago, Associate General Counsel & System Investigator  
Sharron Scott, Chief Financial and Operating Officer  
Meg Walz, Director, Project Management  
Sophie Zdatny, Chancellor  
Yasmine Ziesler, Chief Academic Officer

From the Colleges: Jae Basiliere, Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, Northern Vermont University  
Mary Brodsky, Executive Director Human Resources, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Community College of Vermont  
Sarah Chambers, Coordinator of Instructional Technology, Castleton University  
Tajae Edwards, Student, Castleton University  
Ana Gaillat, Dean of Academic Affairs, Vermont Technical College  
Jenny Gundy, Coordinator of Teaching & Learning, Community College of Vermont

Elaine Harvey, Director of Student Engagement & Persistence,  
Northern Vermont University  
Kyla Leary, Student, Vermont Technical College  
Kathleen Mason, Coordinator for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion,  
Vermont Technical College  
Kevin McGreal, Student, Community College of Vermont  
Hannah Miller, Co-Director, Inclusive Childhood Education  
Program, Faculty, Northern Vermont University  
Patricia Shine, Faculty, Northern Vermont University  
Sabra Anne Snyder, Office Assistant, Northern Vermont  
University  
Devyn Thompson, Student, Northern Vermont University  
Beth Walsh, President, VSCUP, Northern Vermont University

1. Call to Order

Chair Jefferson called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. and welcomed David Durfee, a new legislative trustee, to the Committee.

2. Approval of October 15, 2021 Meeting Minutes

**Trustee Cooney moved and Trustee Masland seconded the motion to approve the October 15, 2021 minutes. The motion was approved unanimously.**

3. Update from the VSC DEI Transformation Work Group

Chair Jefferson invited Jae Basiliere, Northern Vermont University's Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, to provide an update on the work of the DEI Transformation Workgroup. These efforts are to ensure that DEI is being taken into consideration as part of the ongoing transformation work. Dr. Basiliere shared a presentation that can be found [here](#). Dr. Basiliere answered questions from the Committee about the trainings they have been providing to the transformation teams on how to incorporate DEI practices into their design work and make data informed decisions.

4. Presentation of proposed VSCS Diversity Statement by VSC DEI Transformation Work Group

Dr. Basiliere presented a draft VSCS Diversity Statement. The group seeks to develop a system-wide statement that represents the values of the institutions and serves as a check point to anchor back to when doing transformation work. The draft statement has already been reviewed by and preliminary feedback has been received from the Council of Presidents. The next step is for the draft statement to be shared with the college communities to receive additional feedback and

build support for the statement. Mary Brodsky, Executive Director of Human Resources and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Community College of Vermont, added that the importance of receiving feedback from all groups is critical as the intent is to have this document be the “north star” of the system’s institutions. Trustee Lippert suggested incorporating a tone reflective of members of the VSC striving collectively to move forward together and that this work is iterative. Dr. Basiliere agreed that part of the work is to model how to make a mistake, to recalibrate, and to grow.

5. Update on processes for data systems and pronouns

Dr. Basiliere shared that part of the DEI Transformation Work Group’s work is seeking to define which data points the VSC needs to collect and why so that we can determine what data is currently being collected, how we are using it, and any gaps in the data. One of the transformation projects is focused on Colleague, the VSC’s primary information system. Part of this work will involve taking steps to ensure that pronouns are stored correctly to avoid misgendering. Work on data definitions will also enable the VSC to better use its data for training purposes. This work covers all of the system’s institutions, including the Community College of Vermont.

Kellie Campbell, Chief Information Officer, congratulated Dr. Basiliere and NVU faculty member Pat Shine, both of whom will be receiving the Dr. Wanda Heading-Grant Award for Justice awarded by Vermont Women in Higher Education

6. Update on Initiatives related to equitable hiring practices

Chancellor Zdatny shared information on the current posting for the Chief Human Resource Officer position. This position will provide leadership and coordination with the institution’s Chief Diversity Officers and system leadership to implement strategies to build a more diverse, equitable and inclusive workforce. The job description also seeks candidates who will demonstrate commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion and the prohibition of harassment and discrimination in the workplace. Once hired, the CHRO who take the lead in hiring a Chief Diversity Officer for the new university. Associate General Counsel Kathryn Santiago shared that the Employee Services Transformation Subgroup is looking to make sure that the VSC engages in equitable hiring practices.

