

## MEMORANDUM

TO: VSCS Board of Trustees

FROM: Elizabeth Mauch, Chancellor 

DATE: January 18, 2024

SUBJECT: Board of Trustees' Meeting on Monday, January 22, 2024

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Trustees:

Materials are now available for the Board meeting scheduled for **1:00 p.m. on Monday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>**. The meeting will take place via Zoom and will be livestreamed on YouTube. The public will have the opportunity to provide comments.

Following approval of the minutes from the Board's November 13<sup>th</sup>, November 17<sup>th</sup> and November 29<sup>th</sup> meetings, the Board will receive reports from the recent meetings of: (1) the Finance and Facilities Committee; (2) the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee; (3) the Education, Personnel and Student Life Committee; and (4) the Audit and Risk Management Committee. The Board will be asked to vote on several recommendations from the committees.

The Board will be asked to approve some minor revisions to the Board of Trustees Handbook.

The Presidents will each provide a report to the Board, followed by a Government Affairs update and a report from the Chancellor and the Executive Committee.

Finally, the Board will appoint a new slate to the Nominating Committee.

The meeting will adjourn, after consideration of any additional business.

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

**Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**Zoom Meeting/YouTube Stream**  
**Monday, January 22, 2024 at 1:00 p.m.**

**AGENDA**

1. Call to order
2. Comments from the public - signup for public comment at [www.vsc.edu/signup](http://www.vsc.edu/signup).<sup>1</sup>
3. Approval of Minutes
  - a. November 13, 2023
  - b. November 17, 2023
  - c. November 29, 2023
4. Report from the Finance and Facilities Committee
  - a. Motion to approve Claire Fisher Heist & Mae Niles Scott Nursing Scholarship Endowment
  - b. Motion to approve Resolution 2023-015: 2024-2025 VTSU Tuition, Fees, Room & Board
  - c. Motion to approve Resolution 2023-016: 2024-2025 One-to-One Device (Technology) Fee
  - d. Motion to approve changes to VSC Policy 403-A
5. Report from the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
6. Report from the Education, Personnel, and Student Life Committee
  - a. Motion to approve VSC Policy 102 new program proposal for Restorative Justice
7. Report from the Audit and Risk Management Committee
  - a. Motion to approve Withum as independent auditors for 2024-2027 audit cycles
8. Approval of revisions to the Board of Trustees' Handbook
9. Report from the Presidents
10. Government Affairs update
11. Report from the Chancellor
12. Report from Executive Committee
13. Appoint new Nominating Committee
14. Additional business
15. Adjourn

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<sup>1</sup> Note: To make a comment you must be logged into the live session at <https://www.vsc.edu/botzoom>. Please test your microphone and camera before logging into the session.

## MEETING MATERIALS

- Item 1: Minutes for Approval
  - > November 13, 2023
  - > November 17, 2023
  - > November 29, 2023
- Item 2: Claire Fisher Heist & Mae Niles Scott Nursing Scholarship Endowment
- Item 3: Resolution 2023-015: 2024-2025 VTSU Tuition, Fees, Room & Board
- Item 4: Resolution 2023-016: 2024-2025 One-to-One Device (Technology) Fee
- Item 5: VSC Policy 403-A: System Annual Operating Budget
- Item 6: VSC Policy 102: new program proposal for Restorative Justice
- Item 7: Board of Trustees' Handbook revisions

ITEM 1:

Meeting Minutes

- November 13, 2023
- November 17, 2023
- November 29, 2023

**Minutes of the VSCS Board of Trustees Meeting held Monday, November 13, 2023, 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 Monday, November 13, 2023, via Zoom

Board members present: Lynn Dickinson, Betsy Bloomer, Janette Bombardier, Megan Cluver (1:30 p.m.), David Durfee, Bob Flint (1:52 p.m.), Karen Luneau, Perry Ragouzis, David Silverman, Shawn Tester, Sue Zeller

Absent: Shirley Jefferson, Bill Lippert, Jim Masland

Presidents: Joyce Judy, Nolan Atkins (Acting)

Chancellor's Office Staff: Jen Porrier, Administrative Director  
Katherine Levasseur, Director of Governmental & External Affairs  
Sophie Zdatny, Chancellor  
Yasmine Ziesler, Special Assistant to the Chancellor

Shared Services: Donny Bazluke, Network/Security Analyst  
Kellie Campbell, Chief Information Officer  
Sarah Chambers, Director, Learning Technologies  
Matt Corriere, Technical Projects Manager  
Timothy Dusablon, Operations & Security Specialist  
Gayle Malinowski, Chief Technology Officer  
Sarah Potter, Chief Human Resources Officer  
Kathryn Santiago, Associate General Counsel  
Sharron Scott, Chief Financial & Operating Officer  
Patty Turley, General Counsel  
Meg Walz, Director, Project Management

From the Colleges: Nolan Atkins, Provost, Vermont State University  
Kelley Beckwith, Vice President of Student Success, Vermont State University  
Mary Brodsky, Dean of People & Culture, Community College of Vermont  
Ryan Dulude, Director of Financial Aid  
Nicole Mace, Dean of Administration, Community College of Vermont  
Maurice Ouimet, Vice President of Admission & Enrollment, Vermont State University

Sarah Truckle, Vice President of Business Operations, Vermont State University

*See attachment for full list of attendees*

From the Media: Sean Cavanaugh, Reporter, News 7  
Anna Guber, Reporter, NBC 5

1. Chair Dickinson called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.
2. Public Comment

The Trustees heard twenty-three public comments over a one hour period from current and former faculty, staff, and students of the Vermont State Colleges. Chair Dickinson thanked everyone for sharing their feedback and reiterated that the trustees were fully briefed on both Optimization 2.0 and the administrative optimization plan and are supportive of the actions being taken. She noted that the trustees recognize that these changes are hard, particularly for those most directly impacted by the plans. The trustees also recognize their responsibility as fiduciaries to ensure that the new university implements the necessary changes to achieve financial sustainability. Chair Dickinson stated that President Smith laid out a plan which puts the university on a path towards financial stability and this is what the state, the Governor, and legislative leaders expect Vermont State University to do. The work to operationalize those plans will move forward under Acting President Nolan Atkins and incoming President David Bergh. She again thanked everyone for their comments, passion, and commitment to the success of Vermont State University.

3. Approval of October 30, 2023 Minutes

**Trustee Zeller moved and Trustee Luneau seconded the motion to approve the October 30, 2023 meeting minutes. The motion was approved with one abstention.**

4. Reports from the Presidents

Acting Vermont State University President Nolan Atkins acknowledged the shared comments from earlier in the meeting and thanked everyone who turned out to offer their opinions. President Atkins spoke of his involvement in the trenches of transformation for the past seven years, including through the unification of Lyndon State College and Johnson State College. He shared that the pathway to sustainability is now becoming clearer to him and the changes being made to restructure the academic offerings and administrative structure are integral parts of a plan that he believes will lead to financial sustainability. President Atkins shared that VTSU met its target enrollment numbers for both new and returning students for this academic year. He was excited to share that faculty member Ross Lieblappen received a \$3 million grant to study microbes in sea ice and their connection to climate change. This will give students the opportunity to study microbes in the Arctic. VTSU is responding to help address the critical nursing shortage in VT and across the country by expanding its program to nearly 1,000 students. There are planned nursing capital investments at the Williston and Johnson campuses to support program growth and a new simulation lab at the Lyndon campus. There are also continued investments and enrollments in workforce, including the largest apprenticeship program in plumbing and electrical with over 800 students. VTSU is pleased to welcome Oyibo Afoaku as Chief Diversity Officer on January 8<sup>th</sup> as they join the team to continue to enhance

and lead VTSU's DEI efforts. Finally, the VTSU Complete College Accelerator project launches on November 17. At the kick-off meeting, leadership will identify four initial institutional priorities to improve student outcomes based in part on baseline data about campus perceptions of student success.

Community College of Vermont President Joyce Judy shared that CCV recently hosted a successful NECHE accreditation visit looking at CCV's delivery of educational programming in Vermont's Corrections system. CCV co-sponsored a press conference with the McClure Foundation to celebrate Free Degree Promise on National First-Generation Student Day. Now in its second year, the McClure Foundation promises a free degree through the state's Early College program to all Vermont high school students in the classes of 2023-2026. This program reinforces that, when college is affordable, people enroll. President Judy also shared that 640 students are currently being taught CCV courses in high schools and tech centers around the state. Finally, CCV was awarded a \$1.2 million grant from a federal partnership between the Northern Border Regional Commission and the U.S. Department of Labor that will support workforce education. This funding will support CCV's Career Pathway Entry Program Plus, which is designed to prepare Vermonters for high-wage, high-growth careers. CCV was one of just three grant recipients in Vermont.

5. Report from the Chancellor

Chancellor Zdatny echoed the appreciation to all those who provided public comments. As this meeting was her last regular Board meeting, the Chancellor thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve the Vermont State Colleges, to the state for its continued financial support and encouragement for the ongoing transformation work, and to all those with whom she has worked during her tenure. Recognizing that many have questioned whether the system truly needs a Chancellor moving forward, she listed the key responsibilities of the Chancellor and the need to preserve the role in order to lead and support the ongoing work of transformation. Chancellor Zdatny also noted the significant and ongoing transformation of the Office of the Chancellor, including the reduction in personnel and the physical size of the office. She concluded by sharing some data regarding the personnel who work in Shared Services – more than one-third of whom are covered by collective bargaining agreements, more than half of whom work on VTSU's campuses or in CCV's academic centers, and the number of employees in each of the Shared Services' areas.

6. Report from the Finance and Facilities Committee

a. Motion to approve the Florilla Ames Endowment

Trustee Silverman shared some background about Florilla Ames's remarkable background and noted that the Florilla Ames Endowment will provide scholarships to undergraduates attending VTSU's Lyndon campus.

**Trustee Silverman moved and Trustee Zeller seconded the motion to approve the Florilla Ames Endowment. The motion was approved unanimously.**

b. Motion to approve changes to the Bridges to Vermont Scholarship

Trustee Silverman shared the changes to the Bridges to Vermont Scholarship criteria for receiving the scholarship to broaden eligibility, while honoring the original intent of the award.

**Trustee Silverman moved and Trustee Luneau seconded the motion to approved the changes to the Bridges to Vermont Scholarship. The motion was approved unanimously.**

c. Motion to approve changes to the Alumni Association Endowment

Trustee Silverman shared the updated criteria for the Vermont Technical College's Alumni Association Endowment, which now provides that students with at least a 2.5 GPA who have completed their first year of college and are enrolled in an agricultural program or veterinary technology will be eligible to receive the George F. Wellman Memorial Scholarship.

**Trustee Silverman moved and Trustee Luneau seconded the motion to approve the changes to the Alumni Association Endowment. The motion was approved unanimously.**

Trustee Silverman concluded by noting other matters covered at the recent Finance and Facilities Committee meeting included a review of the FY2023 Financial Performance by Chief Financial and Operating Officer Sharron Scott and an update on the VSC's intended legislative ask for the upcoming session.

7. Report from the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair of the DEI Committee, Associate General Counsel Kathryn Santiago provided the report on behalf of the DEI Committee. The Committee met on October 30th and heard a report from Mary Brodsky, CCV's Dean of People and Culture. Dean Brodsky described CCV's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee's work over the past five months. Secondly, Assistant Director of DEISJ at VTSU, Aurora Hurd, shared an update on the successes and challenges of the ongoing DEISJ work at VTSU. Finally, Student Trustee Perry Ragouzis provided an update on the status of the proposed anti-racism pledge developed by students from across the system and the ongoing planning for its launch.

8. Report from the Education, Personnel, and Student Life Committee

a. Motion to approve award of honorary degree to Howard Coffin

Trustee Cluver asked the Board to approve the resolution [here](#) on page 17 to award an honorary Doctor of Letters degree to Howard Coffin at the VTSU Lyndon Commencement on May 24, 2024. She noted Mr. Coffin's work to record and preserve Vermont's civil war history and his attendance at Lyndon State College in 1960-1962 before leaving for Vietnam with the U.S. Army.

**Trustee Cluver moved and Trustee Luneau seconded the motion to approve Resolution 2023-014, awarding an honorary Doctor of Letters degree to Howard Coffin at VTSU-Lyndon's May 2024 commencement. The motion was approved unanimously.**

b. Motion to approve revisions to VSC Policy 208: *Criminal Background Checks*

Trustee Cluver noted that Chief Human Resources Officer Sarah Potter explained the purpose behind the revisions to Policy 208 at the October 30th EPSL Committee meeting. These changes include obtaining background checks for part-time faculty and staff, receiving the results of online background checks prior to new employees starting work, clarifying that the cost of the background check will be covered by the employer, not the employee, and ensuring the policy complies with the Fair Credit Reporting Act. Trustee Cluver noted that the effective date of the

revised policy is to be February 1, 2024, per the request of Human Resources. The brief delay in the start date for the new policy will avoid disrupting the ongoing hiring process for part-time faculty for the Spring semester and will provide sufficient time to train staff on how to conduct online background checks.

**Trustee Cluver moved and Trustee Zeller seconded the motion to approve the revisions to VSC Policy 208: Criminal Background Checks, effective February 1, 2024. The motion was approved unanimously.**

Trustee Cluver shared other matters covered at the EPSL Committee included: a data snapshot for Fall 2023 that showed five-year trends on enrollment, persistence, and retention; an update on direct transfer pathways between CCV and VTSU; and an update from then-President Mike Smith on VTSU's program array Optimization 2.0 and its administrative optimization plan.

#### 9. Report from Executive Committee

Chair Dickinson provided an update from the Executive Committee's most recent meeting on October 31<sup>st</sup> and the Chancellor Search. The Committee met with Interim President Mike Smith on October 31 for a final update on the status of VTSU's Academic Optimization 2.0 and Administrative Optimization plans before his departure. The Executive Committee recently interviewed three semi-finalists for the position of Chancellor. The final interviews will be held in person in Burlington on Thursday, November 16<sup>th</sup>. Each finalist will participate in three interviews – with the full Board, with faculty and staff representatives of both CCV and VTSU, and with senior leaders from CCV, VTSU, and Shared Services. A final decision is expected to be made within the next couple of weeks.

Chair Dickinson noted that the VSC consists of two unique and different institutions: Vermont State University and Community College of Vermont. These two institutions are different from each other and have very different histories. Vermont State University is a unification of the legacy residential colleges, originally the Normal Schools and Vermont Technical and Agricultural College. They were originally joined together in the 1960's to become the Vermont State College System. The Normal Schools were primarily serving their respective rural areas as the source of teachers for the K-12 schools in their areas, while Vermont Tech was primarily a technical and agricultural school that granted associate degrees in these specialized fields. CCV was created in the 1970's and is unique as a community college in that it was established as an alternative school in local communities for adult and other non-traditional students. Credit was granted for life experience. It eventually expanded and grew and joined the Vermont State College System as the fifth college, but its legacy as an alternative school still is strong and it does not include Associate degree programs that traditional community colleges offer, since many of these programs are currently at VTC. The two institutions, VTSU and CCV, can and do complement each other. Many students start their post-secondary education at CCV and then transfer to Vermont State University campuses.

