


MEMORANDUM

TO: Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees
Gwen Bailey-Rowe
Betsy Ide Bloomer
Jenette Bombardier
Megan Cluver, Vice Chair
Coleen Condon
Eileen Dickinson, Chair
David Durfee
Bob Flint

Shirley Jefferson
Jim Masland
Marc Mihaly, Secretary
David Silverman, Treasurer
Sue Zeller
Phil Scott, Governor
Amelia Vlahogiannis

FROM: Elizabeth Mauch, Chancellor 

DATE: June 6, 2025

SUBJECT: VSC Board of Trustees Meeting June 14, 2025

The VSC Board of Trustees Annual Meeting will take place on Saturday, June 14, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom. This is a remote meeting with the option for the public to join in-person at VTSU Randolph (124 Admin Dr, Randolph Center, VT,) Conant Building, Room 102.

The meeting will begin with public comment, vote on the consent agenda, and then go into executive session. Following executive session, the board will hear reports from the committees on Nominating; Audit & Risk Management; Diversity, Equity & Inclusion; Education, Personnel & Student Life; and Finance & Facilities. The board will then hear reports from the presidents and receive an update from the chancellor. Following any additional business the board will adjourn.

The board has fifteen members. The quorum to start the meeting and to take any action is eight members of the board. The board assistant may be reached at (802) 224-3021 for any questions.

Cc: VSCS Board of Trustees Council of Presidents
Department of Libraries

Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees
Zoom Meeting¹/YouTube Stream²
Saturday, June 14, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.

This is a remote meeting with the option to join in-person at VTSU Randolph (124 Admin Dr, Randolph Center, VT,) Conant Building, Room 102. Contact 802-224-3021 for more information.

AGENDA

1. Call to order
2. Public comment³
3. Consent Agenda
 - a. Election of Board Chair
 - b. Election of Board Officers
 - c. Election of Audit & Risk Management Committee Members
 - d. VTSU Faculty Fellows Nominations for Professor Preston Garcia and Professor Brandon Stroup
 - e. Education, Personnel & Student Life Policies
 - i. 102 New Program
 - ii. 102 New Degrees
 - iii. 108 Transfer of Credit
 - iv. 111 Academic Data Management
 - v. 311/311 A
 - vi. 313 Hazing
 - f. Annual Banking & Investment Resolution
 - g. Finance & Facilities Policies
 - i. 408 Grants and External Funding
 - ii. 419 Driver Safety
 - h. Academic Year 2025-2026 Tuition Increases for CCV and VTSU
 - i. FY2026 System-Wide Annual Operating Budget
 - j. Minutes of April 14, 2025

¹ <https://www.vsc.edu/botzoom>

² www.vsc.edu/live

³ Sign up to make a public comment at www.vsc.edu/signup. You must be present or logged in to the live session to make a comment.

4. Executive session
5. Committee Reports
 - a. Nominating Committee and Election of Officers
 - b. Audit & Risk Management Committee
 - c. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee
 - d. Education, Personnel & Student Life Committee
 - e. Finance & Facilities Committee
6. Review/vote: 2025-2026 Board of Trustees and Committee Meetings Schedule
7. Reports from the Presidents
 - a. President Bergh
 - b. President Judy
8. Update from the Chancellor
9. Additional business
10. Adjourn

CONSENT AGENDA MATERIALS

1. Consent Agenda Overview
 - a. Nominating Committee Recommendations
 - b. Education, Personnel & Student Life Committee Recommendations
 - c. Finance & Facilities Committee Recommendations
2. Education, Personnel & Student Life Committee Items in Detail
 - a. VTSU Faculty Fellow Presidential Nomination for Professor Preston Garcia and Professor Brandon Stroup
 - b. Policy 102 New Degrees and Majors
 - c. Policy 108 Transfer of Credit
 - d. Policy 111 Academic Data Management
 - e. Policy 313 Hazing
 - f. Policy 311/311 A
3. Finance & Facilities Committee Items in Detail
 - a. 2025-006 Annual Banking & Investment Resolution
 - b. Policy 408 Grants and External Funding
 - c. Policy 419 Driver Safety
 - d. Academic Year 2025-2026 Tuition Increases for CCV and VTSU
 - e. 2025-005 FY2026 System-Wide Annual Operating Budget Resolution

4. Minutes of April 14, 2025

OTHER MATERIALS

5. 2025-2026 Board of Trustees and Committee Meetings Schedule

ITEM 1: Consent Agenda Overview

CONSENT AGENDA OVERVIEW

As noted in the cover memo, the key action items for today's meeting will be addressed via a "Consent Agenda". The consent agenda groups together action items that are either routine matters such as meeting minutes or matters that have been pre-vetted by one of the board's committees. All items on the consent agenda will be approved with a single motion and vote without discussion.