7. Update on proposed anti-racism pledge from Student Diversity and Inclusion Task Force

The members of the Student Diversity and Inclusion Task Force joined the meeting and introduced themselves: Devyn Thompson from NVU-Johnson, Tajae Edwards from Castleton University, Kevin McGreal from Community College of Vermont, Kyla Leary from Vermont Technical College, and Sabra Ann Snyder from Northern Vermont University. The team shared an update on their progress with the anti-racism pledge. The group has developed a website and the goal is to have a soft launch of the pledge before the end of the current semester, with an official launch at the beginning of the next academic year, facilitated by a Canvas pop-up

announcement. The team is open to receiving feedback and suggestions. They hope to receive as many signatures on the pledge as possible once it is launched.

8. Other Business

There was no other business.

9. Comments from the public

Andrew Clark asked whether equitable hiring practices are antithetical to finding the strongest candidates. Hannah Miller, Co-Director Inclusive Childhood Education at NVU, responded that equitable hiring practices are intended to find the best candidate by eliminating biases that might shrink the pool or prevent high-quality candidates from being seen due to personal biases that limit recognition of what other people might bring to our institutions. Equitable hiring practices assist in hiring the best possible candidate, rather than preventing the strongest candidates from being hired.

Chair Jefferson adjourned the meeting at 4:19 p.m.



ITEM 2:  
Summary of Feedback for the Diversity Statement

## Summary of Feedback for the Diversity Statement

Socialization of the Vermont State College System (VSCS) draft diversity statement began in March with various college groups. CCV and VTC also sent the draft statement directly to faculty and staff with a link to collect feedback and a mechanism to indicate whether or not they approved of the statement in concept. Employees were informed that feedback collected during the socialization of this statement would be shared with other groups, including the VSCS Board of Trustees' DEI committee and other VSCS college personnel.

Our communications began with an introduction to the effect of:

We believe there is value in making a public declaration about our commitment to the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice both from a future-focused perspective but also from an accountability perspective. We also believe there is benefit to establishing a common statement for all the VSCS colleges. This draft statement was based, in part, on the Vermont Declaration of Inclusion as well as Governor Phil Scott's [Proclamation of Inclusion](#).

Please note: this statement is but one more step towards institutionalizing CCV's common core objective of nurturing a welcoming, diverse, inclusive learning and working environment. This diversity statement is one we hope will be embraced by employee groups, including faculty, staff, and union leadership, as well as student groups. Like the student pledge, a diversity statement should be seen as a foundational progress in the VSCS' overall efforts to enhance professional knowledge of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice.

We are keenly aware that for any such statement to be meaningful, it must be grounded in action.

Overall, the feedback for a system-wide Diversity Statement has been positive. But, the percentage of our community who provided feedback and who are actively engaged in DEI work is relatively small. It seems likely that the majority of the VSCS employees remain apathetic or neutral to this work and our efforts. We must continue to be intentional and persistent about explaining how and why diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice issues are critically important to the overall success of our institutions and community at large.

### CCV

On the whole, 28 individuals elected to vote and/or formally comment on the diversity statement. Twenty-six individuals were in favor of the statement in concept, one was neutral, and one person abstained.

In its presentations, CCV paired the draft statement with its draft DEI Strategic Action Plan. Work continues to develop the plan, but in brief, every action must be in support of our overarching goal/core objective: To nurture a welcoming, diverse, inclusive learning and working environment.