Chair Dickinson also highlighted that the positions of President and Chancellor have very different roles. The President works to support the interest of the college or university in providing education in accordance with their mission, while the Chancellor works to support the interests of the State and its role and needs for post-secondary education. The Chancellor is necessary to guide the work of the two presidents to ensure the system is operating efficiently and in concert with one another. The Shared Services model developed over the past two years,

significantly reduces duplication for administrative work and is foundational to the hybrid university that we will need for the 21st Century. Shared Services staff are not Chancellor Office staff but support the employees and students of VTSU and CCV in many ways, such as by supporting their IT needs, processing payrolls, managing employee benefits, and overseeing library system. Many of these staff operate at the system level but work locally at VTSU and CCV. The Shared Services structure allows for cost allocation to ensure we are maximizing our resources, sharing our expertise, and providing for nimble and flexible response. This allows us to reduce our costs, learn from each other, and maximize resources without compromising services. If the Vermont State Colleges system is to survive to continue to serve the State of Vermont, then it must change and become more efficient. That's the incredible transformation and optimization work we have undertaken.

10. Update on planning for ERP replacement and motion to approve resolution in support of project governance structure

Kellie Campbell, Chief Information Officer, provided an update on the ERP replacement project. The presentation can be found [here](#). Dr. Campbell shared background information on the ERP project and then discussed the governance proposal, located at page 5 of the presentation.

Trustee Cluver noted that documenting efficiency savings and cost avoidance is important, but it is also important to document those areas where strategic investment in technology could enhance the student experience. For example, how can AI be leveraged to be more responsive to students.

**Trustee Zeller moved and Trustee Tester seconded the motion to approve Resolution 2023-013: ERP Project Implementation Governance. The motion was approved unanimously.**

11. Report on State-funded Projects from CCV and VTSU

CCV President Judy began by sharing that during the 2023 legislative session, Governor Scott proposed, and the legislature funded, a program to reduce CCV's tuition by 50% for the 2023-2024 academic year in certain degree and certificate programs. Ryan Dulude, Director of Financial Aid at CCV, shared further information on the Vermont Tuition Advantage Program and its success. Further information can be found [here](#) on page 23. Mr. Dulude noted that 2,400 Vermonters have enrolled in Vermont Tuition Advantage Programs, which has resulted in \$2.44 million in tuition savings to Vermonters in Fall 2023. There has been a 32% reduction in borrowers in VTA programs compared to Fall 2022. President Judy noted that this 50% cut in tuition brings CCV's tuition to the national average for community college tuition. CCV is committed to addressing affordability. CCV is seeking additional funding for the Vermont Tuition Advantage program through the Budget Adjustment Act.

VTSU Acting President Nolan Atkins provided an update on the various VTSU programs with financial support from the legislature.

- The curriculum for the Bachelor of Science degree in restorative justice, plus a certificate, is being developed and is anticipated to come before the EPSL Committee and the Board in January for approval, before going through the faculty governance process. The program will be available state-wide to serve both traditional and non-traditional

students. There will be a low-residency option over the summer as the pedagogy does require some face-to-face instruction.

- VTSU is seeking a reallocation of the legislative funding designated for a program to upskill staff in long term care facilities as there has been very limited uptake in this tuition-support program. Ideally, the funding can be repurposed to purchase additional nursing simulators.
- The delivery of a dental therapy program has been challenging: the search for a program director is ongoing and the curriculum is in the process of being developed.
- The CTE pathways pilot programs are intended to provide a convenient and local pathway to a VTSU degree. Currently, there are some CTE students taking paramedicine courses at VTSU-Williston at a reduced tuition rate. More work needs to be done on developing pathways and marketing them.
- The 3D-Technology certificate is making good progress. The certificate will be available to traditional and non-traditional students, as well as to high school students and is designed to be accessible to a non-technical audience. The certificate will be offered at the Castleton, Lyndon and Randolph campuses and in different modalities. The certificate has been approved through the faculty governance process and has been discussed at recent Open Houses with high school students. The certificate is on course to be delivered this spring and to high school students over the summer. Some additional equipment is needed prior to the certificate's launch.
- The state funding for nursing simulators is well on its way and there are no concerns.
- Vice President of Business Operations, Sarah Truckle, shared that good progress is being made on setting up the Meat Lab in Randolph. A site has been identified, necessary additional funding has been secured, a director has been hired, and the project should be going out to bid shortly.

#### 12. VTSU free tuition proposal – discussion and motion to approve

Sarah Truckle, Vice President of Business Operations, shared that VTSU's free tuition proposal comes close to guaranteeing free tuition for students/families with an adjusted gross income of \$50,000 or less. Further information on this proposal can be found [here](#) on pages 28 and 29. Chief Financial and Operating Officer, Sharron Scott, noted that this proposal did not come before the Finance and Facilities Committee first as required by policy as VTSU wishes to move forward with marketing the proposal as soon as possible.

**Trustee Ragouzis moved and Trustee Tester seconded the motion to approve the Vermont State University Free Tuition Guarantee. The motion was approved unanimously.**

The Board requested that, even though the proposal has been approved, it be placed on the agenda for the upcoming Finance and Facilities meeting for further discussion.

#### 13. Executive session on collective bargaining – action expective to be taken upon exit

**At 3:38pm Trustee Dickinson moved that the Board enter executive session, pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B) labor relations agreements with employees, and 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(F) to consider confidential attorney-client communications, because premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body involved at a substantial disadvantage. Along with the members of the Board present at this meeting, in its discretion, the Board invited the Chancellor, the Chief Financial and Operating Officer,**

**the General Counsel, the Acting President of Vermont State University, the President of the Community College of Vermont, and VTSU's Vice President of Business Operations to attend the executive session. Trustee Luneau seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.**

The Board exited executive session at 3:51 p.m.

**Trustee Bombardier moved and Trustee Ragouzis seconded the motion to approve the Guiding Principles for the upcoming collective bargaining. The motion was approved unanimously.**

**Trustee Bombardier moved and Trustee Durfee seconded the motion to ratify the new full-time faculty contract with the Vermont State Colleges Faculty Federation. The motion was approved unanimously.**

**Trustee Ragouzis moved and Trustee Zeller seconded the motion to ratify the new part-time faculty contract with the Vermont State Colleges Faculty Federation. The motion was approved unanimously.**

14. Additional Business

There was no additional business.

15. Executive Session – Board training on Vermont's recent amendments to the Fair Employment Practices Act (Act 80) – no action expected upon exit

**At 3:54 p.m. Chair Dickinson moved that the Board enter executive session, pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(F), to receive confidential attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the Board, because premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body involved at a substantial disadvantage. Along with the members of the Board present at this meeting, in its discretion, the Board invited Attorney Kerin Stackpole, the Chancellor, the Presidents, General Counsel, Associate General Counsel, the Chief Human Resources Officer, CCV's Dean of People and Culture, and VTSU's Academic HR Manager. Trustee Tester seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.**

The Board exited executive session at 5:09 p.m.

Chair Dickinson adjourned the meeting at 5:09 p.m.

**Minutes of the VSCS Board of Trustees Special Meeting held Friday, November 17, 2023, at 8:30 a.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 Friday, November 17, 2023, via Zoom

Board members present: Lynn Dickinson, Janette Bombardier, David Durfee, Bob Flint, Karen Luneau, Jim Masland, David Silverman, Shawn Tester (9:03 a.m.), Sue Zeller

Absent: Betsy Bloomer, Megan Cluver, Shirley Jefferson, Bill Lippert, Perry Ragouzis

Chancellor's Office Staff: Jen Porrier, Administrative Director

Shared Services: Donny Bazluke, Network/Security Analyst  
Sharron Scott, Chief Financial & Operating Officer  
Patty Turley, General Counsel  
Meg Walz, Director, Project Management

From the Colleges: Karry Booska, Director of Career Development, Vermont State University  
Rich Clark, Faculty, Vermont State University  
Mary Droege, Faculty, Vermont State University  
Oscar Paredes, Student, Vermont State University  
Denise Rhodes, Student Financial Support Specialist, Vermont State University  
Beth Walsh, Co-President, VSCUP, Vermont State University

1. Chair Dickinson called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.
2. Public Comment

Rich Clark provided a comment advocating for the Board to leave the Chancellor position unfilled. Mr. Clark went on to reference the most recent Board meeting and the outpouring of public comment heard at that time. He suggested that the Board visit the campuses to meet with the constituents and have dialogues face to face.

Beth Walsh mentioned an OpEd piece in VTDigger that speaks about the State taking on more responsibility for the state colleges.

Mary Droege asked the Board to come to the campuses to meet with the faculty, staff and students as well. She felt the Board is out of touch with what it takes to run a campus.

3. Additional Business

There was no additional business.

4. Executive Session

**At 8:42 a.m. Chair Zeller moved that the Board enter executive session, pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3), to discuss the appointment of a public officer. Along with the members of the Board present at this meeting, in its discretion, the Board invited the Chief Financial and Operating Officer. Trustee Flint seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.**

The Board exited executive session at 10:02 a.m. and took no action.

Chair Dickinson adjourned the meeting at 10:03 a.m.

**Minutes of the VSCS Board of Trustees Meeting held Wednesday, November 29, 2023, at 8:30 a.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 Friday, November 17, 2023, via Zoom

Board members present: Lynn Dickinson (Chair), Betsy Bloomer, Megan Cluver, David Durfee, Bob Flint, Shirley Jefferson, Bill Lippert, Karen Luneau, Jim Masland (9:01 a.m.), Perry Ragouzis, David Silverman, Shawn Tester, Sue Zeller

Absent: Janette Bombardier

Presidents: David Bergh, Joyce Judy

Chancellor's Office Staff: Jen Porrier, Administrative Director  
Sophie Zdatny, Chancellor  
Yasmine Ziesler, Special Assistant to the Chancellor

Shared Services: Donny Bazluke, Network/Security Analyst  
Wilson Garland, Director of Transformation Projects  
Katherine Levasseur, Director of Governmental & External Affairs  
Katheryn Santiago, Associate General Counsel  
Sharron Scott, Chief Financial & Operating Officer  
Patty Turley, General Counsel  
Meg Walz, Director, Project Management

From the Colleges: Nolan Atkins, Provost, Vermont State University  
Karry Booska, Director of Career Development, Vermont State University  
Beth Camp, Student Success, Vermont State University  
Mary Cooper, Student Success, Vermont State University  
Shelby Day, Advising, Vermont State University  
Mary Droege, Faculty, Vermont State University  
Charlotte Gerstein, Reference & Instruction Librarian, Vermont State University  
Patrick Jeffries, Student Success, Vermont State University  
Kathleen Mason, Director of International Studies & Global Affairs, Vermont State University  
Amy Miller, Co-President, VSCUP, Vermont State University  
Ashley Stackowitz, Health & Wellness, Vermont State University

1. Chair Dickinson called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.
2. Public Comment

The Board of Trustees heard public comment from Patrick Jeffries, Kathleen Mason, Ashley Stackowitz, Charlotte Gerstein, and Mary Droege.

3. Additional Business

There was no additional business.

4. Executive Session

**At 8:51 a.m. Trustee Zeller moved that the Board enter executive session, pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3), to discuss the appointment of a public officer. Along with the members of the Board present at the meeting, in its discretion, the Board invited the Associate General Counsel and Dr. Elizabeth Mauch to attend. Trustee Jefferson seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.**

The Board exited executive session at 9:41 a.m.

**Trustee Masland moved and Trustee Ragouzis seconded the motion that the Board of Trustees of the Vermont State Colleges System appoint Dr. Elizabeth Mauch as Chancellor of the Vermont State Colleges beginning January 1, 2024. The motion was approved unanimously.**

Chair Dickinson noted that in this role, Dr. Mauch will exercise broad fiduciary responsibility for the system including the strategic leadership of the corporation, lead system-wide transformation, be responsible for state and federal government relations, implement board policies and procedures, and will be broadly responsible for the academic financial, and business affairs of the system. Building on the foundational work of the outgoing chancellor, a critical goal for Dr. Mauch's tenure as chancellor will be the completion of the ongoing transformation and modernization effort and financial stabilization of the system.

Chair Dickinson adjourned the meeting at 9:44 a.m.

**ITEM 2:**

**Claire Fisher Heist & Mae Niles Scott Nursing Scholarship Endowment**



December 4, 2023

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 Vermont State University.

**The Claire Fisher Heist and Mae Niles Scott Nursing Scholarship Endowment**, in the amount of \$100,000, is funded with an estate gift from the Robert W. Chapman Trust.

Per Robert Chapman and John Fisher's wishes (as recorded in the deed of trust), this scholarship will be used to provide scholarship support to students enrolled in the pre-nursing or nursing program on the Lyndon campus. Recipients will be selected on the basis of need and academic performance. Preference will be given to student who plan to pursue a nursing career in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont. If, in the future, the Lyndon campus ceases to offer a pre-nursing/nursing program, the scholarship will be awarded to students in another health or human services field at Lyndon campus that benefits the Northeast Kingdom.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Bergh".

David Bergh  
Interim President

Attachments: Funding Source C document

- NEW FUNDING SOURCE DOCUMENT - ENDOWMENTS ONLY

**VERMONT STATE 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)

**Claire Fisher Heist and Mae Niles Scott Nursing Scholarship Endowment**

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

Bequest distribution from the Robert W. Chapman Trust

3) Purpose of endowment: (Attach supporting Documentation)

The **Claire Fisher Heist and Mae Niles Scott Nursing Scholarship Endowment** provide scholarship support to students enrolled in the pre-nursing or nursing program on the Lyndon campus. Recipients will be selected on the basis of need and academic performance. Preference will be given to student who plan to pursue a nursing career in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont. If, in the future, the Lyndon campus ceases to offer a pre-nursing/nursing program, the scholarship will be awarded to students in another health or human services field at Lyndon campus that benefits the Northeast Kingdom.

4) Proper accounting fund:

Regular  
Endowment

Term Endowment

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

Not assigned

6a) Date Endowment Reach Endowment Status:

October, 2023

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

None

8a) Funding amount:

\$100,000.00

8b)  One-time - OR

Ongoing funding (indicate timeframe:)

Another significant distribution from the trust is expected in early to mid-2024. Annual gifts may be made to the endowment corpus.