However, if any board members have concerns about an item on the consent agenda and wish to have it removed for full discussion, the board member may request that the Chair remove these items from the consent agenda prior to the motion and vote. No motion/second/vote is required to *remove* an item from the Consent Agenda – all that is required is the request by one voting member. In that event, the item will be moved to the section of the agenda where the appropriate committee is reporting for the board's full consideration.

While all background materials are provided as addendums to this packet, a summary of the key action items from the consent agenda are found on the next few pages.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

On June 2, 2025, the Nominating Committee met to recommend officers for the Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees. The Committee's recommendations are as follows:

Chair of the Board of Trustees: Lynn Dickinson

The Chair of the Board is a two-year appointment. The Nominating Committee unanimously recommends to the full board electing Lynn Dickinson to a two-year term for the period July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2027.

Officers of the Board of Trustees: Megan Cluver, Vice-Chair
David Silverman, Treasurer
Marc Mihaly, Secretary

Officers of the Board are elected annually. The Nominating Committee unanimously recommends to the full board electing Megan Cluver as Vice-Chair, David Silverman as Treasurer, and Marc Mihaly as Secretary to a one-year term for the period July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026.

Audit & Risk Management Committee: Gwen Bailey-Rowe,
David Durfee
Bob Flint
David Silverman
Sue Zeller

VSC Bylaws require that the Board vote each year on the composition of the Audit & Risk Management Committee. The Nominating Committee unanimously recommends to the full board appointing Gwen Bailey-Rowe, David Durfee, Bob Flint, David Silverman, and Sue Zeller to the Audit & Risk Management Committee for the period July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026.

EDUCATION, PERSONNEL & STUDENT LIFE RECOMMENDATIONS

At the EPSL Committee meeting on May 12, 2025, the Committee reviewed updates to four policies. Special Assistant Yasmine Zeisler gave an overview of the academic affairs policies and Associate General Counsel Kathryn Santiago update of the student affairs policy. The Committee unanimously voted to recommend each of the policies to the full Board of Trustees for approval.

Policy 102 Approval of New Degrees and Majors – Policy & Template Update

The revision to Policy 102 provides clarification and streamlines the process for program development within the system. Additionally, the changes formalize the Board of Trustees' strategic priority concerning accessibility as well as encouraging program development in incremental stages.

Policy 108 Transfer of Credit

The revisions to Policy 108 expand the seamless transfer of experiences within the Vermont State Colleges to include the acceptance of credit from other sources.

Policy 111 Academic Data Management

Policy 111 clarifies the role of registrars at Community College of Vermont and Vermont State University within a transformed system. It also modernizes language and updates grading practices.

Policy 313 Hazing

Federal legislation enacted in January requires institutions of higher education to maintain anti-hazing policies. The VSC Board adopted a policy prohibiting hazing in 2006 to reflect Vermont law. The changes to this policy are to comply with the new federal anti-hazing statute, especially regarding the requirement that prevention training and strategies, as well as to update language and legal citations.

At the EPSL Committee meeting on June 13, 2025, the Committee is scheduled to review updates to Policies 311/311A. The Committee is anticipated to recommend these changes to the full Board of Trustees for approval.

Policies 311/311A (Prevention of Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct)

Due to court and executive actions, the policies adopted by the Board last August are not operative. Since then, we have been operating under the pre-2024 policies. While these policies are operating soundly, they require some minor changes to reflect current law (changes that had

been incorporated in the now-defunct August 2024 revised policies). We also adopt the simpler naming conventions for these policies, as we did in 2024. The Chancellor will also adopt revised Implementing Procedures for both policies.

Policy 311 is the policy to prevent Discrimination. The updates involve language clarifications and references to Policy 311A, updated definitions to recognize additional protected classifications under Vermont law, as well as acknowledging that the revised Procedures will allow for a single investigator, rather than require two investigators.

Policy 311A is the policy to prevent sexual misconduct, often referred to as the Title IX policy. The updates include language clarifications and references to Policy 311 and a new section on Amnesty as required by Vermont law.

FINANCE & FACILITIES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

At the Finance & Facilities Committee meeting on May 12, 2025, the Committee reviewed two policies, requests for tuition and fee increases at VTSU and CCV, the Annual Banking & Investment Resolution, and the third and final pass of the FY26 System-Wide Annual Operating Budget. After considerable discussion, the Committee unanimously voted to recommend each of the action items to the Board of Trustees for approval.

Policy 408 Grants & External Funding

Recent changes to federal regulations require updates to Policy 408. The changes include guidance regarding “supplanting” institutional resources with grant funds, increases to the equipment threshold to \$10,000, and standardizing compensation for grant personnel including payment during sabbaticals.

Policy 419 Driver Safety Policy

The updated policy clarifies who is covered by the policy and standardizes procedures.

Tuition & Fees Increases for VTSU and CCV

Community College of Vermont and Vermont State University are requesting tuition increases for the 2025-2026 academic year. CCV requested \$10 per credit (3.5%) and Vermont State University requested 3.5% for all programs. In addition, VTSU is requesting a 5% increase on its board (dining) charges.