CCV's three priorities are:

### Priority 1: Build the Cultural Foundation

1.1 Expand and Deliver DEI General Education and Training: Grow Employees' Cultural Competency and Incorporate DEI Principles Into the Work

1.2 Use Intentional DEI Practices in Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention of Employees

### Priority 2: Provide Student Support and Resources to Promote Inclusivity

2.1 Expand and Deliver DEI Education and Training: Grow Students' Cultural Competency

2.2 Promote Inclusive Scholarship and Teaching

### Priority 3: Establish and Strengthen Community DEI Engagements

3.1 Within VSCS

3.2 With Other Institutions of Higher Education in Vermont

### CCV Employee Comments:

1. I am happy to see the system adopting a diversity statement.
2. I know that this is just a general statement and there are probably further more detailed resources to come, but here are a few thoughts I had reading through it:
  - I think it is important to directly acknowledge the historical (and ongoing) role of higher education in enforcing social/racial/economic inequities and access to power. Higher education has played a major role in enforcing socioeconomic and racial inequities in our society -- through who access to these institutions and the cultural norms of academic discourse. (And as we break down these barriers higher education can also play a role in empowering individuals from traditionally underserved backgrounds.)
  - Should a diversity statement could include something about curriculum? - i.e. a commitment to actively seek out underrepresented voices and uplift diverse perspectives?
  - I would like to see a more explicit commitment to critically examining how the resources and services we offer affect and are utilized by people from different backgrounds and perspectives and how well we are meeting the educational needs of different populations. (As someone who generally works with online resources, I would include issues of accessibility and universal design here as well.)
  - I would like to see something about the need to bring diverse voices into these conversations and decision-making processes – both through diverse staffing and through coordinated outreach to diverse user groups.
  - Finally, as a librarian, I would like to see something on providing students the critical framework to think about issues of information/education equity and access. And how that relates to the scholarly communication process and what information is thought of as important/or credible in our society.

Thanks for pushing everybody to think about these important issues!

3. I have been considering writing my own Diversity Statement to help me to focus on how I want to walk in the world. Creating an institutional statement is taking a step forward in building a common understanding of what we all can expect around diversity and inclusion.
4. It seems to me that there is remarkable and undeniable value in clearly expressing the VSCS' recognition of the value of diversity and inclusiveness. I hope very much that this diversity statement encourages engagement with the VSCS from all of Vermont and serves as a measuring stick by which we can evaluate our work.
5. I support the efforts of the diversity statement. My biggest concern is that at CCV that will mean that faculty will not get compensated in any way for participating in any training while all other staff and administrators will. I hope you will not build a diversity statement and vision for CCV that rests on the shoulders of uncompensated faculty.
6. Why does first paragraph state "We condemn racism" and then in second paragraph it states that you formally condemn all discrimination. The first paragraph, to me, feels exclusive simply because it is the first paragraph that sets the tone of your entire document. As a female with a documented disability I might feel slighted by this opening statement.
7. This statement is extremely important given that we face a climate in which many are actively seeking to denigrate particular groups and craft oppressive laws, such as the FL "Don't say gay" bill. As an institution of higher education, we must stand on the side of human dignity and respect, and insist that our community unequivocally commit to these standards of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
8. It is important to articulate this value.
9. I believe there is value in the concept of a Diversity Statement. It can communicate a desire or commitment on the part of the college community to become more intentional about commitment to diversity. My feeling is that a diversity statement is one way to share that intention; more important is that the diversity statement is just one small part of the community's work, and that the "talk" of the statement is backed up with the "walk" of the work, college wide.
10. Swap "ability" in place of disability in Paragraph 1.
11. In the last sentence, revise to eliminate saying "diverse" twice.
12. My suggestion is to take this up in class – to help normalize the diversity statement and encourage its adoption throughout CCV.
13. Could this be included on the website near CCV's mission? Can we include in the materials for the faculty Great Beginnings training?
14. Presenting the statement during the new faculty orientation sessions would help normalize the diversity statement and encourage its adoption throughout CCV.
15. As COVID restrictions loosen, organize ways to bring people together to engage, to talk, to think about DEI.
16. It can be discussed at every CCV meeting during a two-month period. There can be a survey or google doc where each group can share thoughts and ways THEY will help socialize the statement.