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

**VERMONT STATE 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:



12) Date to Ch's Ofc:

December 4, 2023

13) Date Board Approved:

Version 4/17/2008

**ITEM 3:**

**Resolution 2023-015: 2024-2025 VTSU Tuition, Fees, Room & Board**

VERMONT STATE COLLEGES SYSTEM

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

RESOLUTION 2023-015

2024-2025 Vermont State University Tuition, Fees, Room & Board

WHEREAS, In accordance with Policy 403-C, System Annual Operating Budget – Student Tuition and Fees, Each institution may propose individual tuition rates, room and board program charges and selected fees based on a review of and recommendation by the Chancellor; and

WHEREAS, Vermont State University proposes a 3.5% increase to tuition, fees, room and board for the 2024-2025 academic year as outlined in the December 11, 2023 Finance and Facilities materials; and

WHEREAS, The recommendation has been reviewed and verified by the Chancellor and Chief Financial & Operating Officer and the Chancellor agrees the proposal has merit and should be recommended for consideration by the Board of Trustees; and

WHEREAS, The Finance and Facilities Committee of the Board of Trustees has reviewed the recommendation and agrees with the Chancellor’s recommendation; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the tuition, fees, room, and board for increase for Vermont State University Students for Academic Year 2024-2025 shall be 3.5% as outlined in the December 11, 2023 Finance & Facilities Materials attached hereto

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Eileen “Lynn” Dickinson, Chair of the Board of Trustees

**ITEM 4:**

**Resolution 2023-016: 2024-2025 One-to-One Device (Technology) Fee**

VERMONT STATE COLLEGES SYSTEM

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

RESOLUTION 2023-015

2024-2025 Vermont State University One-to-One Device (Technology) Fee

- WHEREAS, In accordance with Policy 403-C, System Annual Operating Budget – Student Tuition and Fees, Each institution may propose individual tuition rates, room and board program charges and selected fees based on a review of and recommendation by the Chancellor; and
- WHEREAS, Vermont State University has piloted the use of individual classroom technology to support student learning; and
- WHEREAS, The pilot programs have allowed students to be more academically successful and supports hybrid learning; and
- WHEREAS, Students who possess technology that meets the minimum requirements may be exempted from the one-to-one device (technology) fee; and
- WHEREAS, Students with a demonstrated financial hardship may apply for use of a loaner device at minimal cost; and
- WHEREAS, The recommendation has been reviewed and verified by the Chancellor, Chief Information Officer, and Chief Financial & Operating Officer and the Chancellor agrees the proposal has merit and should be recommended for consideration by the Board of Trustees; and
- WHEREAS, The Finance and Facilities Committee of the Board of Trustees has reviewed the recommendation and agrees with the Chancellor’s recommendation; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED, That Vermont State University may institute a one-to-one device (technology) fee as outlined in the December 11, 2023 Finance & Facilities Materials attached hereto

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Eileen “Lynn” Dickinson, Chair of the Board of Trustees

**ITEM 5:**

**VSC Policy 403-A: System Annual Operating Budget**



# Manual of Policy and Procedures

Title  <b>SYSTEM ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET                  - ALLOCATION OF STATE GENERAL AND CAPITAL                  FUND APPROPRIATIONS</b>	Number  403-A	Page  1 of 3
	Date  <b>01/23<del>2</del>/2023<del>4</del></b>	

## PURPOSE

Vermont State Colleges System receives general and capital fund appropriations from the State of Vermont. The primary purpose of these appropriations is to support the VSCS and create access to higher education for Vermonters throughout the state. This policy describes the methodology by which the general fund and capital fund will be distributed across the component units (i.e. individual institutions, shared services and Chancellor’s Office.)

## STATEMENT OF POLICY

### 1. Allocation of General Fund Appropriation

#### A. Deductions prior to allocation of the General Fund Appropriation:

- (1) Allocations named to a specific purpose by state law shall be allocated solely to that purpose and assigned to the appropriate component unit
- (2) All extraordinary and one-time funding not named to a specific purpose by state law
- (3) 23% of the total base appropriation less the values of (1) and (2) above for strategic initiatives at the discretion of the Chancellor. At the discretion of the Board of Trustees, any portion of the available balance from the prior fiscal year may, in whole or in part, be distributed to another purpose such as reallocation to the economic stabilization fund or distribution to the institutions proportional to the prior year’s appropriation allocation.
- (4) 2% of the total base appropriation less the values of (1) and (2) above allocated to an economic stabilization fund
- (5) Budgeted retiree medical costs

(6) Corporate functions including Chancellor, Government Relations, Board Support, and related activities.

B. After all deductions occurring in A above, the remaining balance shall be distributed to the member institutions to fill the gap between a ~~three~~five-year rolling average of actual unrestricted Student Revenue (Net Tuition and Fees plus Room and Board) plus special purpose general fund allocations as described in A(1) above, less all Unrestricted Expenses excluding all Athletics, Camps & Conferences, and Development/Fundraising. Where the need exceeds the available general fund balance, the amount shall be shared proportionately. Under no circumstances shall an institution receive less than 15% of the available appropriation and not more than 85%. Further, to prevent undue harm to an institution, under no circumstances will the proportional change in appropriation exceed 1% for any given year.

**Example**

Available general fund appropriation after application of deductions is \$18,000,000.

	Institution 1	Institution 2
All Student Revenue	15,000,000	20,000,000
Gross Unrestricted Exp	23,000,000	40,000,000
Athletics	0	-6,500,000
Development	-75,000	-300,000
<u>Camps and Conferences</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>-1,000,000</u>
Net Expense	22,925,000	32,200,000
Balance	7,925,000	12,200,000
	39.4% of whole	60.6% of whole

The total need for both institutions is the sum of the balances for each organization: \$12,200,000 + \$7,925,000 = \$20,125,000. Because the need of \$20,125,000 exceeds the available balance, of \$18,000,000, the available balance is distributed proportionately to the whole of the need. Therefore, Institution 1 would receive 39.4% (\$7,092,000) of the available general fund appropriation and Institution 2 would receive 60.6% (\$10,908,000) of the general fund appropriation.

2. Allocation of Capital Fund Appropriation

A. Deductions prior to allocation of the Capital Fund Appropriation:

- (1) Allocations named to a specific purpose by state law shall be allocated solely to that purpose and assigned to the appropriate component unit
- (2) \$500,000 for emergency repairs which shall be distributed at the discretion of the Chancellor or Chief Financial Officer

B. After all deductions in A above, the remaining balance shall be distributed proportionate to owned square footage by institution as calculated the fall before the beginning of each State Biennium; with the expectation that not less than \$150,000 will issued to each institution regardless of proportionate value.

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Elizabeth Mauch, Chancellor

<u>Date</u>	<u>Version</u>	<u>Revision</u>	<u>Approved By</u>
<u>1/23/2023</u>	<u>1.0</u>	<u>Adopted</u>	<u>VSCS Board of Trustees</u>
<u>1/22/2024</u>	<u>2.0</u>		

**ITEM 6:**

**VSC Policy 102: new program proposal for Restorative Justice**

**VERMONT STATE COLLEGES  
POLICY 102 NEW PROGRAM PROPOSAL TEMPLATE**

**Part I: General Information**

1. Institution: Vermont State University Lyndon
2. Name of new program: B.S. & A.S. Restorative Justice
  - a) Individual(s) with responsibility for program development: Dr. Brandon Stroup with additional co-author Instructor Jessica Visnesky
  - b) Academic Department(s): Social Science
3. Proposed start date of program: Fall 2025
4. Title of degree to be conferred (if applicable): B.S. & A.S. in Restorative Justice
5. Brief description of proposed program (150 words or less):

Restorative justice majors at Lyndon will comprehensively study the history, theories, and philosophies behind the restorative justice paradigm. Students will assess restorative practices used within community, criminal-legal, education, and social service contexts. Restorative justice majors will also study the sociocultural political history of the American legal system and consequences of legal-correctional policies in the United States. A hallmark of this degree is the emphasis on direct student experience in the practice-based discipline of restorative justice: students will gain direct experience in pre-conference preparation; creating safe, respectful spaces for restorative dialogue; and designing and facilitating a variety of restorative practices. Restorative justice majors will gain much experience in designing and facilitating restorative practices for victim-offender mediation, circle processes, and community-based reparative panels. They will also explore the ways in which restorative practices are being applied in emerging careers and professions. Students will also gain direct experience in teaching and training others in restorative practices.

**Part II: Rationale**

1. How the program will strengthen the institution (refer to institutional mission, institutional priorities and existing institutional programs) and how the perceived interest in the program at the institution was determined:

The creation of this program aligns with the state's restorative justice goals and enhances Vermont's economy through producing the restorative justice professionals needed for the

current workforce. This program expands the current restorative justice concentration embedded in VTSU-Lyndon's criminal justice degree. As a response to the workforce development needs in this area, the state legislature approved the VSC's request for a \$500,000 appropriation in the fiscal year of 2024 to establish a baccalaureate degree (BS) in restorative justice. The funding will support program development and implementation and will also provide full-time faculty support for the first three years that the program is offered.

VTSU Lyndon proposes the creation of a B.S./A.S. in Restorative Justice. Lyndon currently offers a restorative justice concentration within the criminal justice program and a minor, which are popular, evidenced by the number of students graduating with the concentration. Although there are approximately three criminal justice programs nationally that have added restorative justice to their degree titles, those programs are largely lacking in actual restorative justice education (Holler, personal communication, 2023). According to Dr. Holler, President of the Restorative Justice section of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, "the limited restorative justice education presently available to undergraduates is not adequate preparation for entry-level restorative justice work...the necessity for dedicated restorative justice degrees cannot be understated." At this time, it appears that VTSU Lyndon's degree will be the first standalone baccalaureate degree in restorative justice nationally and is designed to adequately prepare future restorative justice practitioners (please see Dr. Holler's supportive letter).

The degree will be comprised of 48-51 credits. Students will take a core of restorative justice foundation courses, electives from applied restorative practices courses, as well as electives from criminal justice coursework in which restorative content has been integrated. A B.S./A.S. in Restorative Justice will meet the needs for the emerging restorative practitioner workforce. Graduates will work in K-12 educational systems, universities, and a variety of public and private organizations. These graduates will find work in violence prevention, youth crisis work, conflict transformation and mediation careers, re-entry and re-integration specialists, housing coordinators, victim service specialists, as well as restorative practitioners.

The proposed restorative justice degrees are in alignment with the VTSU institutional mission and with several of VTSU's Strategic Priorities. The B.A. in Restorative Justice will directly engage with partners throughout Vermont, particularly district attorney's offices, diversion programs, Vermont's strong network of Community and Restorative Justice Centers, as well as local school districts. Students will be prepared for meaningful work through experiential learning and skill building that is workforce centered. Required internships in restorative justice will expand and strengthen our community partnerships, while increasing student opportunities for community engaged scholarship and learning.

This degree provides students a unique/innovative (double major) credential for students enrolled in Criminal Justice, Education, Applied Psychology and Human Services, History, and Global Studies. A few of our current students have been able to use the concentration in restorative justice to gain employment as restorative practitioners in schools and local restorative justice centers. Offering the A.S./B.S. in Restorative Justice should significantly increase the visibility and capacity of VTSU Lyndon in providing quality, in-demand restorative justice education to practitioners within the state, regionally, and nationally.

Interest in the proposed program has been perceived in multiple arenas: 1) popularity of restorative justice concentration/student feedback, 2) regional employer demand, 3) letter from the President of the Restorative Justice section of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, 4) faculty research on restorative practitioners, restorative justice employers, and curricular/competency priorities for new hires. This interest will be reviewed below.

We first perceived interest in the program when upon the creation of the restorative justice concentration, the majority of CRJ students began enrolling in the concentration and expressed an interest in a standalone major. Since the implementation of the restorative justice concentration curriculum, it has become apparent to Lyndon faculty the challenges and limitations that result from a concentration embedded in a criminal justice program alone (marketing confusion, inadequate for restorative work outside of criminal-legal arena, and the limited practice-based courses for students). Over the years of offering restorative justice-oriented courses, we also learned that for some students, a criminal justice degree (with a restorative justice concentration) is not attractive due to students' concern of hiring biases from employers. A common example of this is students seeking work within educational institutions as restorative practitioners – typically, criminal justice graduates would have a difficult time securing employment in K-12 educational institutions. Dr. Stroup, in his role as internship supervisor, has also directly experienced the difficulty in students obtaining internships in educational settings – with principals asking the relevance and appropriateness of a criminal justice internship within a K-12 setting and depicting a discomfort with being a site supervisor of a criminal justice internship. While we have been able to ease those concerns with local school districts and students have eventually obtained those internships, this confusion has certainly delayed the process for students. We also ask ourselves, does a “criminal justice internship” on a student transcript/resume accurately depict the work they are doing in a school-based setting?

Dr. Brandon Stroup sought input from employers in the region to assess their needs regarding the hiring of restorative practitioners and received a letter dated November 16, 2021, from former Executive Director, Susan Cherry, on behalf of all directors of the restorative justice centers in Vermont, outlining the increased need for further education in this field and the inadequate preparation a certificate in restorative justice provides to practitioners (Appendix B). Dr. Holler, President of the Restorative Justice section of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences' also outlined the need for expansive restorative justice education within his letter of support for this degree program (also Appendix B). He critiques the present models that conflate restorative justice and criminal justice as one:

*As it currently stands, the cooptation of restorative justice into criminal justice programs and degrees dilutes the quality of restorative justice concepts and applications throughout higher education. Restorative justice is a “buzz phrase” that institutions use for marketing purposes. Upon further examination of those programs, criminal justice is always the primary focus, and restorative justice principles and practices are relegated to one or two classes, if any. Thus, it appears that there is currently no standalone restorative justice bachelor’s degree anywhere in the country....*

*I would argue that the limited restorative justice education presently available to undergraduates is not adequate preparation for entry-level restorative justice work –*

*this is harmful to the restorative justice movement, the arenas in which restorative justice practices are employed, and particularly harmful to the individuals served by underprepared restorative facilitators. The necessity for dedicated restorative justice degrees cannot be understated.*

### Faculty research

VTSU Lyndon faculty also conducted a content analysis on restorative practitioner job postings in New England and the greater Northeast regions to assess emerging profession status and employer needs (Visnesky and Stroup, presented to the Northeast Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, 2022). While a portion of this research has been published in 2023, much of this research remains underway. A brief summary of the presented findings can be found in appendix A. Relevant to this proposal, during the months of April-May 2022, 494 job postings were located that included the search terms “restorative justice” or “restorative practices” in the states of New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine. Of the postings that met our definition for “restorative practitioner,” 54% were postings specifically for K-12 education; 25% were for generalized non-profit/human services professions; and 21% were specifically legal/justice-system connected. Only 4% of these job postings required criminal justice undergraduate education. This clearly depicts the need for restorative justice education that is outside of the realms and boundaries of criminal justice-related restorative justice applications. Nearly all positions posted described restorative justice knowledge and restorative facilitation experience as a preferred quality in an applicant.

This research was also useful for faculty to assess employer needs and how such could relate to the coursework in new ways – directly emerging from this research was the understanding that restorative practitioner work often necessitates practitioners’ ability to train others in restorative practices. Due to this, faculty re-conceptualized a student learning outcome to include student achievement in development of training materials and experience training others. Faculty created the restorative justice senior seminar course to culminate in students’ meeting this learning outcome. Our restorative justice concentration and minor are inadequate in meeting this student/workforce need.

Additionally, VTSU Lyndon faculty have been requested to consult with faculty from other institutions seeking information on Lyndon’s restorative justice concentration, highlighting to us the interest other institutions have in expanding restorative justice education (recent examples within the last year: Spalding University, Kentucky; Curry College, Massachusetts; broader requests for our restorative justice syllabi from the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences’ Restorative Justice section; invitations from the ACJS’ RJ section to present on restorative pedagogy at 2022 annual meeting/accepted; invitations from the ACJS’ RJ section to facilitate a workshop at 2023 annual meeting/declined; invitation to provide a pre-conference workshop on restorative pedagogy to NEACJS in Summer 2023; invitation from the Journal of Criminal Justice Studies to publish our research on restorative employers’ curricular preferences in 2024, etc.).

Based on data from our research, regional employer feedback, and our restorative justice contacts within academia, we contend that the field is rapidly growing. As the only higher

education institution in the country with advanced restorative coursework for undergraduate students, we are well positioned to expand our restorative justice offerings into a standalone restorative justice degree.