Resolution 2025-006 Annual Banking & Investment Resolution

Annually the Board of Trustees approves a banking and investment resolution that authorizes the Chancellor, Chief Financial & Operating Officer, Presidents, and Chief Business Officers to perform necessary banking and investment activities.

FY26 System-Wide Operating Budget and Resolution 2025-005

At its May meeting, the F&F Committee reviewed the third and final pass of the FY26 budget. As proposed, the Budget \$181.27 million including a projected deficit of \$4.932 million. The deficit is consistent with the \$5 million as discussed at each of the budget meetings. FY26 is the fifth and final year of the planned deficit reduction.

ITEM 2: Education, Personnel & Student Life Committee Items in Detail



**Vermont State
University**

Office of the President
PO Box 500
Randolph Center, Vermont 05061

Tel: 802.728.1252
Email: President@VermontState.edu

February 27, 2025

Chancellor Elizabeth Mauch
Vermont State Colleges

Dear Chancellor Mauch,

I am pleased to endorse the nominations of **Dr. Preston Garcia** (Natural Sciences) and **Dr. Brandon Stroup** (Criminal Justice) to receive Faculty Fellow recognition for 2025-2026.

Both of these nominees have demonstrated significant accomplishments in their teaching, research, and service, as you will see in the supporting materials.

Professors Garcia and Stroup reflect the values and priorities of VTSU with their overarching commitment to our students and their successful development. We are fortunate to have them and would be wise to recognize them with this distinction.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

David Bergh, Ed.D.
President

January 17, 2025

Dear Faculty Fellow Committee:

I am writing to nominate myself, Dr. Brandon Stroup, for the Faculty Fellow Award in recognition of excellence in teaching and learning. I have made significant contributions through my advancement of comprehensive restorative justice curricula, my scholarship on transformative experiential criminal justice education, and my research on the educational and training needs of practitioners within the emerging occupation of restorative justice practice. My research, pedagogy, and curricular advancements have greatly benefitted our regional criminal and restorative justice communities.

Recognizing that entry-level restorative justice practitioners are frequently underprepared for their work upon hire, and that restorative justice-specific education has been nearly absent from undergraduate curriculums across the country, I have been on the frontlines of advancing restorative justice education. In 2017, I created the nation's first undergraduate restorative justice concentration within a criminal justice degree. This concentration emphasizes practice-based coursework that introduces students to restorative facilitation skills and practitioner-centered education. This resulted in a publication in *Contemporary Justice Review* on the use of restorative justice coursework as experiential, workforce-centered education for CJ students: Stroup, B. (2019) Conceptualizing and implementing a restorative justice concentration: Transforming the criminal justice curriculum. In 2022, I co-wrote a proposal for a standalone baccalaureate degree in restorative justice (**the first of its kind in the world**). This proposal for advanced, comprehensive restorative justice education received a \$500,000 state grant for the resources to develop an A.S. and B.S. in Restorative Justice. The creation of this program aligns with Vermont's restorative justice goals and the education and training needs of future restorative justice practitioners.

My research has focused on the career readiness of restorative justice practitioners. My most recent research demonstrated that 80% of restorative justice practitioners surveyed needed additional training in restorative theory and restorative practices before being able to begin their work. This study also demonstrated that 55% of organizations under study hired external consultants to train their staff in restorative justice practices within one year of the survey. This illustrates a significant implementation challenge for restorative justice – how do we ensure fidelity with the tenets of restorative justice, if restorative justice organizations themselves are unable to adequately train their restorative justice staff?

Given the expansion of restorative justice-related work and the limited formal educational opportunities to gain experience in restorative justice, my research has also sought understanding of restorative practitioners' educational and experiential backgrounds, the ways in which employers navigated educational and skill requirements for their new hires, and the types of education/training employers and practitioners perceive as the most beneficial for restorative practitioners. I co-wrote a paper, "Credential, Curricular, and Competency Priorities for Restorative Justice Practitioners: Perceptions of Practitioners and Employers" which provides new insights on restorative justice education and the emerging restorative practitioner workforce – topics unexplored in published research. This study not only examined employer perspectives of credentials and competencies when making hiring decisions for new restorative justice workers but also examined

restorative practitioners' perspectives on requisite education and the necessary competencies for new restorative justice workers. This study provides insight into the role of higher education as it relates to restorative justice implementation and has been revised and resubmitted with the Journal of Criminal Justice Studies (a special issue in restorative justice).

The implications of this research carry significance for the future of restorative justice practice, highlighting concerns regarding the potential of cooptation of restorative justice practice and challenges surrounding fidelity and staffing amidst significant skills gaps of employees and employers. Fundamentally, this research stresses the need for comprehensive education and training programs for restorative justice practitioners while emphasizing opportunities for undergraduate justice programs to meet these new workforce demands. This research also informed the curriculum for the new restorative justice degree, with the goal of meeting practitioner needs. Some examples of this coursework include *Circle Processes* and *Mediation and Conflict Resolution*. Our students at VTSU will benefit from the new restorative justice course offerings, as their education now aligns with employer and practitioner needs.