VTC Comments:

1. Change title to Statement of Inclusion.
2. Any diversity statement needs to include disability as a diversity issue.
3. I think it is a great idea that will set us apart and will help make it clear that all are welcome and supported here.
4. I think the draft statement is very well done.
5. In the introductory paragraph, it seems that drafting a statement is a forgone conclusion: "A diversity statement should be seen as foundational progress in the VSCS' overall efforts to enhance professional knowledge of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice." It also seems like its drafted. "institutionalizing a culture of nurturing a welcoming, diverse, inclusive learning and working environment." So, why ask?
6. I feel the draft is great and I support it. Your point about education and training is critical as well as backing this up with practice and policy!
7. There is only one line...one phrase...that gives me apprehension. Where it reads, "we formally condemn all discrimination in all its forms," that means any and all discrimination. We do want to discriminate based on merit. We do want to discriminate based on appropriate biases (I am biased toward quality work vs. deficient work, and I grade accordingly). I know "all its forms" is meant to be from a DEI perspective here, but that is not what the phrase says, and I'd encourage much more precise language. Other than that, I find it concise, easy to understand, and easy to support.
8. I'm in many conversations about 'data driven' and I'm a big fan of data. But I'm aware that we're short of data in many areas. I wonder how we plan to get data and if we plan to post it in a transparent fashion. - Do we include wealth inequity in our definitions of diversity? In today's Vermont I think that issues of wealth, educational experience, family responsibilities and work commitments represent much of our existing 'diversity'.
9. Please, let's make sure this does not end up just as a tokenism gesture, but as an expression of true commitment.
10. The sentence "We condemn racism and welcome all persons..." should in my opinion be two separate sentences; one condemning bigotry in all its forms, including but not limited to racism, and the second being an affirmative statement of inclusion.
11. reluctant because this has only been shared across one campus
12. The need for such a statement seems odd especially on top of all the other diversity/inclusion statements that already exist at and around the college and at a state and federal level. Because of this redundancy it sounds like a reaction to an incident that happened and makes me question why such a statement is even necessary. Why not also make a statement about why the college condemns murder and theft since those are equally laudable statements? Broadening the list of welcomed persons in paragraph 1 to include political opinion and

health status including vaccinations would help to show a genuine commitment to inclusivity. As it stands there is a sense that the college is welcoming but only to people with certain political opinions. The second to last paragraph touches on a good point, that community members do not hold one single identity but rather many intersecting ones which make them unique. While I very much like this statement, it is immediately contradicted in the last paragraph upon stating "we actively pursue the inclusion of diverse students, faculty, and staff" as if there are some students and staff who are more diverse than others and should therefore be included more. Rather than focusing on how to check off the highest number of diversity boxes the college should focus on treating people like genuine individuals where everyone is seen as somebody unique and diverse since we all have different experiences. Nothing is more welcoming to students, faculty, and staff than being treated like an individual with unique traits; as opposed to being treated like a member of a "diverse group" for diversities sake.

13. You are on the right path.
14. This is great! 2 things to consider...are we avoiding the term "anti-racist institution" for any reason? Also, a large part of this kind of work is the commitment to "belonging" as the end goal and a constant work in progress. Just some things to consider, in case you hadn't yet. Thank you!
15. This should be renamed to be a statement of Inclusion
16. Diversity statement title can come loaded Instead something like: Statement of Inclusion
17. I am concerned that anything we come up with needs to be matched with implementation; policies have not been matched with actions in the past
18. I think it is very important for the Vermont State University to publicly share a Diversity Statement that we not only believe in but determine our best practices based on it.
19. It is important to not trigger negative reactions in people who are uncomfortable with 'overzealous' diversity support. For example, if the word 'discrimination' is used, it might well be coupled with 'prejudicial'. We are not trying to make everyone the same; we are trying to help everyone feel part of the same community.
20. I really think this work is critical and our support in this is vital. As an educational institution, we need to fully articulate our collective goal to create a more inclusive community.
21. I am in favor with reservations that the university needs to build capacity in order to follow through with these ideals. It can't be solely the employee's responsibility with limited capacity to put into practice the pillars mentioned. Although I believe in what is being proposed, data informed practices and training take time and this needs to be built in to the culture rather than extracurricular activities.
22. I hear what others are saying about not including a "negative" statement in the mission statement such as the one below, but I believe it needs to be included. I would like to see it at the end. By moving it to the end, I would like to see the removal of the pronoun "We condemn" and replace it with "Vermont State University condemns..." to be absolutely clear that the entire