2. Specific student, educational and/ or employment need(s) to be addressed, including in-person, hybrid, low-residency, or distance mode(s) of program delivery, and whether these needs are local, state, regional, national or global (attach documentation of need in the form of supporting data from external or internal sources such as professional organizations, feedback from corporate partners, or market research):

Restorative Justice as a practice/paradigm is gaining in popularity both locally and around the country. This new degree is of special importance to the Northeast Kingdom where we are home to the largest Community and Restorative Justice Center in the region. Within the broader state, Vermont Law School offers one of the only two master's degrees in restorative justice (within the U.S.) and is the home for the National Center on Restorative Justice. Within the region, Maine is creating similar restorative justice hubs/programs as Vermont's Community and Restorative Justice network. These agencies are all looking for skilled employees to accommodate their growing needs.

The B.S. in Restorative Justice will be supported through the creation of a total of seven new classes (many of the program's courses already exist within the Criminal Justice program's Restorative Justice concentration curriculum) and the hire of one additional faculty to assist in the program's facilitation. Lyndon's Criminal Justice program presently offers six to eight courses a semester and at least four each summer. The addition of a second tenure track faculty member teaching primarily RJ courses will require both programs to offer a combined total of at least eight courses a semester (with both faculty offering their contractual load). The faculty believe that both degrees would need to offer a total of nine to ten courses a semester. Since over half of the Restorative Justice program's curriculum already exists within Lyndon's Criminal Justice curriculum many of the RJ/CJ offerings will count for credit within both degrees (this will assist in offering both programs efficiently).

Restorative justice is an established practice-based discipline and requires experiential learning as the primary mode of instruction (Toews, 2013; Stroup, 2019; Pointer, McGoey, & Farrar, 2021; Sweeney, 2022; Visnesky, 2023). Much of the literature surrounding restorative justice pedagogy depicts going beyond face-to-face instruction to a deep, experiential practice with learning lab/workshops in which students directly experience restorative processes (Sweeney, 2022). A letter to Dr. Stroup from Kay Pranis, international expert of the restorative Circle process, demonstrates the need for in-person learning (attached). Ms. Pranis writes,

*I believe that on-line learning is not adequate for teaching the skills necessary for facilitating Peacemaking Circles. The Circle process requires deep authentic presence modeled by the facilitator. That sense of presence cannot be conveyed in an electronic form. Presence is critical to deep listening and to the experience of being held in dignity for all participants.*

*Learning to facilitate Peacemaking Circles requires unlearning a lot of formal training and socialization because it is rooted in a different paradigm than the paradigm of the social institutions of our dominant culture. Training to be a facilitator is a process that is felt as well thought. It cannot be completely captured in words. It requires engaging heart and body as well as the head. For example physical activities are an important part of my training process requiring direct physical interaction with other participants which is not possible on-line.*

*Facilitator training is an experiential process first, followed by reflection and then analysis. The experience of being in a physical Circle is essential to understanding the potential of the Circle space. I have been training for over 20 years. Still I cannot with words describe adequately to others the nature of sitting in Circle. One must experience the Circle to understand what the space feels like and to understand its potential to transcend our usual limitations in collective work.*

Much of the new offerings being created for the Restorative Justice program will be offered in an in-person format, providing our students with deep experiential practitioner-based learning. The primary duty for RJ graduates upon entering the job market as a restorative justice practitioner will be to facilitate restorative methods of conflict resolution. Within this new coursework, students will gain direct experience preparing conference spaces in a respectful, safe manner, conducting pre-conference sessions, and designing, implementing, and facilitating restorative processes for a variety of contexts and environments. Our goal is to ensure that our restorative justice graduates entering entry-level restorative practitioner work will not need their employers to pay for additional training conducted by external consultants. The faculty will attempt to create an introductory level course that can be offered in a highly interactive telepresence format.

The faculty presently involved have a goal of creating future summer intensive programming for interested professionals (example: K-12 educators). The regionally popular Summer Institute of Restorative Practices, previously offered by the St. Johnsbury Community and Restorative Justice Center for K-12 educators, principals, and school-based staff, is no longer being offered due to the retirement of the former Executive Director. We envision that this is one area of professional development that should be explored; however, we acknowledge that this is wholly dependent upon resources being provided to the faculty as well as interest. Eastern Mennonite University, home of the internationally recognized Center for Justice and Peacebuilding and Zehr Restorative Institute, also holds a Summer Peacebuilding Institute annually, which provides restorative coursework and training (Lyndon CJ-RJ faculty have previously attended this SPI). Since 1994, EMU has had 3,500 participants from 124 countries attend their Summer Peacebuilding Institute. Over 5,400 participants have participated in their Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience course alone since 2001 (the course has a restorative/transformational justice-orientation). While we acknowledge that EMU's CJP has been globally recognized for decades, we would be well-positioned to conduct similar work at a regional level, with the appropriate staffing/faculty resources. Please see their impact statement here: [About CJP \(emu.edu\)](#).

Certificate, lower residency, and non-traditional opportunities

Future goals of the faculty are to establish in-person summer intensive coursework for a restorative practices certificate and expand our lower residency coursework options. The nature of restorative pedagogy and the need to engage students in mock restorative practices/simulations of conflict resolution necessitates a minimum of 7-8 students in each restorative practices course. Therefore, these classes do not lend themselves well to independent studies (summer courses tend to be more likely to be under-enrolled). Depending upon faculty resources as well as future faculty interest, there is also the possibility of faculty travel to CU/other VTSU institutions to hold intensive restorative workshops. As there presently is no restorative justice full-time faculty, these goals will need to be assessed as the program develops.

The certificate program requires learners to complete four courses, comprising of 14-15 credits.

### **Certificate in Restorative Practices**

#### **Required coursework:**

Principles of Restorative Justice (3 credits)

Circle Processes (4 credits)

Facilitating Restorative Practices (4 credits)

#### **Select one of the following two courses:**

Trauma, Resilience, and Restorative Justice (4 credits) **or**

Restorative Justice and Schools (3 credits)

The above certificate program is likely to be attractive to working professionals, establishes learning outcomes in restorative theory, practice, and applications, and can be ladderized into the degree program. Summer intensive certificate options will provide students at Castleton or Johnson with a feasible pathway to completion. Students at Castleton or Johnson who complete the restorative practices certificate program can finish the remainder of the degree program by utilizing the criminal justice coursework offered in multiple modalities and completing the remaining in-person restorative justice electives/required coursework on the Lyndon campus (five additional in-person courses, with a supervised internship).

Additional lower residency options include course rotations that include several non-traditional class meeting times. Restorative justice coursework at Lyndon has been historically offered in the evenings for a once per week duration. The faculty find this time frame appropriate for restorative justice pedagogy (longer class meetings). Much of the restorative justice coursework also lends itself well to other non-traditional class meeting times, such as condensed first or second-half mini sessions that meet on weekends. These non-traditional class meeting times may encourage students who reside on other campuses to travel to Lyndon to complete their restorative justice coursework while offering another potentially viable option for working professionals.

### **Job outlook in Criminal Justice in the state of Vermont:**

With the distinctive focus on conflict resolution skills and trauma and resiliency, RJ graduates are well-positioned to serve in a wide variety of entry-level social service and human services

work. Many of our RJ concentration graduates are already working in social service and behavioral health fields (ex: Northeast Kingdom Youth Services).

Restorative justice specialists can be conceptualized as a “new occupation” – an occupation that cannot be counted for in existing labor statistical systems. Restorative justice specialists fall into this category – there is no search result for “restorative justice” in the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Evidence of RJ as a new occupation is present in Vermont, in which our large network of state-wide community and restorative justice centers are currently having difficulty locating quality hires, with numerous entry-level and advanced job openings presently. A job search on 1/7/2023 depicts 49 job openings in Vermont, 21 job postings in New Hampshire, 16 job postings in Maine, 342 job postings in New York, 172 job postings in Massachusetts, 23 postings in Connecticut, 20 job postings in Rhode Island, and 88 postings in Pennsylvania, resulting in 731 available job postings at this time. These searches demonstrate similarly to our earlier content analysis research: a varied array of career opportunities for those with experience in restorative justice. Sample job titles within the state of Vermont include the following:

- Restorative Practices/PBIS Coordinator at Lamoille North Supervisory Union
- Restorative Justice Case Worker for the Community Justice Center in St. Johnsbury
- Diversion and Pretrial Services Case Manager for the Community Justice Center in St. Johnsbury
- Community & Social Justice Case Manager for Northeast Kingdom Community Action, St. Johnsbury
- Conflict Assistance Program Coordinator for the City of Burlington
- Community Support Liaison for the City of Burlington
- Balanced and Restorative Justice Program Coordinator for Youth Services in Brattleboro

It is important to note that federal grant money is also underway to support the widespread implementation of restorative justice in schools, communities, and justice systems. Presently, the Restorative Practices in Schools Act of 2022 has been proposed through the U.S. Senate and would establish competitive grants to help schools in establishing restorative practices, including the hiring of staff to lead restorative practices and conduct restorative trainings (see attached PDF). In addition, the state of Maine has recently received a four-year grant to create community and restorative justice hubs across the state ([Restorative Justice Project Wins nearly \\$1 Million in grant award; seeks new Executive Director to lead \(rjpmidcoast.org\)](#)). Since the inception of our restorative justice concentration, twenty-two states have passed legislation providing for the implementation of restorative practices in K-12 schools.

3. How the program will strengthen the System. If the program approximates existing programs within the System, describe why the development of an additional program will serve particular need(s). If it is a distinct program that expands System offerings, please describe what value it offers, any intended collaboration with other VSC colleges or organizations in planning or delivering this program, and, if appropriate, indicate specific benefits to the State of Vermont):

The B.S. in Restorative Justice is a distinct program that will serve the State of Vermont by providing trained employees to accommodate the emerging/growing field of restorative justice practitioners. This degree will have the strongest impact within the region's K-12 schools, local justice centers, non-profits/human service agencies, and city centers. This degree will help to address workforce needs for those positions that at this time have no formal educational training associated with them (i.e., restorative theory or practices). The existing lack of an education in restorative justice compels employers to hire external organizations to train their new restorative practitioner (employee) in restorative practices. This practice can not only be considered inadequate but potentially harmful as the paradigm of Restorative Justice consists of a complex history, philosophy, and *numerous interpersonal practices* geared toward *conflict resolution* and community building (please see letter from Dr. Tim Holler). The creation of this degree would make VTSU Lyndon a strong choice for those seeking employment in this emerging occupation.

Lyndon is the only VTSU campus presently offering any type of restorative justice education. The creation of this degree will not only expand restorative educational/credential opportunities within the system/state, but function as the only advanced restorative education preparation for undergraduates at this time in the country. It is reasonable to foresee that other universities and institutions will soon be competitors in this area. From the time of the first B.S. in Restorative Justice proposal to administration in 2021, degrees in "Criminal and Restorative Justice" have increased from two – presently three while several new minors/concentrations in restorative justice have also emerged nationally. Lyndon's RJ programs are far advanced in that we provide advanced educational preparation for facilitation and a comprehensive foundation in restorative justice theory, concepts, and practices. It is anticipated that this program will attract students from within and outside of Vermont. This degree can also be conceptualized as a unique additional credential for students majoring in criminal justice, applied psychology and human services, education, global studies, history, and sustainability studies. For example, while our potential students can attend most competing universities to study psychology, they cannot attend any other university to study psychology **and** restorative justice.

As previously noted, the restorative justice concentration embedded within VTSU Lyndon's criminal justice degree program has not been comprehensive enough to meet the needs of students or employers. In 2023, Lyndon faculty completed a study of restorative justice employers and practitioners to better understand the needs of both groups (Visnesky and Stroup have been invited to submit this research for publication in 2024 through a special edition of the *Journal of Criminal Justice Studies*). A few examples of our research findings, as relevant to the proposed curriculum, is provided below.

**Example 1: Employer needs and preferences when hiring restorative workers.** In a mixed methods study of restorative justice employers, we asked, "Which credential would you prioritize when making considerations for hiring a potential restorative justice worker?" Restorative justice employers prioritized a B.S. in Restorative Justice as their top choice, with a certificate in Restorative Justice as their second top choice. No degree at all, but restorative facilitation experience was selected third, with a degree in Education as the fourth most prioritized degree (selected only by one individual). The following two degrees were not selected as a top choice from respondents: B.S in Criminal Justice and B.S in Criminal and Restorative Justice. We also surveyed employers on their preferred competencies and coursework for new

restorative practitioner hires. Findings reflected that employers rank “restorative facilitation” as the top coursework item, with “trauma awareness”; “race, class, gender, and justice”; “circle processes”, and “restorative justice theory” as other top curriculum items. Apart from race, class, gender, and justice, these are not standard criminal justice courses.

**Example 2: Assessing educational needs of restorative practitioners: A skills gap analysis.**

In a mixed methods study of restorative justice employers and practitioners, we found that both employers and practitioners agree that restorative practitioners were underprepared to facilitate restorative processes immediately upon hiring.

- Ninety percent of employers agreed that their new hires needed additional restorative justice-specific training immediately upon hire to do their work.
- Fifty-four percent of the respondents shared that their organizations hired external consultants within the last twelve months for additional restorative justice training for their employees.
- Employers estimated that less than sixty percent of their employees had facilitated restorative practices before their hire.
- On a scale of 1 – 10, with 10 being exceptionally prepared to do the work they were hired to do and 1 being completely unprepared, restorative practitioners ranked themselves at 4.5.

These examples illustrate that employers are seeking specific restorative justice-related competencies that are not found in contemporary undergraduate degree programs, including our current criminal justice degree with a restorative justice concentration. This research conveys that while restorative justice is an emerging occupational field, new employees are underprepared due to the lack of restorative justice-specific education. The proposed program expands our system’s offerings while providing a clear benefit to the state’s need for prepared restorative justice practitioners.

**Part III: Program Description**

1. Specific program objectives, including career and learning outcomes for students:

Program Goals:

A standalone restorative justice degree is workforce centered, with numerous applied courses focused on teaching specific skill sets associated with the practice-based discipline of restorative justice. Graduates of this new program will exit with in-demand competencies such as facilitating restorative practices, trauma-aware practices for restorative justice, and restorative approaches for educational institutions. Graduates of this degree will be well-situated for placement in a variety of career possibilities and will have a solid foundation in both the values and practices associated with restorative justice. As the first of its kind, a standalone baccalaureate in restorative justice will provide our graduates with a unique credential that employers are seeking.

Restorative justice majors at Lyndon will comprehensively study the history, theories, and philosophies behind the restorative justice paradigm. Restorative justice majors will also study the sociocultural political history of the American legal system and consequences of legal-

correctional policies in the United States. A hallmark of this degree is the emphasis on direct student experience in the practice-based discipline of restorative justice: students will gain direct experience in pre-conference preparation; creating safe, respectful spaces for restorative dialogue; and designing and facilitating a variety of restorative practices. Restorative justice majors will gain much experience in designing and facilitating restorative practices for victim-offender mediation, circle processes, and community-based reparative panels. They will also explore the ways in which restorative practices are being applied in emerging careers and professions. Students will also gain direct experience in teaching and training others in restorative practices.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will analyze and evaluate the history, philosophy, and theory of the restorative justice paradigm and movement.
2. Students will analyze and evaluate the history and philosophy of punitive forms of justice.
3. Students will identify and assess restorative justice as a practice-based discipline, examining practices used in community, criminal-legal, education, and social service contexts.
4. Students will recognize the relationship between research, theory, and practice.
5. Students will experience being in Circle and evaluate how this process differs from other conflict resolution techniques.
6. Students will develop specific skill sets in restorative facilitation, including circle processes and conferencing.
7. Students will develop specific skill sets in teaching restorative practices to others.