I worked with the Caledonia County District Attorney's office and the St. Johnsbury Community and Restorative Justice Center in 2022 to develop a new community justice program – "youth justice reparative panels." These reparative panels seek to divert youthful (18-21 years) nonviolent offenders from the CJ system using restorative processes and supported by VTSU interns – student interns are acting as lead and co-facilitators of these panels, as well as gaining valuable experience volunteering to serve on the panels themselves. Traditionally, reparative panels consist of facilitators and volunteers who do not reflect the youthful offenders in age or social class. The inclusion of VTSU students in the youth reparative panel process has created more inclusive and reflective representatives of the community and expanded the use of youth reparative panels in this region while simultaneously creating innovative experiential learning opportunities for our students here at VTSU.

In summary, my research on the emerging occupation of restorative facilitation work has provided opportunity for teaching innovations and program initiatives, as results have shed light on content areas suitable for curricular development that meet the needs of restorative justice practitioners. My research and curricular work provide students with the opportunity to experience the restorative paradigm in and outside of the university classroom.

Thank you kindly for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Brandon Stroup
Department of Social Sciences
Vermont State University



January 16th, 2025

Dear Provost Atkins,

I would like to formally nominate myself for the Vermont State Colleges Faculty Fellowship. My tenure at Castleton University/Vermont State University as a Biology professor has been a deeply rewarding experience, enabling me to contribute meaningfully to both our students' academic growth and the broader scientific community. I believe my accomplishments in teaching, scholarly activity, and professional development align strongly with the mission of this fellowship.

Teaching Excellence

Throughout my time here, I have prioritized innovative teaching practices to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. I have created the full curriculum for all of the courses I have taught since arriving. I have also reached as far out of my comfort zone as possible to offer the widest array of courses for our students. These courses range from two Microbiology courses for nursing and science majors, Biogeochemistry, which I co-teach with Dr. Andrew Vermilyea, to Immunology and Genetics. My goal has always been to integrate independent research with hands-on laboratory experiences, empowering students to apply theoretical knowledge to practical challenges. Student evaluations consistently highlight my ability to make complex topics accessible and foster a collaborative learning environment.

The strength of my teaching, and the response from my students has previously been recognized through awards such as the Castleton University Outstanding Faculty Alumni Award (2021) and the Endowed Richardson Faculty Award (2019). As noted in the Richardson Award nomination letter, my innovative course design, such as the "Small World" research course, motivated countless students to pursue independent research and graduate education. That course emphasized hands-on exploration of critical topics like antibiotic resistance, enabling students to engage in authentic research while cultivating accountability and curiosity. Similarly, my "Bacterial Proteomics" course offered students a graduate-level research experience, fostering critical thinking and technical skills. I also had the privilege of teaching within the Honors program for many years, specifically for a course titled "Great Ideas in the Castleton Curriculum." The opportunity to work with our top students was one of the highlights of my teaching career. I am saddened that we no longer have an Honors program at Vermont State University.

In addition to classroom teaching, I have mentored over 40 undergraduate students in independent research projects. These students worked with me during the academic year, and many spent the entire summer with me, receiving stipends for their work. These mentorships have resulted in numerous student presentations at local, regional, and national conferences, significantly enhancing their academic and professional networking capabilities. For example, students under my guidance have presented at the Vermont Genetics Network Career Day, the Northeast Microbiologists Physiology, Ecology, and Taxonomy Meeting, and the American Society for Microbiology. Included in this group are three McNair Program scholars, which I have been privileged enough to support with my laboratory work.

Scholarly and Professional Activity

My research focuses on the genetic regulation of central metabolism in bacteria, specifically *Sinorhizobium meliloti*. Over my time here, I have successfully secured over \$600,000 in grant funding, including a \$308,000 award from the National Science Foundation and multiple grants from the Vermont Genetics

Network/Vermont Biomedical Research Network. These grants have supported my research and provided paid research opportunities for students, allowing them to gain invaluable hands-on experience. I have been lucky enough to be invited to give research talks at such institutions as the University of Vermont, Norwich University, James Madison University, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

My professional collaborations extend to institutions such as the Saint Joseph's University, University of Vermont, University of Connecticut, and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, enriching the scope of my research and providing unique opportunities for Castleton students. These partnerships have facilitated student involvement in cutting-edge projects and fostered their development as emerging scientists. Because of my collaborations, I have also been on five different thesis committees for students at Saint Joseph's University Masters students. Being a part of these committees has been worthwhile, as I do not have the opportunity to participate in science graduate committees here at VTSU-Castleton.