university condemns racism. "We condemn racism and welcome all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, age, or disability, and want everyone to feel safe and welcome in our community."

### Castleton

Jae presented the feedback to the Castleton University community at a transformation town hall meeting on March 10<sup>th</sup>. The statement was circulated in advance, and approximately 65 people were present for the discussion. The conversation was introduced by President Maus-Pugh, and then Jae facilitated the dialogue. What followed was a robust conversation about the function of a diversity statement and the content of this statement in particular. Conceptually, the community was in favor of a diversity statement existing.

### Castleton Feedback

- Is this statement measurable in any way? How will we hold people accountable to these values?
- The diversity statement should have a website page associated with it that includes resources as well as information about VSCS actions in support of DEI/SJ (this is a follow-up to the question about accountability.)
- The order of the bullet points should be revised to lead with the personal and make the statement more relevant to individuals
- Sexual orientation is missing from the identity list in the first paragraph
- It would be effective if you followed the section about intersectionality up with some language about good and effective allyship.
  - Is this an example of a resource that could be housed on the website associated with the statement?
- If this statement is a statement of institutional investment, then that needs to be followed up with action. (2 additional people chimed in in support of this specific statement.)
- Institutional investment could look like:
  - Personnel dedicated to DEI and SJ work
  - Course releases for significant engagement with DEI work
  - The availability of a DEI learning community
  - Dedicated physical spaces on our campuses for DEI work
  - Mandatory trainings for faculty and staff
- I want there to be a DEI clearinghouse so we can share what's going on across campuses
- How will this statement increase student engagement with DEI issues?
- There need to be incentives for participating in this work
- Faculty and staff need to have time to engage in this work

### NVU

The diversity statement was distributed to the entire NVU community, and discussed in great length at both the Johnson DITF and Lyndon FAIR meetings. A number of faculty and staff who weren't able to attend those meetings also submitted comments over email. Conceptually, both Lyndon and Johnson respondents were in favor of the diversity statement existing, although the folks who took the

opportunity to provide feedback represented a fairly small subset of the community. Several people raised concerns about the potential impact (or lack thereof) of a statement like this.

**NOTE:** Feedback that paralleled edit for clarity suggestion received elsewhere (i.e. define the DEISJ acronym) are omitted from this list.

#### NVU-Johnson Feedback

- How is this different from the antiracism pledge? Too many pledges will feel overwhelming
- The way the statement calls out racism twice makes it seem like race is more important than other identity categories
- How will the institution support this statement? Will there be tangible action taken?
- Tangible action could look like:
  - Hiring staff to focus on DEI work
  - Supporting existing staff with budget lines
  - Flagging courses that teach DEI content and highlighting them in a separate place
  - Honor DEI work in tenure and promotion process (or annual staff evaluations)
  - Offer financial support for people to attend conferences and workshops on DEI issues
  - Bring in outside speakers
- Since Johnson has adopted the Vermont diversity statement, should we do that instead? What is the advantage of a VSCS-specific statement?
- I don't trust that this statement will be anything but empty virtue-signaling; I want accountability.

#### NVU Lyndon Feedback

- A diversity statement is an important first step in moving towards an institution that values all of its members
- "I don't want people to feel safe and welcome in our community, I want people to **be** safe and welcome."
- Is there a way to acknowledge that experiencing discrimination affects a students' sense of belonging?
- Change fair and equal to fair and equitable
- Consider ending the statement with a tangible commitment: "So that we may actively challenge systems of oppression."