2. How the program will integrate professional, liberal and career study:

Student competencies:

- Comprehensive study of the history, theories, and philosophies behind the practice-based discipline of restorative justice
- Restorative facilitation preparation
- Circle processes, such as peacemaking circles and conflict resolution circles
- Victim-offender mediation
- Family group conferencing models
- Whole-school approach to restorative justice implementation
- Trauma awareness and trauma-informed practices for restorative practitioners
- Comprehensive study of the sociocultural history of the American legal system and its consequences

Students will integrate their studies through applied experiential simulations and internship placements. Students will also integrate their studies through learning how to teach restorative practices to non-discipline others in their senior seminar course offering.

This degree fulfills all general education competencies in the areas of critical thinking, writing and oral presentation. It provides an excellent balance between theory and practice, focusing on

restorative practices/facilitation, theory, and methods, as well as a foundation in the contemporary criminal justice system.

3. What peer programs or model curricula served as a basis for the proposal:

We have examined Restorative Justice Masters Programs at Eastern Mennonite University and Vermont Law School. While there are presently no baccalaureate degrees to model after (please see Dr. Holler's letter describing the lacking restorative justice education at the undergraduate level), we utilized employer feedback as well as the research previously mentioned on the emerging profession of restorative practitioners. The most relevant highlights of this research remain that restorative practitioner work analyzed presented as predominately located in the K-12 educational space, with non-profit human services work and justice-system non-profit work combining for the other approximately half of employers (Visnesky and Stroup, 2022). Other notable features of this research include a single posting that required an Associate's degree in Restorative Justice (no associate's degree exists to date) and an employer emphasis on restorative values orientation, direct experience in restorative facilitation, and the ability to train/teach others restorative practices (Visnesky and Stroup, 2022; Visnesky and Stroup, 2023). We plan to continue to monitor the emerging profession of restorative practitioner in relation to our academic offerings.

4. How the program will assess its effectiveness in achieving student learning outcomes:

Learning outcomes will be assessed through assessments already in place for the restorative justice concentration that is embedded within the criminal justice major. The department will also track the career paths that graduates enter. Students will be observed in their internships in order to assess their ability to facilitate restorative practices, as applicable and appropriate.

5. How the program incorporates current standards and/or emerging directions in the field, and what the program will require to maintain licensure, certification, or accreditation standards with external entities, if any.

No licensure, certification, or accreditation standards currently exist. As such, Lyndon faculty reviewed the current two graduate programs in existence, conducted research on practitioner and employer perspectives of curricula items, and sought an external review from restorative justice expertise within academia. There is little to no restorative justice education in the U.S. at a baccalaureate level, we believe that this degree will become the model for other degrees in the future. All reviews and current research confirmed that the proposed curriculum is in alignment with the emerging direction of the field.

Furthermore, the faculty in the department will annually review the program to maintain and to adjust curricula to ensure a continued level of excellence. The Lyndon Career Services and VTSU Career Services Director tracks graduates as part of their regular duties and will report results to the department chair to help assess placement rates and graduate success.

6. Program outline; include brief descriptions of all new courses:

**B.S. in Restorative Justice**

Course Name & Number	Credits	New or Existing?
<b>Restorative Justice Credits:</b>		
<b>Note: SSC 1040 is recommended for all first year students.</b>		
<b>Core 29 Credits</b>		
CRJ 1010 - Introduction to Criminal Justice	3	<u>E</u>
RSJ 1XXX – Principles of Restorative Justice	<u>3</u>	<u>N</u>
CRJ 2150 – Community and Restorative Justice	<u>3</u>	<u>E</u>
RSJ 2XXX – Circle Processes	<u>4</u>	<u>N</u>
CRJ 3085 – Research Methods	<u>3</u>	<u>E</u>
CRJ 3410/RSJ 3XXX – Facilitating Restorative Justice Practices	<u>4</u>	<u>E</u>
CRJ 3410/RSJ 3XXX – Peacemaking Criminology	<u>3</u>	<u>E</u>
RSJ 4XXX – Senior Seminar in Restorative Justice	<u>3</u>	<u>N</u>
RSJ 4720 – Internship in Restorative Justice	<u>3</u>	<u>N</u>
<b>Restorative Justice Electives</b>		
<b>Select 4 courses: 10-13 Credits:</b>		
At least 10 credits of the following, at least three credits at the 3000/4000 level. Advised Term 2nd Year.		
RSJ 2XXX – Mediation and Conflict Resolution	<u>3</u>	<u>N</u>
RSJ 2XXX – Restorative Justice in Schools	<u>3</u>	<u>N</u>
RSJ 3XXX – Trauma, Resilience, and Restorative Justice	<u>4</u>	<u>N</u>
RSJ 3XXX – Families and Justice	<u>3</u>	<u>N</u>
RSJ 3XXX – Alternatives to Violence	<u>3</u>	<u>N</u>
RSJ 4710 – Special Topics	<u>1-3</u>	<u>N</u>
<b>Criminal Justice Settings Electives</b>		
<b>Select 3 course: 9 Credits:</b>		
At least 9 credits of the following, at least three credits at the 3000/4000 level. Advised Term 2nd Year.		
CRJ 2020 – American Judicial Process	<u>3</u>	<u>E</u>
CRJ 2080 – Correctional Philosophies & Practices	<u>3</u>	<u>E</u>
CRJ 2220 – Environmental Justice	<u>3</u>	<u>E</u>
CRJ 2410 – Race, Class, Gender, and Crime	<u>3</u>	<u>E</u>
CRJ 3010 - Victimology	<u>3</u>	<u>E</u>
CRJ 3160 – Juvenile Justice	<u>3</u>	<u>E</u>
CRJ 3235 – Victim Assistance and Advocacy	<u>3</u>	<u>E</u>



Open Elective: Credits 3 16	Total Credits:	Open Elective: Credits 3 Credits: 15	Total
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**A.A. in Restorative Justice**

Course Name & Number	Credits	New or Existing?
<b>Restorative Justice Credits:</b>		
<b>Note: SSC 1040 is recommended for all first year students.</b>		
<b>Core 20 Credits</b>		
CRJ 1010 - Introduction to Criminal Justice	3	<u>E</u>
RSJ 1010 – Principles of Restorative Justice	<u>3</u>	<u>N</u>
CRJ 2150 – Community and Restorative Justice	<u>3</u>	<u>E</u>
RSJ 2XXX – Circle Processes	<u>4</u>	<u>N</u>
CRJ 3410/RSJ 3XXX – Peacemaking Criminology	<u>3</u>	<u>E</u>
CRJ 3310/RSJ 3XXX – Facilitating Restorative Justice Practices	<u>4</u>	<u>E</u>
<b>Restorative Justice Electives</b>		
<b>Select 3 courses: 7-10 Credits:</b>		
At least 6 credits of the following, at least three credits at the 3000/4000 level. Advised Term 2nd Year.		
RSJ 2XXX – Mediation and Conflict Resolution	<u>3</u>	<u>N</u>
RSJ 2XXX – Restorative Justice in Schools	<u>3</u>	<u>N</u>
RSJ 3XXX – Trauma, Resilience, and Restorative Justice	<u>4</u>	<u>N</u>
RSJ 3XXX – Families and Justice	<u>3</u>	<u>N</u>
RSJ 3XXX – Alternatives to Violence	<u>3</u>	<u>N</u>
RSJ 4710 – Special Topics	<u>1-3</u>	<u>N</u>
<b>Criminal Justice Settings Electives</b>		
<b>Select 2 course: 6 Credits:</b>		
At least 6 credits of the following, at least three credits at the 3000/4000 level. Advised Term 2nd Year.		
CRJ 2020 – American Judicial Process	<u>3</u>	<u>E</u>
CRJ 2080 – Correctional Philosophies & Practices	<u>3</u>	<u>E</u>
CRJ 2220 – Environmental Justice	<u>3</u>	<u>E</u>
CRJ 2410 – Race, Class, Gender, and Crime	<u>3</u>	<u>E</u>
CRJ 3010 - Victimology	<u>3</u>	<u>E</u>
CRJ 3160 – Juvenile Justice	<u>3</u>	<u>E</u>
CRJ 3235 – Victim Assistance and Advocacy	<u>3</u>	<u>E</u>

11. TOTAL CREDITS in proposed program: \_\_\_\_\_ 33-36 \_\_\_\_\_

12. TOTAL GENERAL EDUCATION CREDITS beyond those in the program: 27

13. TOTAL CREDITS for the degree: 62-3

14. For associate and baccalaureate degree programs, provide a 2- or 4-year degree map showing intended semester-by-semester sequence of courses including program courses, general education requirements, and electives. For graduate degree programs, describe the intended timeframe and sequence for completion of the degree.

<b>Year One Fall</b> SSC 1040: Credits 3 - GEU CRJ 1010: Credits 3 – Core/GEU Social Science RSJ 1010: Credits 3 – Core/GEU Social Science ENG 1081: Credits 3 - GEU Math: Credits 3 – GEU <p style="text-align: right;">Total Credits: 15</p>	<b>Year One Spring</b> ENG 1082: Credits 3 – GEU Digital/Comp. Lit: Credits 3 – GEU RSJ 3XXX Alt. to Viol.: Credits 3 – RJEL CRJ 2150: Credits 3 – Core RSJ 2XXX Med. & Conflict Res.: Credits 3 – RJEL <p style="text-align: right;">Total Credits: 15</p>
<b>Year Two Fall</b> Art/Music: Credits 3 – GEU CRJ/RSJ 3410 Peacemaking Crim: Credits 3 – Core Lab Science: Credits 4 – GEU RSJ 2XXX Circle Processes: Credits 4 – Core Free Elective: Credits 3 <p style="text-align: right;">Total Credits: 16</p>	<b>Year Two Spring</b> Humanistic: Credits 3 – GEU RSJ 3XXX T, R, & RJ: Credits 4 – RJEL RSJ Families & Justice: Credits 3 - IALIE CRJ/RSJ 3XXX Fac. RJ. Pract.: Credits 4 – Core CRJ 3010 Victimology: Credits 3 – IALIE <p style="text-align: right;">Total Credits: 17</p>

**New Course Descriptions:**

**RSJ 1XXX Principles of Restorative Justice Credits: 3**

This course introduces participants to the origins, values, and philosophy of restorative justice. Students will explore restorative justice as a practice-based discipline, social movement, and paradigm while assessing opportunities for restorative justice applications in a variety of contexts and settings, not limited to education, in the community, and in criminal-legal arenas.

**RSJ 2XXX Circle Processes Credits: 4**

The course is intended to provide an introductory experience in the circle process as well as an understanding of the foundational values and key structural elements for designing and conducting peacemaking circles. Students will consider practical applications of the circle process. Students will gain experience with directly and physically being in circle. This course will use the circle process as the primary form of instruction. The prerequisite for this course is RSJ 1XXX Principles of Restorative Justice, sophomore standing, or faculty permission.

**RSJ 2XXX Restorative Justice and Schools Credits: 3**

This course surveys the growing movement of implementing restorative practices in educational institutions. This course will explore harms in schools, including: the school-to-prison pipeline,

institutional violence, and interpersonal violence and institutional responses. Students will review contemporary restorative practices for schools, including but not limited to: the whole-school approach, circles in schools, and restorative peer panels. A concluding emphasis will examine and assess university-level restorative practices and policies. The prerequisite for this course is RSJ 1XXX Principles of Restorative Justice, sophomore standing, or faculty permission.

### **RSJ 2XXX Mediation and Conflict Resolution Credits: 3**

This course is an introduction to the theory and practice of mediation. Students will learn about conflict resolution theory, court processes, mediation processes and techniques, self-awareness, as well as ethics. Students will gain experience using role play and other conflict transformation facilitation exercises. The prerequisite for this course is RSJ 1XXX Principles of Restorative Justice, sophomore standing, or faculty permission.

### **RSJ 3XXX Alternatives to Violence Credits: 3**

This course offers an introductory examination of the major concepts, processes, and practices within contemporary anti-violence movements and practices. Students will explore the questions: (1) how do we define safety? (2) how do we strengthen our personal and community skills in responding to harm? Non-carceral frameworks for building community responses to harm and violence will be considered. Coursework will be highly experiential using role-play, in-person facilitation exercises, and other skill-building activities in “learning lab” settings. The prerequisite for this course is RSJ 1XXX Principles of Restorative Justice, sophomore standing, or faculty permission.

### **RSJ 2560 Trauma, Resilience, and Restorative Justice Credits: 4**

This course explores trauma from a socio-cultural lens, examining interpersonal, familial, community-based, organizational, and structural cycles of harm, violence, and injustice. The course places a special emphasis on the restorative, transformative, and healing justice movements and the ways in which their associated practices can interrupt cycles of harm and violence. Students will consider the ways in which the various justice models examined address the needs of trauma-impacted individuals and communities. Models examined include but are not limited to victim-offender dialogue, restorative processes for sexual harms, truth and reconciliation commissions, restorative practices in education, and community accountability. Students will also develop skills and learn strategies for dealing with trauma exposure. The circle process will be used as a main method of inquiry, with other physical and experiential components. The prerequisite for this course is RSJ 1XXX Principles of Restorative Justice OR CRJ 2150 Community and Restorative Justice, sophomore standing, or faculty permission.

### **RSJ 3XXX Families and Justice Credits: 3**

This course takes a family perspective on the consequences of the American legal system and the widespread use of incarceration as a crime control strategy in the United States. Topics will include pregnancy during incarceration, parenting during incarceration and consequences of incarceration on nonincarcerated family members. Students will assess policy through a family perspective lens – recognizing that there is no aspect from arrest through reentry that does not impact nonincarcerated family members. This course will conclude with an emphasis on “justice re-imagined” – exploring family-focused alternatives to our current legal and correctional

policies. The prerequisite for this course is RSJ 1010 Principles of Restorative Justice or CRJ 1010 Introduction to Criminal Justice, sophomore standing, or faculty permission.

**CRJ/RSJ 3310 Facilitating Restorative Justice Practices Credits: 4**

This course explores the designing, preparation, and facilitation of a variety of restorative practices (circle processes, family group conferencing, victim-offender dialogue, etc). Students will gain practice in preparing safe, respectful spaces for restorative dialogue and navigating common issues that arise within restorative facilitation work. Through role play, simulations, and other skill-building activities, students will develop their restorative practitioner toolkit. The prerequisite for this course is CRJ 2150 Community and Restorative Justice or faculty permission.

**CRJ/ RSJ 3410 Peacemaking Criminology Credits: 3**

This course explores the historical, intellectual, and theoretical roots of peacemaking criminology. Students will use this theoretical grounding in exploration of the growing field of justice and peace studies. Topics may include historical and contemporary analyses, critical issues of militarism, inequality, and injustice, emphasizing the development of viable alternatives and contemporary peacemaking movements. Students will also participate in restorative peacemaking circles within this class. The prerequisite for this course is CRJ 2150 Community and Restorative Justice or faculty permission.

**RSJ 4XXX Senior Seminar in Restorative Justice: 3**

This course contributes to the student’s development in restorative justice practices beyond their direct learning community. This experiential seminar will explore themes of vocation/purpose, community engagement, professional development, teaching restorative justice practices, and leadership. Students will be expected to conceptualize, develop, and deliver a training or educational offering in restorative justice/restorative practices with the guidance and supervision of the instructor. Senior standing is required.