I have also contributed significant time giving back to the university through my positions on campus. I have been the coordinator of the Biology program since 2011. I hold the "unofficial" position of social media and alumni outreach for our department, which I have been actively doing since 2012. This outreach has allowed us to actively connect alumni with current students, which helps to further their career goals after graduation. I have served on a committee or executive position every year I have been here. Those committees include Educational Resources and Admission and Retention, both of which I chaired. I then was elected Vice-President of the Castleton Faculty Assembly, a position I held for four years. I was honored to then be elected as the President of the Castleton Faculty Assembly for two years. Since that time, I have been elected the Chair of the Natural Sciences Department, so I continue to serve across all campuses.

Proposed Fellowship Contribution

If awarded the Faculty Fellowship, I plan to deliver a public lecture titled, "Bacterial Conversations: Understanding the Language of Genes in Microbial Communities." This presentation will bridge my research expertise with broader scientific and societal implications, engaging both academic and local audiences. I look forward to this opportunity, as I thoroughly enjoy these public talks, such as when I presented at the "Science Pub" series at the Brandon Inn on "Why being too clean can be harmful." This would be a great opportunity to showcase the work being done at the university by myself and students.

In summary, my commitment to excellence in teaching, coupled with a robust record of scholarly achievements and student mentorship, makes me as a strong candidate for the Vermont State Colleges Faculty Fellowship. I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute further to our academic community and look forward to the possibility of sharing my work through this esteemed platform. It would be an honor to be chosen for this fellowship and represent the faculty and the university.

Thank you for considering my nomination.

Sincerely,



Preston P. Garcia, Ph.D.
Professor of Biology
Natural Sciences Department Chair
Biology Program Coordinator
Vermont State University-Castleton

Preston P. Garcia, Ph.D.

Department of Natural Sciences
Vermont State University- Castleton
233 South Street
Castleton, VT 05735
802-468-6463
preston.garcia@vermontstate.edu

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Microbiology, July 2008

University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

Masters of Science in Microbiology, August 2007

University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

Bachelor of Science in Biology, May 1999

James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA

POSITIONS HELD

Department Chair, Vermont State University

Natural Sciences Department, 2023-Present

Professor of Biology & Biology Program Coordinator, Castleton University/Vermont State University

Dept. of Natural Sciences, 2022-Present

Associate Professor of Biology & Biology Program Coordinator, Castleton University

Dept. of Natural Sciences, 2016-2022

Assistant Professor of Biology & Biology Program Coordinator, Castleton University (formerly

Castleton State College)

Dept. of Natural Sciences, 2010-2016

Postdoctoral Research Associate, University of Virginia

Dept. of Microbiology, 2008-2010

- Laboratory of Joanna Goldberg, Ph.D.

Graduate Research Assistant, University of Connecticut

Dept. Molecular and Cell Biology, 2001-2008

- Laboratory of Daniel J. Gage, Ph.D.

Senior Laboratory Specialist, The College of William and Mary

Dept. of Biology, 1999-2001

- Assistant to Radiation and Biological Safety Officer

Undergraduate Research Assistant, James Madison University

Dept. of Biology, 1997-1999

- Laboratory of Bruce Wiggins, Ph.D.

COURSES TAUGHT

- Applied Microbiology with laboratory
- Bacterial Proteomics
- BioGeoChemistry with laboratory
- Cellular and Molecular Biology with laboratory
- Fundamentals of Biology with laboratory
- Fundamentals of Microbiology with laboratory
- Genetics with discussion
- Great Ideas in the Castleton Curriculum- Honors
- Immunology with discussion
- Infectious Diseases of Everyday Life
- Microbiology with laboratory
- Science in the classroom
- Small World with laboratory
- Tiny Earth with laboratory

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Castleton University Faculty Assembly President, 2021- 2023

Castleton University Outstanding Faculty Alumni Award, 2021

Castleton University Endowed Richardson Faculty Award, 2019.

Castleton University Faculty Assembly Vice President, 2018-2021

Small World Initiative Partner Instructor and Social Media Chair, 2016-2018

National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program Reviewer, 2015-2016

American Society for Microbiology SLAMD Editor 2015-2016

International Society for Molecular Plant-Microbe Interactions Manuscript Reviewer, 2014-Present

- Molecular Plant-Microbe Interactions Journal

American Society for Microbiology Career Development Committee, 2010-2013

- Appointed member

Vermont Genetics Network, Grant Reviewer, 2010

American Society for Microbiology Kadner Institute, Preparation for Careers in Microbiology- University of Colorado, Boulder, July 2007

- Accepted participant and presenter

SOCIETY MEMBERSHIPS

American Society for Microbiology. Member

International Society for Molecular Plant-Microbe Interactions, Member

Sigma Xi, Member

GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS

National Science Foundation, MCB Systems and Synthetic Biology, Castleton University, \$308,000, 2018-2022