**ITEM 3:**

**VSCS Diversity Statement v2.0 Revision Comments**

## VSCS Diversity Statement v2.0 Revision Comments

1. Added sexual orientation to the list of identities in the second sentence. (Note: we recognize that sexual orientation does not constitute a protected class, but felt comfortable adding it because this is a community values statement and not a legal doctrine.)
2. Swapped “ability” for “disability” in the list of identities (same note as in 1 above)
3. More clearly defined DEISJ as an acronym
4. Changed the order of the three pillars to lead with the personal
5. Added the following sentence to the second paragraph: “We also acknowledge that education is both destabilizing and exhilarating and that learning necessarily involves hard conversations and moments of disagreement.”
6. Changed the end of the first paragraph from “want everyone to feel safe and welcome” to “want everyone to be safe and welcome.”
7. Changed “fair and equal treatment” to “fair and equitable”
8. Changed “nurture true belonging for our diverse community” to “nurture true belonging for our entire community.”

## Draft VSCS Diversity Statement

2/28/22

The Vermont State College System (VSCS) is committed **to nurturing a welcoming, diverse, and inclusive learning and working environment**. We condemn racism and welcome all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, age, or disability, and want everyone to feel safe and welcome in our community.

As an institution of higher education, we formally condemn all discrimination in all its forms, commit to fair and equal treatment of everyone in our community, and strive to ensure all our actions, policies, and operating procedures reflect this commitment.

Our commitment is based on three pillars of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice:

- **Data informed Practices:** We make decisions and examine our policies and practices based on valid and reliable data sets and how those decisions, policies and practices may positively or negatively impact different populations.
- **Professional Knowledge of DEISJ:** We are committed to providing faculty, staff and students access to training and learning about how their knowledge of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice topics impact their professional and educational work.
- **Personal Knowledge of DEISJ:** We are committed to providing faculty, staff, and students opportunity for personal growth to increase their understanding of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice related topics so that they can then apply that information to their lives, their community engagements, and their career.

We recognize our diverse community members do not hold a single identity that may impact their belonging, or access to educational or professional opportunities. Each person holds multiple and intersecting personal and social identities that must be recognized as they engage in learning and professional development.

We actively pursue the inclusion of diverse students, faculty, and staff; break down barriers impacting access to education and professional growth for all; and nurture true belonging for our diverse community.

**ITEM 4:**  
**VSCS Diversity Statement v2.1**

VSCS Diversity Statement v2.1  
04/25/2022

The Vermont State College System (VSCS) is committed **to nurturing a welcoming, diverse, and inclusive learning and working environment**. We condemn racism and welcome all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, or ability, and want everyone to be safe and welcome in our community.

As a system of higher education, we formally condemn discrimination in all its forms, commit to fair and equitable treatment of everyone in our community, and strive to ensure all our actions, policies, and operating procedures reflect this commitment. We also acknowledge that education is both destabilizing and exhilarating and that learning necessarily involves hard conversations and moments of disagreement.

Our commitment is based on three pillars of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice (DEISJ):

- **Personal Knowledge of DEISJ:** We are committed to providing faculty, staff, and students opportunity for personal growth to increase their understanding of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice related topics so that they can then apply that information to their lives, their community engagements, and their career.
- **Professional Knowledge of DEISJ:** We are committed to providing faculty, staff and students access to training and learning about how their knowledge of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice topics impact their professional and educational work.
- **Data informed Practices:** We make decisions and examine our policies and practices based on valid and reliable data sets and how those decisions, policies and practices may positively or negatively impact different populations.

We recognize our diverse community members do not hold a single identity that may impact their belonging, or access to educational or professional opportunities. Each person holds multiple and intersecting personal and social identities that must be recognized as they engage in learning and professional development.

We actively pursue the inclusion of diverse students, faculty, and staff; break down barriers impacting access to education and professional growth for all; and nurture true belonging for our entire community.