**RSJ 4XXX Internship in Restorative Justice: 1-3 credits**

This course combines 45 hours per credit of student participation in the operation of one host restorative justice agency/organization with instructor-led circle processes for meetings held throughout the semester. The course is designed to give upper-level restorative justice majors the opportunity to have responsible work-related experience in the field. Students must apply and be accepted into the internship program by both restorative justice faculty and the supervising agency. Both the restorative justice faculty instructor and the on-site supervisor will provide direction and supervision throughout the internship.

**Part IV: Budget Considerations**

1. Expenditures for the proposed program: Requires one additional offerings or faculty. Cost should remain static.

	<b>Year One</b>	<b>Year Two</b>
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<b>Faculty</b>	\$106,587 (1 FTF) + \$13,187 (PT) = \$119,774	\$123,367 (3% inflationary increase over year 1)
<b>Admin/Other Staff</b>	N/A	N/A
<b>Facilities/Equipment</b>	\$1,000.00*	N/A
<b>Library/Other Materials</b>	\$500.00	\$500.00
<b>Other Costs (e.g. accreditation/licensure expenses)</b>		
<b>Overhead</b>	\$98,224	\$101,171
<b>Cross Enrollment</b>	\$82,500	\$137,500
<b>TOTAL COSTS:</b>	<b>\$301,998</b>	<b>\$362,538</b>

A detailed calculation of revenue and expense indicates that a program enrollment of approximately 68 students is needed for sustainability. As such, it will be imperative that enrollments over the first three years are on track to achieve this goal. In addition to program enrollment trends, other program efficiency metrics that were developed during the Optimization 2.0 work will also be monitored and annually reported. These include but are not limited to average class size and the ratio of student to faculty FTE.

\*The restorative justice program would need at least two additional spaces on campus outside of faculty office space.

- A circle room in which students learn how to prepare the physical space for restorative conferencing as well as for conducting circles for class. This space would need to be able to fit at least fifteen individuals. This room should have no tables/desks, instead consist of the chairs needed to conduct a restorative process.
- A pre-conference room. This space would need to be located next to the circle room. This is a room in which parties participating in a circle would meet with the facilitator before being led to the circle process in the larger meeting space. This room should be able to hold 3-4 people at one time.
  - The faculty have found one example of a possible location on the Lyndon campus that would meet the program's needs. Vail 458 (The circle room) and Vail 457 (pre-conference room). In addition, the faculty within the RJ and CJ programs would request having their office locations moved to the same hallway as the two rooms mentioned above.

Justifications for this request include the following. First, literature on restorative pedagogy repeatedly emphasizes the importance of students engaging directly in restorative practices (Visnesky, 2023; Sweeney, 2022; Pointer, McGoey, and Farrar, 2019; Stroup, 2019; Toews, 2013). This includes students learning the skills of preparing restorative conference space (for example, restorative facilitators often have to prepare a unique "centerpiece" for each circle

process) as well as holding mock pre-conference meetings. This space will be used so that faculty can assess students' ability to adequately prepare and conduct these types of practices/meetings.

In addition, literature on restorative processes repeatedly emphasizes the importance of private, inclusive, and comfortable space (Pointer, 2020). This can be difficult to achieve using regular classrooms when there are people consistently walking around the outside of the classroom. This literature also refers to the need for restorative spaces to be "liminal" - that is, outside of the standard day-to-day space and activities (Pointer, 2020). Restorative pedagogy should include these considerations. Of significance, confidentiality is required within restorative processes. As such, these rooms also need to be in a semi-private space due to the confidential and sensitive nature of the disclosures that often happen within restorative processes in the RJ learning space.

2. Revenue/sources to meet new expenditures

	<b>Year One</b>	<b>Year Two</b>
<b>Tuition</b>	<b>Gross: \$227,348.00 Net: \$198,929</b>	<b>Gross: \$382,358 Net: \$334,563</b>
<b>Reallocation</b>	N/A	N/A
<b>Other Sources</b>	<b>State Appropriation</b>	<b>State Appropriation</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUES:</b>	<b>\$198,929 + State Appropriation</b>	<b>\$334,563 + State Appropriation</b>

As shown and discussed in Part IV, much of the program delivery expense is related to the direct expense of delivering the courses with part and full-time faculty. As such we anticipate that most of the state appropriation funds will be used to offset the instructional direct expense for course and program delivery. This will include courses that support the certificate, A.S., and B.S. programs.

**Part V: Enrollment, Marketing and Public Relations Considerations**

a. Projected enrollment for new program:

	<b>Year One</b>	<b>Three Years Out</b>
<b>Full-Time</b>	15	60
<b>Part-Time</b>	-	-

<b>In-State</b>	8	38
<b>Out-of-State</b>	7	22

2. Describe how you arrived at these projections:

Presently, there is no standalone undergraduate restorative justice degree in the U.S. There are several master's degrees (including Vermont Law School's popular MARJ degree) and graduate level certificate programs. The RJ degree will be more desirable to students who desire working in school-based or community-based settings than our CRJ degree with the RJ concentration. Similarly, graduates of this program will also be more attractive for employers outside of the judicial system. NVU Lyndon's RJ concentration has been very successful, resulting in a student enrollment of at least 47 students pre-COVID. The majority of Lyndon criminal justice students are presently graduating with the restorative justice concentration. The popularity of restorative justice in the media should facilitate positive enrollment.

Review of Eastern Mennonite University's Center for Justice and Peacebuilding's "impact" fact sheet depicts a strong participation in peacebuilding/restorative justice coursework. As noted earlier, over 5,400 participants have enrolled in a single Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience course since 2001 and 3,500 participants since 1994 since in their annual summer peacebuilding institute that offers numerous restorative justice courses. They also share that they have 668 graduates of their master's degree programs working in 78 different countries.

Personal communication with Vermont Law School regarding enrollment for their MARJ program reveals that they have had to request the American Bar Association lift their maximum capacity limit every year since the creation of the degree.

3. Describe the marketing strategies for the new program.

As with all our programs, we will develop an information sheet, put the information on the web, and send a mailing to all of the high schools in our recruitment territories (to guidance counselors in the social and behavioral sciences). Marketing strategies should include emphasis on the uniqueness of the degree, the marketability for graduates seeking emerging careers, and the hands-on, experiential aspects of the program.

Marketing strategies should include stacking credentials – exploring a four-year degree “double major pathway” for restorative justice and applied psychology/human services students as well as a four-year degree “double major pathway” for restorative justice and education students. We also envision the ability to eventually market “stackable micro-credentials” built into the degree program (we would like to create certificates in the following areas: victim services and advocacy; restorative practices; conflict resolution; and child advocacy studies).

4. Competition:

- a. In state and region

- i. There is no standalone undergraduate degree in the field of Restorative Justice that this degree would be competing with.
  - b. Online
    - i. There is no standalone undergraduate degree in the field of Restorative Justice that this degree would be competing with online.

5. How the program will impact enrollments in existing programs at the College:

This degree will increase enrollment within the Lyndon campus. It is expected that this degree will be a unique complementary second major for students enrolled in Criminal Justice, Applied Psychology and Human Services, Education, History, and Global Studies. Therefore, the degree should increase majors across a broad spectrum of programs offered on the Lyndon campus.

6. How the program will impact enrollments in existing programs at other VSC colleges:

There is no comparable degree being offered on any other campus within the VSC. We plan to pursue the development of CCV pathways to both the Restorative Justice and Criminal Justice degree programs. These pathways may be of interest for students in the CCV Human Services AS program.

7. How the program will impact existing and/ or future external relations:

As the first standalone restorative justice undergraduate degree to be created in the United States, this program will result in positive local, regional, and national press for VTSU and the Lyndon campus. The demand for restorative justice has increased dramatically over the past few years, with legislation surfacing regionally and nationally for restorative practices in schools.

Due to the uniqueness of standalone restorative justice degrees, we aim to create collaboration with Vermont Law School, particularly their popular MARJ degree program/faculty/students. Such collaboration may also result in positive local and regional press.

Students are anticipated to gain unique internships in restorative justice – such as the pilot “Youth Justice Panels” program presently offered through the Caledonia County District Attorney’s Office in collaboration with St. Johnsbury’s Community and Restorative Justice Center. This program was developed to utilize Lyndon student interns with coursework experience in restorative justice to facilitate reparative panels for youthful offenders, ages 18 – 21 years. We anticipate the creation of additional internships in restorative justice due to the restorative justice degree program, establishing beneficial relationships with our community partners. We would anticipate that the new restorative justice faculty hire may spend significant

time establishing relationships with new areas for restorative justice internship work, particularly envisioning future collaboration with K-12 schools.

Lastly, we anticipate that the creation of this degree would result in positive external relations with the broader restorative justice academic community and professional networks (please see Dr. Holler's letter describing the significant need for this degree). This may include the degree's listing on a variety of restorative justice websites (for example, National Association of Community and Restorative Justice maintains a listing of RJ-related programming in the university setting). We also anticipate research and potential publications on the development of this degree and the pedagogical implications on students, strengthening external academic community relationships.

rev. 7/21/2016

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## Appendix A

### Exploring Employer Needs and Perceptions when Hiring Restorative Justice Practitioners: Considerations for Restorative Justice Education

Jessica Visnesky, M.A. – Northern Vermont University Lyndon

Brandon Stroup, Ph.D. – Northern Vermont University Lyndon

\*This research was presented at the 2022 NEACJS annual conference.

#### Introduction

Across the country there has been a steady rise in legislation at state and federal levels calling for the implementation of restorative practices in K-12 schools as well as the hiring of restorative justice staff or trauma-informed support personnel (Examples: Restorative Justice in Schools Act 2013; Michigan’s Restorative Justice Law, 2016; Counseling not Criminalization Act.) Despite the proliferation of such legislation and a rise in restorative justice-related careers, there has not been the same movement within higher education to meet those potential employer/paradigm demands. With the rise of such legislation/careers and the dearth of restorative justice education (Stroup, 2019) we have asked the following two research questions. First, what are the expected responsibilities and duties of a restorative justice practitioner in their daily work? Second, what credential(s)/skills qualifies one to be a restorative justice practitioner? This paper will briefly review the concept of methods used to answer to two questions, respond to the questions, and then pose a variety of considerations for criminal/restorative justice educators in response to the revealed data.

#### Methodology

The methods used to conduct this research was a thematic content analysis of job postings that included the term “restorative justice” or “restorative practitioner” on the website Indeed.com. The research reviewed postings for the states of New York (339), Pennsylvania (68), Vermont (43), New Hampshire (24), and Maine (20). For the purpose of this study, we defined restorative practitioner as an individual who facilitates restorative practices as a primary function of their work responsibilities. Examples of restorative practices that we conceptualized included: tier 1 – tier 3 conflict resolution circles, reparative justice panels, victim-offender mediation/dialogue, peacekeeping circles for community-based conflict, and restorative justice facilitation trainings for community members, etc. We excluded from our analysis employment in which there was no mention of facilitating restorative practices within the job duties.

#### Characteristics of Hiring Institutions

Using our definition, a total of 26(N) postings met the researchers’ criteria for a restorative justice practitioner. These included a single posting from Pennsylvania, 11 postings from Vermont, and 14 postings from New York. The types of institutions hiring these positions were non-profit human services organizations (25%), restorative justice centers (21%), and K-12 educational institutions (54%). Within these institutions, there were a variety of job titles in which employees were expected to be proficient restorative practitioners. A sample of these are as follows: within K-12 educational settings, *Restorative Practices Specialist*, *Student Support Specialist Coordinator*, and *Social Emotional and Restorative Teacher* to name only three. Within justice-related non-profits titles included *Restorative Program Coordinator at Community Justice Center*, *Pretrial Services and Tamarack Coordinator*, *Community and Social Justice Case Manager*, and *Program Associate in Peacemaking*.

#### Practitioner Responsibilities

In relation to the first research question, the review of job postings revealed a variety of daily responsibilities depending on the type of organization. Within educational settings, common responsibilities included the implementation of restorative practices and training all support staff in restorative practices, behavior management and de-escalation, leading restorative circles, designing and facilitating re-entry circles, support teachers in Tier 1 connection activities and circle facilitation, first responder for school-based crisis, point person for determining and implementing suspensions, lead restorative practices for incidents that occur with families, students, staff, and oversee disciplinary issues and management. Within the non-profit sector the most common responsibilities included community outreach, the facilitation of restorative circles in the community and for people in conflict, train and oversee youth circle facilitators and peer mediators, develop/deliver experiential education about restorative practices, create individualized and group support for youth participants on resiliency, self-sufficiency, mental health, address victim-survivor needs, and case management duties.

It is important to note that several organizations within educational settings described practitioner responsibilities that better reflect a punitive paradigm (i.e., conduct restraints or oversee suspensions/expulsions). These punitive roles raise the question as to the actual restorative position in which some are acting in. In other words, are organizations attempting to shift wholly away from the punitive paradigm? Or are these organizations using restorative terminology without a commitment to the restorative paradigm (co-optation)?

#### Required Credentials/Skill Sets

In relation to the second research question concerning the credential(s)/skills that qualifies one to be a restorative justice practitioner, this analysis revealed a number of themes. They are as follows. First, there was no common degree in which employers required for restorative practitioner positions. Almost half of the listings required no specific degree type outside of a university education. Twenty percent of the listings required a Bachelor's degree in some type of non-specified social sciences program. Other postings ranged from degrees in education, psychology, counseling, and social work. Only one listing required a degree in Restorative Justice and this listing was for a school-based position.

In relation to skills required by employers, approximately half of the postings reflect a preference of restorative facilitation experience and values orientation over a degree in hand. Approximately two-thirds of job postings analyzed expressed a preference for restorative facilitation training, experience, or the embodiment of restorative values. Some quotes taken directly from the postings included "Embodies our restorative values"; "Theoretical and practical understanding of restorative practices for schools"; "Minimum three years' experience of restorative facilitation"; "Training in restorative practices required"; and "Candidate must be willing to integrate restorative processes in all aspects of programming."

We also found that restorative facilitation experience was highly sought after for non-restorative practitioner employment. While most of the job postings analyzed did not meet our definition for restorative practitioners, nearly all job postings demonstrated that knowledge of or experience with restorative justice or practices was preferred. This is particularly relevant for faculty working towards advancing restorative justice education within higher education settings, demonstrating a clear demand for education that we could be providing. Further, for faculty who advise and mentor students, this sheds light on contemporary strategies for our students' success post-graduation.

#### Future Research

Two possible venues for future research based on the above findings are being sought by the writers of this work: (1) restorative practitioners' perceptions of their preparedness and (2) employers/managers' knowledge of restorative justice/values. Future research should examine restorative practitioners' experiences of their work and educational preparedness. How prepared for facilitating restorative practices did practitioners find themselves when beginning in their field? What educational backgrounds do they have and what would they consider necessary educational preparation for future practitioners?

Future research should also continue examining employers' needs, knowledge, and understanding regarding restorative justice. Using survey research, the authors of this paper are exploring the educational qualifications necessary or most beneficial for restorative practitioners according to employers/managers with hiring decision-making responsibility. What skills are deemed most needed for entry-level restorative practitioners? How much do employers know of/understand/embody the restorative justice paradigm and related practices?