Vermont Biomedical Research Network, Equipment Grant \$9,000, 2021

Vermont Biomedical Research Network, Pilot Grant \$4,000, 2020-2021

Vermont Genetics Network, NIH, INBRE, Project Grant Castleton University, \$75,000 awarded, reduced to \$46,700 after NSF grant accepted, 2017

Vermont Genetics Network, NIH, INBRE, Project Grant Castleton University, \$75,000, 2017-2018

Vermont Genetics Network, NIH, INBRE, Summer Undergraduate Stipend Grant, \$5000, 2017

Vermont Genetics Network, NIH, INBRE, Pilot Grant Castleton University, \$25,000, 2016-2017

Pittsburgh Conference Memorial National College Grants Program, \$10,000, 2016

ProteinSimple Grant Program, FluorChem Western Blot and Gel Imager, \$35,000 2016

Vermont Genetics Network, NIH, INBRE, Small Equipment Grant, Microscope Camera, \$5000, 2016

Vermont Genetics Network, NIH, INBRE, Small Equipment Grant, Plate Reader, \$5000, 2016

Vermont Genetics Network, NIH, INBRE, Pilot Grant Castleton University, \$5,000 2015-2016

Vermont Genetics Network, NIH, INBRE, Pilot Grant Castleton State College, \$75,000 2012-2014

American Society for Microbiology, Castleton State College, 2013

Undergraduate Research Fellowship (URF) mentor

Faculty Advanced Study Grant, Castleton State College, 2012

Faculty-Student Research Grant, Castleton State College, 2011-2013

Natural Sciences Research Grant, Castleton State College, 2012

NIH Infectious Diseases Training Fellowship, University of Virginia, 2008-2009

Predoctoral Demi Fellowship, University of Connecticut, 2007-2008

Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship, University of Connecticut, 2007

GAANN Fellowship, Department of Education, 2001-2004

- Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need: Environmental Biotechnology
- Emphasis placed on preparation for teaching career

GRADUATE THESIS COMMITTEES

Julie Kleinot (MS): “Investigating the role of Universal Stress Proteins in *Sinorhizobium meliloti*.” Saint Joseph’s University Committee members: Catalina Arango P (Chair), Brian M. Forster, **Preston P. Garcia**. Anticipated date of graduation: September 2025

Cecilia Ouyed Hernandez (MS): “The Phosphotransferase System in *Sinorhizobium meliloti*: How does it control cell processes?” Saint Joseph’s University. Committee members: Catalina Arango P (Chair), Shantanu Bhatt, **Preston P. Garcia**. Anticipated date of graduation: May 2025

Robert G. Betsch (MS): “Take a deep breath and relax: Exploring stress response in *Sinorhizobium meliloti*” Saint Joseph’s University. Committee members: Catalina Arango P (Chair), Christina King Smith, Shantanu Bhatt, **Preston P. Garcia**. December 2021

Courtney G. Wallace (MS): “Are you the one? A bait and prey analysis of Enzyme IIA^{Ntr} and potential protein partners in *Sinorhizobium meliloti*” Saint Joseph’s University. Committee members: Catalina Arango P (Chair), Edwin Li, Matt Nelson, **Preston P. Garcia**. July 2021

Daniel Netting (MS): “Interaction of HWE histidine kinase Sma0113 with cognate response regulator Sma0114.” Saint Joseph’s University. Committee members: Catalina Arango P (Chair), Shantanu Bhatt, Julia Lee-Soety, **Preston P. Garcia**. May 2021

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS (*McNair Scholar)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Suzanne Aldana (Dean of American Academy in Prague, CZ), | 18. Jacob Henderson (University of Vermont Medical School) |
| 2. Kelsey McKay (bioMérieux, Raleigh, NC), | 19. Dom Kuziak |
| 3. Molly Smith (Franklin Pierce University: Physician Assistant Masters Graduate), | 20. Alex Williams |
| 4. Daniel Trigg (University of Vermont Medical School), | 21. Rynne Mix |
| 5. Christopher Villa (Perrigo Labs), | 22. Tim Kittler |
| 6. Katelynn Leavey (Albany Medical College: Physician Assistant Program Graduate) | 23. Allison Andrade (UConn Health Ph.D. student in Neurobiology) |
| 7. Rachael Brazil (Masters degree in Bioimaging at Boston University School of Medicine) | 24. Ben Boggio |
| 8. Hannah Rose (Paramedic, Kenora, ON) | 25. Julia Worland |
| 9. Trevor Hanna | 26. Gianna Pezzetti |
| 10. Wyatt Pickrell (Schulich School of Medicine, Windsor, ON) | 27. Jillian Laughlin (Pathology Assistant Masters Student Loma Linda University) |
| 11. Paul Flynn (SUNY Downstate Medical School Graduate) | 28. Julia Carpenter |
| 12. Ryan Duggan (UConn Ph.D. student in Microbiology) | 29. Nancy Benedict |
| 13. Megan Nadler (Molecular Medical Laboratory Scientist II · Quest Diagnostics) | 30. Brian Pierce |
| 14. Breanna Babiarz (Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences Physician Assistant Masters Graduate) | 31. Sophia Hussak |
| 15. David Harvey (Serepta Therapeutics, Boston, MA) | 32. Petra Veljkovic |
| 16. Viviane D’Amico | 33. Michael Pisciotto* (University of Georgia Ph.D. student in Virology) |
| 17. Anthony Laniewski | 34. Sandra Welch* |
| | 35. Kailey McRae |
| | 36. Evan Day |
| | 37. Hailey Martinovich |
| | 38. Marti Ahart |
| | 39. Ginevra Trevisan |
| | 40. Jordan Mattison |
| | 41. Veronica Daniel* |
| | 42. Kristina O’Neil |
| | 43. Ryan Doughty |