These avenues for research should assist restorative justice educators in the development of restorative curriculum, as well as act as evidence for justifying the creation of any new restorative justice-related programming to hesitant colleagues and administrations.

#### Implications

This research highlighted that employers prefer facilitation and restorative justice experience over specific degree titles. Many job postings within the non-profit sector listed no degree requirement but reflected preferences for experience in restorative facilitation, knowledge, and restorative ethos. In our view, this might reflect movement resiliency over professionalization – that being an individual's commitment to restorative values carry more weight than a degree in hand. At the same time, if/as restorative justice work expands, particularly within educational settings, will employers be pushed to hire individuals with no restorative justice background or knowledge (assuming those hiring the position have this knowledge)? If so, what are the implications for the broader restorative justice movement? Could this lead to co-optation of restorative justice by employers/institutions? Could the concept of restorative justice be used to rebrand conventional systems, paradigm, and associated punitive practices?

In relation to restorative justice educators, the implications for curricular and program development are many. Strategies and pedagogy for ensuring the resiliency of the restorative paradigm from possible co-optation from the conventional systems of punishment will need to be developed and advocated for.

This research indicated that there is no uniform or requisite educational expectation at the undergraduate level for restorative justice practitioners. This reflects the educational realities for restorative justice formal education. Very few programs in higher education explicitly teach restorative facilitation. To date there are two Master's degrees in restorative justice in the United States. There are no undergraduate bachelor's degrees in restorative justice and as of this writing only one undergraduate concentration offering multiple stand-alone restorative justice courses. Those interested in gaining restorative facilitation credentials often do so through non-profits (Examples: International Institute of Restorative Practices; St. Johnsbury's CJC Summer Institute of Restorative Practices) or professional development trainings/certificate programs at university centers (Ex: Center for Justice and Peacemaking, UMN-D; Center for Justice and Peacebuilding, EMU). Is this an adequate model for preparation?

#### Conclusion

Though there have been gains, there remains a general lack of restorative justice education within higher education. Our own experiences inform us that restorative justice work is often

done individually, particularly notable in educational settings in which only one restorative practitioner is employed and is responsible for overseeing the implementation of restorative practices across the institution. As the restorative justice workforce expands, is this lack of education harming the paradigm? Are entry-level practitioners prepared to create and facilitate trainings in restorative practices for co-workers, youth, community members, responsible parties, or victims? How might the lack of restorative justice educational preparation impact the implementation of restorative practices in organizations and institutions? Anecdotally, as restorative justice faculty, we have been contacted by newly hired restorative practitioners in K-12 educational settings who have requested our assistance, as they did not have facilitation training and did not know where to begin with implementing restorative practices in their institutions. For those of us concerned with advancing restorative justice practices, stories such as these should be immediately alarming.

The data from this study forces one to pose the questions, what role do we hold in ensuring that qualified individuals are being hired within this emerging workforce? How might we conceptualize what restorative justice education can and should look like? As faculty committed to the restorative paradigm, how can we best contribute to movement resilience?

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## Appendix B

Vermont Community Justice Directors  
c/o Susan A. Cherry  
The Community Restorative Justice Center, Inc.  
576 Railroad Street, Suite 2  
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819

Northern Vermont University-Lyndon  
c/o Dr. Brandon Stroup

November 16, 2021

Dear Review Team,

The Directors of the Vermont Department of Corrections (DOC) funded Community Justice Programs in the state meet regularly to discuss issues of importance, and the proposal to create a B.A. Degree in Restorative Justice at NVU-Lyndon was a topic of discussion at yesterday's meeting.

As directors, we often recruit and train new staff for our programs. The training in general takes people with no background in restorative justice and introduces them to the theory and practice of our work in a process that generally takes several months. If we were to hire candidates with a BA in RJ, this process would take much less time in the training as well as less time away from the tasks that are needed at our Community Justice Centers (CJCs). There are more opportunities to use restorative justice now in Vermont, and the need for more staff is ever-increasing.

In addition to our work with the courts and DOC, many of our centers work with schools to help them align with restorative principles. Most of the new guidance and student support positions, as well as principal and curriculum positions, include knowledge of and practice with restorative practices. This is an emerging field.

I recently hired a graduate of NVU-Lyndon who had a certificate in restorative justice. She also worked as an intern with us. Nevertheless, there were still trainings for her to complete, and time spent learning the practice in the field. She is now taking on a new town, and handling this very well. If she had had a degree, I am of the opinion that her movement into this more detailed work might have happened sooner.

Some of the course work that we would find helpful as directors of restorative programs would be in circle process, trauma-awareness, meeting facilitation, restorative justice theory and practice as well as school implementation science. The CJC directors would be very interested in reviewing and giving input into the curriculum offerings.

Restorative Justice is being used in many community conversations which invite equity and justice discussions. We would like to have some time spent in such a degree program initiating and facilitating such conversations.

If you would like any further information about our work, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

*Susan A. Cherry*

Susan A. Cherry, Executive Director  
The Community Restorative Justice Center, Inc.  
Writing on behalf of the VT CJC Directors



January 6, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Tim Holler and I am currently the Chair of the Restorative and Community Justice Section of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences. I also served previously for two years as the Vice-Chair, and for two years as an Executive Counselor for the section. One of our primary concerns over the past few years is the development of standards for restorative justice degrees, tracks, certifications, trainings etc. . . . As it currently stands, the cooptation of restorative justice into criminal justice programs and degrees dilutes the quality of restorative justice concepts and applications throughout higher education. Restorative justice is a “buzz phrase” that institutions use for marketing purposes. Upon further examination of those programs, criminal justice is always the primary focus, and restorative justice principles and practices are relegated to one or two classes, if any. Thus, it appears that there is currently no standalone restorative justice bachelor’s degree anywhere in the country. While there are graduate degrees in the field, those programs have not materialized at the undergraduate level.

I would argue that the limited restorative justice education presently available to undergraduates is not adequate preparation for entry-level restorative justice work – this is harmful to the restorative justice movement, the arenas in which restorative justice practices are employed, and particularly harmful to the individuals served by underprepared restorative facilitators. The necessity for dedicated restorative justice degrees cannot be understated. I would also argue that students who have a restorative justice degree are often better suited to enter criminal justice related work than those who have solely focused on the criminal justice field. In teaching both restorative and criminal justice, it is clear that students who take only criminal justice courses get a very narrow view of criminality and the harmful impacts it has on society as a whole, and on individual survivors.

The proposed restorative justice degree at Northern Vermont University has a clear and defined path for developing the requisite knowledge of restorative justice and the ability to apply restorative practices within numerous disciplines, including criminal justice. I see this degree as both standalone and complimentary to every other degree at your University. The skills that will be developed in these courses transcend the boundaries of academia and touch at the very heart of Northern Vermont’s mission and vision of preparing students to be critical thinkers and globally engaged citizens. I believe this program also has the potential to make an enormous impact on your campus and within the surrounding community.

In closing, I fully support the proposed Bachelor’s in Restorative Justice at Northern Vermont University. Your institution, and your faculty, are well suited for being one of the first, if not the first, in the country to offer this type of degree. I appreciate your time, and please feel free to reach out to me if necessary at [TJH67@pitt.edu](mailto:TJH67@pitt.edu).

Sincerely,

*Timothy J. Holler*

Timothy J. Holler, PhD.  
Associate Professor of Criminal Justice  
University of Pitt-Greensburg  
Chair - Restorative & Community Justice Section - ACJS

**POLICY 102  
RUBRIC FOR STEP 1 PRELIMINARY REVIEW OF NEW PROGRAM PROPOSALS**

	CONTRA-INDICATION	CONCERN / FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT	STRENGTH
1. What are the regional market needs and initial enrollment projections for the program?	Unclear, unsubstantiated, or anecdotal.	Information doesn't exist to support robust projection.	Identified regional market partners with concrete, grounded projections.  ✓
2. How likely is the program to achieve enrollment of 25+ students within five years?	Not likely based on enrollments in comparable programs.	Enrollment yield dependent on multiple, uncontrollable, or unknown factors.	Clear demand from early analyses or experience in comparable programs.  ✓
3. Does the enrollment projection include any anticipated internal enrollment shifts and academic program restructuring at the institution?	Program's impact on other programs within the institution likely and/or not evaluated.	Potential for impact recognized but not discussed.	No evidence of potential impact, or any potential impacts are recognized and program implementation planning addresses them.  ✓
4. Is the program serving any unmet state or regional needs?	No, and the program would not be recognized as adding any other value/benefit for Vermont or the region.	The program defines a potential need that is not yet, or not widely recognized.	Yes, there is a clear need and strong support from stakeholders for the proposed program to meet the need.  ✓
5. Is the curriculum and delivery model in alignment with other programs in the VSCS to maximize enrollment and transfer opportunities for all types of students, including low-income dual enrollment/early college students and working adults?	No, the curriculum design or other factors would preclude transfer opportunities within the system.	The program anticipates transfer pathways, but these do not maximize access for a diverse population of potential students.  ✓	The program anticipates transfer pathways and delivery modalities that maximize access for all students, including low-income students and working adults.
6. What are the likely enrollment competition risks within the system?	There is a similar program in the system serving a similar population of students currently at risk of not sustaining minimum size.	The program is likely to result in some competition, with students able to exercise choice (i.e. based on location, cost, delivery modality, campus culture), but overall enrollments likely to be sustained above  ✓	No competition risk or risk not significant enough to threaten other programs sustaining a minimum size.

		minimum size for both programs.	
7. Is the program the best fit (mission, scope, capacity to deliver) within the system for the institution that is proposing it?	The program appears to have potential stronger fit with a different VSC institution, or a similar program already exists where there is a clear best fit.	Best fit is unclear, or there are multiple institutions within the system with potential fit.	The institution proposing the program is the clear best fit.  
8. What are the likely corollary benefits to the institution and system (e.g., new sources of external funding, enhanced external relations) of adopting the program?	There are no clear benefits, as the program raises external relations concerns or is not projected to generate net new enrollments at the system level.	Benefits to the system are unclear and may be offset by other risks.	The program is likely to elevate the profile of the system as a whole, attract new funding, and/or generate net new enrollments at the system level.  
9. What is the scope of institutional investment risk associated with launching the program?	The program requires immediate institutional investment, regardless of initial revenue projections, that is substantial (total cost, multi-year commitment needed, etc.)	The program requires moderate or substantial investment but is supported by conservative revenue projections.	The program requires minimal or discretionary investment.  
10. What is the scope of institutional commitment necessary to sustain the program?	The program will require a high level of ongoing resource commitment that cannot be sustained based on conservative case revenue projections.	The level of ongoing resource commitment needed is sustainable with conservative revenue projections. 	Conservatively projected revenues will be sufficient to generate a net contribution margin for the institution, inclusive of direct and indirect expenses.

19 January, 2024

**Addendum** to the Restorative Justice Policy 102 Document  
Submitted by N. Atkins

At the 8 January, 2024 EPSL meeting where the Restorative Justice Policy 102 proposal was presented and discussed, additional information was requested in two areas; 1) the development of CCV pathways to this program and 2) enrollment projections to ensure program sustainability. This information is provided below.

**1. CCV Pathways**

The VTSU Dean of the School of Education, Psychology, and Social Sciences, David Kupferman, is working with CCV Associate Academic Dean Leslie Johnson, to develop pathways to both the proposed Restorative Justice program and the existing Criminal Justice program. The pathway in development is from the CCV Associate’s program in Human Services. We anticipate that the pathways will be complete early in the Spring 2024 term.

**2. Enrollment numbers**

The following two tables break down projected program enrollments for the four calendar years from 2025 to 2028.

In Table 1:

VT = in state students

OS = out of state students

new transfer = transfer students

CCV = CCV students starting at VTSU in year 3 of the Restorative Justice Program

Table 1: Anticipated number of incoming RJ Students by Calendar Year.

Cal Yr	Incoming Student Types			
	VT	OS	new transfer	CCV starting yr3
<b>2025</b>	10	5	0	0
<b>2026</b>	11	6	3	0
<b>2027</b>	12	7	5	4
<b>2028</b>	13	8	5	6

Based on the projected number of incoming students in Table 1, Table 2 summarizes program enrollments over the first four years of the program using the retention assumptions below that reflect institutional averages for similar programs. By year 4, we anticipate a total enrollment of **64 students**.

Table 2: Total Program Enrollment by Calendar Year.

	Year in Program				
	first year	second year	third year	fourth year	total enrollment
2025	15				15
2026	20	11			31
2027	24	14	11		49
2028	26	17	15	6	<b>64</b>

**Retention Assumptions:**

Year 1->2     70%  
 Year 2->3     60%  
 Year 3->4     50%

**ITEM 7:**  
**Board of Trustees' Handbook revisions**

January 2024

On behalf of the Vermont State Colleges System, I welcome you to the Board of Trustees.

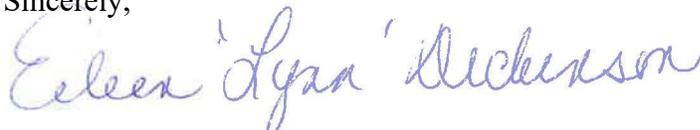
The Vermont State Colleges System provides an essential higher education gateway for Vermonters and the state of Vermont. Created by statute and embracing a rich tradition of serving Vermonters, the work of our colleges and universities touches diverse aspects of Vermont life. Our many programs include high tech manufacturing, healing arts and sciences, and environmental studies. Our studies also build cultural appreciation, develop leaders and teachers, and advance workforce skills. The education and services provided by the Vermont State Colleges System contribute to the success of residents, our communities, and the Vermont economy.

As a trustee, you are part of the leadership team that charts the course of the future of post-secondary education, personal betterment and economic development in Vermont. You will share in the decisions that shape how the system addresses the needs of our current students and constituencies and how the VSCS will evolve to meet the needs of the future. Over the course of your tenure as a trustee, you will also work to address many challenges faced by contemporary higher education. Together, the Board will navigate issues of institutional financial sustainability, prioritizing the accessibility, affordability, quality, and relevance of our students' endeavors.

We work to assure that our doors remain open to all who aspire to improve their lives through education. *For the benefit of Vermont*, as our mission statement begins, we remain steadfast in our commitment to providing access to high-quality, affordable post-secondary education in all corners of the state.

On behalf of the entire VSCS Board of Trustees, I welcome you and look forward to working together with you.

Sincerely,



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

## An Overview of the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees of the Vermont State Colleges System is charged with the oversight of the corporation. As the governing board of the system, the Board is the final authority and is held accountable for both the system and the institutions within it. The Board provides leadership and governance at the system level. System policies govern fiscal, academic, student, and personnel matters.

### *Board Principles of Governance*

There are certain clear and accepted principles that govern the Board's conduct of VSCS affairs and its relationships. These include the following:

- Board Members are officers of the system with a fiduciary responsibility for the entire system. They represent statewide, rather than regional, political, or personal interests.
- The Board limits its direct action to the development and oversight of policy and finances, and to the hiring and evaluation of its executive officers. The Board does not directly manage the institutions.
- The Board acts as a board, not as 15 individual trustees. Board members express their views and seek changes within the committees and other structures of the Board, rather than outside the Board process.
- Openness, trust, and honesty are the trademarks of all dealings between Board members, with the officers of the institutions, and with the public.

According to the [Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges](#), highly effective boards:

1. Create a culture of inclusion.
2. Uphold basic fiduciary principles.
3. Cultivate a healthy relationship with the chief executive.
4. Select an effective board chair.
5. Establish an effective governance committee.
6. Delegate appropriate decision-making authority to committees.
7. Consider strategic risk factors.
8. Provide appropriate oversight of academic quality.
9. Develop a renewed commitment to shared governance.
10. Focus on accountability.

System governance documents include:

- VSCS enabling statutes ([Title 16 VSA Chapter 72 §2170-2186](#))
- [Corporate By-Laws](#)
- [VSCS Policy and Procedures Manual](#)
- [Contracts](#) with the VSCS's union partners
- [VSCS Personnel Handbook](#) for non-bargaining unit employees

The Board promulgates policies and the Chancellor adopts procedures to guide the institutions' presidents and other VSCS officers in the execution of their respective duties.

The Board also selects the Chancellor, the chief executive officer of the VSCS system, and the presidents, who serve as the chief operating officers of their respective institutions (with advice from the Chancellor).

The presidents, once appointed, report to the Chancellor. When a vacancy occurs in one of the above positions, the Board appoints a committee of trustees to review applications, conduct interviews, and ultimately recommend an appointment to the full Board. This Board committee may also be assisted by an advisory group made up of appropriate members of the VSCS community.

Yearly, the Board conducts a performance review of the Chancellor and hears his/her performance reviews of the college presidents.

## VERMONT STATE COLLEGES SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES STATEMENT OF TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Trusteeship is exciting, rewarding, and demanding; it requires commitment, time, intellectual energy, and effort. Major responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

### Standard of Care

A Trustee shall at all times discharge his or her duties as a Trustee in good faith, with the care an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would exercise under similar circumstances, and in a manner the Trustee reasonably believes to be in the best interests of the System.

### Diligence

A Trustee shall carefully prepare for, and regularly attend, all scheduled Board meetings and the meetings of Committees to which he or she is assigned.

A Trustee should allocate the necessary commitment of time to be effective in meetings and participate actively in the group discussion.

A Trustee shall exercise his or her best judgment in making decisions that affect the course of the System.

A Trustee is expected to become knowledgeable in all aspects of the System, including its governance, mission, strategic plans, and programs. In addition, in order to increase understanding of the System, its culture and community, a Trustee is encouraged to participate in the life of the Systems institutions through attendance at their functions and social events.

A Trustee must be committed to the principles of equal opportunity and non-discrimination for all students, faculty, and staff.

### Loyalty

A Trustee may challenge the judgment of others when he or she deems it necessary to do so, and shall vote his or her individual convictions after listening to others. A Trustee must, however, be willing to work with fellow Board members in the best interests of the System and should support Board decisions publicly.

A Trustee shall maintain the confidential nature of Executive Session.

A Trustee shall support the Chancellor's role as chief executive, to whom the Board has delegated responsibility for personnel, management and administrative matters. Furthermore, a Trustee shall communicate promptly and as appropriate any significant concern or complaint of which he or she becomes aware to the Chancellor or Board Chair.

A Trustee shall recognize that the Chancellor is the spokesperson for the System and the Chair is the spokesperson for the Board unless otherwise designated. When a Trustee engages in communications with personnel, students, citizens, and the media on an individual basis, the Trustee shall be guided by the duty of loyalty as set forth in this section of the Statement of Trustee Responsibilities.

A Trustee should support the System's fundraising and/or related activities through participation in fund drives according to their personal circumstances.

A Trustee should have an abiding interest in higher education and in furtherance of the mission of this System.

#### Conflicts Avoidance

The constituency of each Trustee is the System, regardless of the source of appointment. A Trustee shall act independently for the benefit of the System as a whole and not for the benefit of a particular institution, program, or interest.

A Trustee shall comply with the letter and spirit of the Board of Trustees' Conflict of Interest Policy.

*Adopted by the Board of Trustees September 23, 2015*

### *Trustee Commitment*

The full Board meets regularly. The Board's [schedule of Board and Committee meetings](#) is set at the Board's annual meeting for the upcoming academic year. Meetings may be held virtually or in person at one of Vermont State University's campuses or at the Community Colleges of Vermont's academic learning centers. The Board typically has an overnight retreat in mid-September. Board and committee meetings are open to the public and are subject to Vermont's Open Meeting Law. *See* 1 V.S.A. § 310 et seq.

Trustees are expected to attend Board meetings and meetings of the committee(s) on which they sit. Trustees are also encouraged to attend other committee meetings as personal schedules permit.

In addition to Board and committee meetings, trustees are expected to attend one or two college graduations each year, along with other appropriate college events in which they might have interest. Such visits are welcomed as they increase Board members' knowledge of the institutions.

The Board of Trustees is an active body that meets on a regular basis but can also be called to meet more frequently for other reasons, such as a special meeting, ad hoc committee work, or a presidential search. In addition, Board decisions are frequently based on system data and other information provided by staff at the Chancellor's Office staff or the institutions. A certain amount of reading and studying information and data is essential to trustees' ability to make educated decisions. Opportunities for Board member professional development in the form of supplemental reading and other educational opportunities outside of the Board meeting cycle are also provided.

### *General Roles & Responsibilities of Trustees*

#### Annual Tasks

- Selection of external auditor and review of audit reports
- Approval and audit of internal operating and capital budgets
- Establish tuition rates and fees
- Develop request for state appropriations
- Review of existing academic programs under VSCS Policy 101
- Review of program enrollment under VSCS Policy 109
- Election of Board officers (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer)
- Attend VSCS Board of Trustees retreat
- Performance review and reappointment of Chancellor and institution presidents
- Attend institutional commencements

### Ongoing Tasks

- System-wide strategic planning
- Policy development, review, and revision
- Review of system performance indicators and benchmarks
- Review of and action on financial and real estate transactions
- Review of and action on new program proposals under VSCS Policy 102
- Participation in legislative activities

### Intermittent Tasks

- Chancellor selection
- President selection
- Task forces on special topics

### *Board Committees*

The standing committees of the Board are:

- Audit & Risk Management (Audit) Committee
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee
- Education, Personnel & Student Life (EPSL) Committee
- Executive Committee
- Finance & Facilities (F&F) Committee
- Nominating Committee

While the Board's and committee's deliberations are often conducted informally, they follow Robert's Rules of Order. Meeting minutes are published [online](#).

### *Special Task Forces & Committees*

In addition to the standing committees, occasionally the Board appoints special ad hoc committees or task forces to deal with specific problems or issues. Membership often includes non-trustees. The kinds of problems and issues that have been studied by VSCS task forces in the past include library services, student life, computing services, and basic skills.

## About the Vermont State Colleges System

### *The Chancellor's Office*

The Chancellor is the chief executive officer of the corporation. The Chancellor manages and coordinates the system within policies and guidelines established by the Board of Trustees. Responsibilities of the Chancellor include supervision of fiscal, academic, personnel, and student affairs of the corporation.

The Chancellor also serves as the communication channel between the institutions and the Board of Trustees and represents the VSCS's interests with the governor, state agencies, and the General Assembly.

The Chancellor testifies before gubernatorial and legislative committees and directs others to do so as needed. The presidents work for and report to the Chancellor, as do the members of the Chancellor's senior leadership team.

### The VSCS Institutions

The system is comprised of two institutions: Vermont State University (VTSU) and the Community College of Vermont (CCV). VTSU is a four-year institution with liberal arts, pre-professional, and technical programs. It offers degree programs ranging from the associate through the master's level. CCV is a two-year institution offering associate degrees, as well as certificates and other credentials.

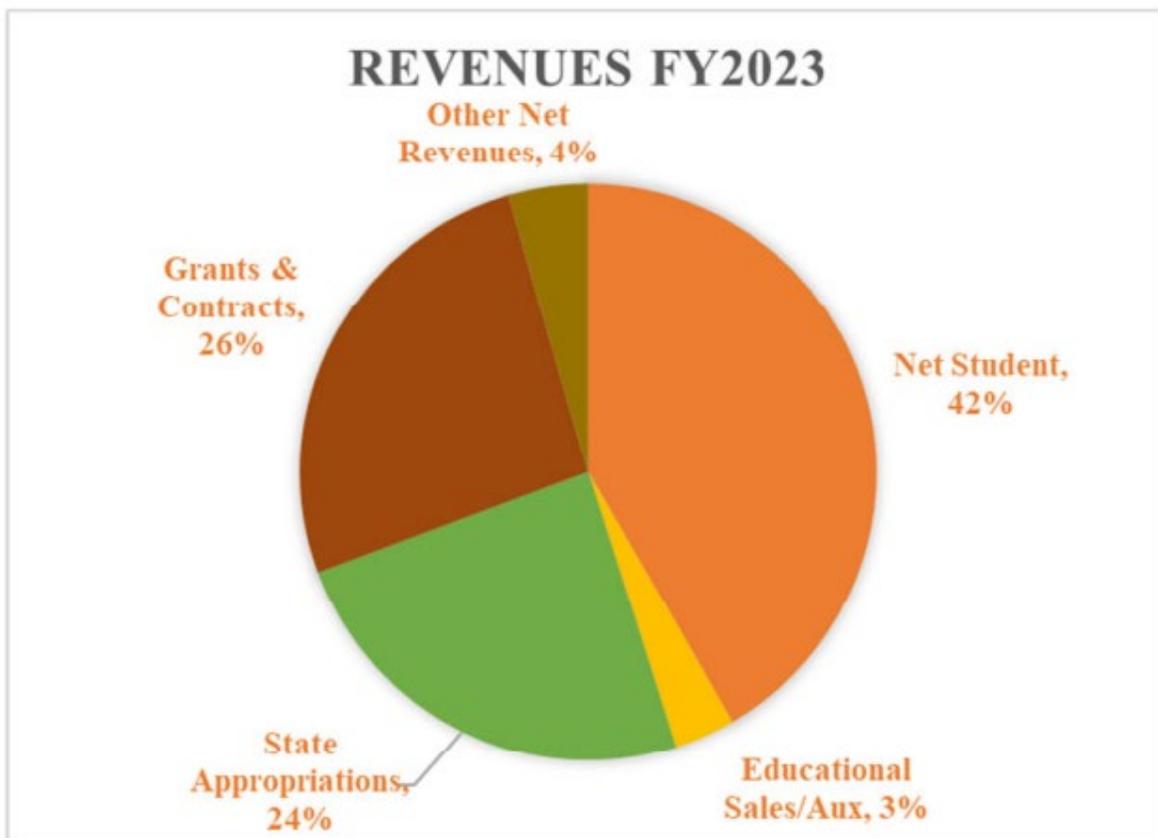
Each institution has a distinctive character and each offers programs to meet the special interests and needs of its students and its region. Together, they offer outstanding opportunities for Vermonters and non-Vermonters to achieve their individual goals.

### *Organizational Structure*

The President is the chief executive and operating officer of each institution. The Presidents report directly to the Chancellor. Certain back-office functions, including Information Technology, Human Resources, and Finance are managed through a shared services model, overseen by the Chancellor and the Presidents. The Presidents are responsible for managing their institutions, including staffing decisions and resource allocation, within the bounds of the Board's policies and guidelines.

## Funding

By statute, the Vermont State Colleges System was to be supported “in whole or in substantial part” by the State of Vermont. The VSCS receives funding for operations, allied health programs, and the Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center. The appropriation provided by the Vermont General Assembly increased \$17.5 million between FY2020 and FY2024, a 57.4% increase. The annual capital appropriation provided by the Vermont General Assembly varies from year to year, and has historically been between \$2 and \$3 million annually. In FY2024 the Vermont General Assembly authorized \$9 million in capital appropriations split between bonded funds and general fund appropriations.



The legislature can also appropriate one-time funds for special projects, such as workforce development or scholarships for Vermonters. VSCS students also benefit from the Vermont Higher Education Endowment, the interest from which is transferred to the VSCS (also to UVM and VSAC).

## A Brief History of the VSCS

The public corporation known as the Vermont State Colleges System was created by statute in 1961. The Vermont State Colleges System currently consists of two institutions: Vermont State University and the Community College of Vermont. The roots of the legacy institutions that comprise VTSU date back over 200 years. Castleton, Johnson, Lyndon and Vermont Tech all started as normal schools between 1787 and 1911 and were under the control of the State Board of Education. The Community College of Vermont, a statewide institution, was founded by executive order of Governor Deane Davis in 1975. In 2018 Johnson State College and Lyndon State College combined to form Northern Vermont University and in 2023 Northern Vermont University, along with Castleton University and Vermont Technical College came together to form Vermont State University – a statewide university with campuses at Castleton, Johnson, Lyndon, Randolph, and Williston.

From 1961 to 1977 the VSCS operated largely as a “loose confederation” of colleges. There was little or no coordination of academic, financial, or personnel activities. Cooperation between the colleges was minimal and there were few system policies. In 1977, the Board of Trustees asserted their leadership over the colleges and created a functioning system. The Board accepted full responsibility for the financial, academic, and personnel activities of the system.

For decades, the Vermont State Colleges System operated under a “top-down” model. The Chancellor’s Office served as central leadership for the system, and the colleges operated within guidelines set from above.

Over time, VSCS leaders restructured the system and the function of the central office to enable a sharing of leadership. Facing increasing financial and operational challenges, the Board of Trustees and Chancellor have made it a priority to become a more comprehensive, cohesive, and interconnected system. This is intended to enhance educational opportunities by providing students access not only to the resources of their institution, but to the resources of the system as a whole, and to enable the most cost-effective operation of individual institutions and the system.

Leadership has evolved into a collaborative relationship allowing for substantial autonomy at the institutional level, while maximizing the educational and operational opportunities provided by a strong system and central office. The Board of Trustees sets policy for the system and the Chancellor adopts system-wide procedures in support of those policies. Each institution operates under the authority of its president and presidential cabinet, consistent with the policies and procedures adopted by the Board of Trustees and Chancellor.

## About the Vermont State Colleges System

The VSCS will continue to transform in order to provide high-quality, affordable, and workforce-connected higher education in Vermont in a financially sustainable model. The Board's most recent strategic priorities may be found [here](#).

### *Employee Relations*

VSCS Employees fall into two general categories: unionized or non-unionized. Non-unionized employees include:

- Senior executive employees at the institutions and in the Chancellor's Office, as well as other employees whose official duties exempt them from coverage under Vermont's State Employees Labor Relations Act. *See* 3 V.S.A. § 901*et seq.*
- Employees in VSCS's outreach programs (*e.g.* Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center)
- CCV staff

Unionized employees include:

- Full-time faculty at Vermont State University (Vermont State Colleges Faculty Federation)
- Professional, Administrative and Technical Employees at Vermont State University (Vermont State Colleges United Professionals – PAT Unit)
- Supervisory Employees at Vermont State University (Vermont State Colleges United Professionals – SUP Unit)
- Clerical and maintenance staff at Vermont State University (Vermont State Colleges Staff Federation)
- Part-time faculty at Vermont State University (Vermont State Colleges Part-Time Faculty Federation)
- Online Faculty at Vermont State University (NVU Online United Faculty)
- Faculty at the Community College of Vermont (CCV United Faculty)

The [collective bargaining agreements](#) applicable to each unit of unionized employees and the [Personnel Handbook](#) for non-unionized employees are publicly available.

In addition, the Board of Trustees maintains a [Policies and Procedures Manual](#) applicable to all VSCS employees.