PUBLICATIONS

Moustafa, DA, Scarff, JM, **Garcia, P.P.**, Cassidy, SKB, DiGiandomenico, A, Waag, DM, Inzana TJ and Goldberg, JB. 2015. Recombinant Salmonella Expressing *Burkholderia mallei* LPS O Antigen Provides Protection in a Murine Model of Melioidosis and Glanders. PLoS One. 2015 Jul 6;10(7)

Sheftic, S. R., **Garcia, P.P.**, White, E., Robinson, V. L., Gage, D. J. and A. T. Alexandrescu 2012. Nuclear magnetic resonance structure and dynamics of the response regulator Sma0114 from *Sinorhizobium meliloti*. Biochemistry 51: 6932

Sheftic SR, **Garcia PP**, Robinson VL, Gage DJ, Alexandrescu AT. 2011. NMR assignments for the *Sinorhizobium meliloti* response regulator Sma0114. Biomol NMR Assign. **5**: 55-58

Garcia PP, Bringham RM, Pinedo CA, Gage DJ. 2010. Characterization of a two-component regulatory system that regulates succinate-mediated catabolite repression in *Sinorhizobium meliloti*. J. Bacteriol. **192**: 5725-35

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Nadler, M, Laniewski, A, and **Garcia PP**. "Complementary Approaches for the Identification of Proteins Associated with the Sma0114 Response Regulator in *Sinorhizobium meliloti*." Invited Joint Oral Presentation, New England Symbiosis Workshop, University of Vermont, November 2019.

Babiarz, B, Harvey, D, Nadler, M, **Garcia PP**, Complementary Approaches for Identification of Proteins Associated with the Sma0114 Response Regulator in *Sinorhizobium meliloti*. Oral Presentation Castleton University Natural Sciences Research Fair, Castleton VT May 2019.

Garcia, PP. "Symbiosis, *Sinorhizobium* and Signaling." Invited Oral Presentation, University of Hartford, November 2018.

Garcia, PP, Arango, C, "Understanding the role of a modified phosphotransferase system and a unique two component signal transduction system in regulating gene expression." Invited Joint Oral Presentation, New England Symbiosis Workshop, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, October 2018.

Garcia PP. "Model of dual regulation control of a modified catabolite repression system" Oral Presentation, *Sinorhizobium/Medicago* workshop, University of Vermont 2016

Garcia PP. “Bacterial-Plant symbiosis: A Model System to Study Metabolism, Genetics and Cell Signaling.” Invited Oral Presentation, Johnson State College Current Topics in Science Speaker Series. 2015

Garcia PP. “Understanding *Sinorhizobium meliloti* signaling via metabolism, genetics and alfalfa symbiosis.” Invited Oral Presentation, Norwich University Larsen Science Lecture Series. 2014

Garcia PP. “Evaluation of *Sinorhizobium meliloti* Signaling, Metabolism & Genetics with their Symbiotic Plant Host, Alfalfa.” Invited Oral Presentation, Vermont Genetics Network Retreat. 2014

Garcia PP. “Understanding *Sinorhizobium meliloti* signaling via metabolism, genetics and alfalfa symbiosis.” Invited Oral Presentation, University of Vermont Plant Biology Marvin Seminar Series. 2013

Garcia PP. “Investigating metabolic regulation in the intracellular symbiont *Sinorhizobium meliloti*” Oral Presentation, *Sinorhizobium/Medicago* workshop, University of Vermont 2013

Garcia PP. “Hygiene hypothesis: Are we becoming too clean?” Invited Oral Presentation, Castleton State College Soundings Series, 2012.

Garcia PP. “*Sinorhizobium* genetics and *Burkholderia* vaccine development: foundations for a microbiology research program at a primarily undergraduate institution.” Invited Oral Presentation, James Madison University Biology Fall Seminar Series. 2012

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ABSTRACTS (*UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS)

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*Nadler, MA *Babiarz BM, *Laniewski AD, *D'Amico VC, **Garcia PP**. “Identifying Unknown Protein Partners of the Sma0114 Response Regulator in *Sinorhizobium meliloti*.” *Accepted Abstract for the American Society for Microbiology Microbe Meeting 2020*. Chicago, IL. June 18th, 2020 (*Meeting cancelled due to COVID-19 pandemic)

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*Amagliani, N, *Babiarz, B, *Golding, A., and **Garcia PP**. "Protein-protein interactions within *Sinorhizobium meliloti* explored using the bacterial adenylate cyclase two-hybrid system." Poster presentation at the Castleton University Natural Sciences Research Fair, Castleton VT May 2019.

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*Atlak, K., *Lamphere, M. and **Garcia PP**. "Soil Making a Difference" Poster presentation at the Castleton University Scholars Celebration, Castleton, VT April 2018

*Trapeni, E., *Frishmon E. and **Garcia PP**. "Searching for a Cure to the Antibiotic Crisis" Poster presentation at the Castleton University Scholars Celebration, Castleton, VT April 2018

*McKenzie, T. and **Garcia PP**. "Isolating Anti-Bacterial Isotopes From Living Bacteria" Poster presentation at the Castleton University Scholars Celebration, Castleton, VT April 2018

*Swears M., *Derosia-Rosenzweig M., and **Garcia PP**. "How Soil Samples Contribute to the Worldwide Antibiotic Crisis" Poster presentation at the Castleton University Scholars Celebration, Castleton, VT April 2018

*D'Amico V. and **Garcia PP**. "Antibacterial nightmare: Extracting Antibiotic Producing Bacteria from Soil." Poster presentation at the Castleton University Scholars Celebration, Castleton, VT April 2018

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*Dash, K. **Garcia PP** "Discovering New Antibiotic Producing Bacterial in Soil" Poster presentation at the Castleton University Scholars Celebration, Castleton, VT April 2017

*Thompson, W and **Garcia PP** "Small World: Big Solutions" Poster presentation at the Castleton University Scholars Celebration, Castleton, VT April 2017

*Nadler, M. and **Garcia PP** "Diggin' into the Antibiotic Crisis" Poster presentation at the Castleton University Scholars Celebration, Castleton, VT April 2017

*Brooks, C. and **Garcia PP** "Invasion of the Body Snatchers: Bacteria." Poster presentation at the Castleton University Scholars Celebration, Castleton, VT April 2017

*Yrsha, C. and **Garcia PP** "Finding New Antibiotics Before It's too Iso-late" Poster presentation at the Castleton University Scholars Celebration, Castleton, VT April 2017

*Cournoyer, E. and **Garcia PP** "A Pinch of Soil to Save the World?" Poster presentation at the Castleton University Scholars Celebration, Castleton, VT April 2017

*Golding, A. and **Garcia PP**, "Isolating Antibiotic Producing Bacterial Colonies from Soil." Poster presentation at the Castleton University Scholars Celebration, Castleton, VT April 2017

*Theberge K. and **Garcia PP** "To Kill or Be Killed by Bacterial Resistance" Poster presentation at the Castleton University Scholars Celebration, Castleton, VT April 2017

*Sanders A. and **Garcia PP**. "A Little Dirt Never Hurt: Searching through Soil for Antibiotics" Poster presentation at the Castleton University Scholars Celebration, Castleton, VT April 2017

*Babiarz B. and **Garcia PP** "What Doesn't Kill Them Makes Them Stronger" Poster presentation at the Castleton University Scholars Celebration, Castleton, VT April 2017

*Harvey D. and **Garcia PP** "Over Medicated America; The Antibiotic Crisis" Poster presentation at the Castleton University Scholars Celebration, Castleton, VT April 2017

*Matteson K. and **Garcia PP** "Soil I Make Some Antibiotics?" Poster presentation at the Castleton University Scholars Celebration, Castleton, VT April 2017

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*Steen, K, *Leavey, K, **Garcia PP**. "Regulation of Two-Component Signal Transduction Operons in *Sinorhizobium meliloti* Competitive Infection and Nodulation of *Medicago sativa*". Poster presentation at the Vermont Genetics Network Undergraduate Career Day, Burlington, VT, 2016

*Steen, K, *Leavey, K, **Garcia PP**. "Regulation of Two-Component Signal Transduction Operons in *Sinorhizobium meliloti* Competitive Infection and Nodulation of *Medicago sativa*." Poster presentation at the Castleton University Scholars Celebration, Castleton, VT 2016

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*Villa, C, *Leach, M, *McKay K, *Leavey K, **Garcia PP**. "*Medicago* Infection and Nodulation Effectiveness Based Upon Competition Between Two-component Signal Transduction Mutants of *Sinorhizobium meliloti*." Poster presentation at the 115th ASM General Meeting. New Orleans, LA. May 30-June 2, 2015

*Villa, C, **Garcia PP**. "Role of crosstalk between the *sma0113* and related genes in the bacteria, *Sinorhizobium meliloti*." Poster presentation at the Vermont Genetics Network Undergraduate Career Day, Burlington, VT and the Castleton State College Research Symposium. Castleton, VT 2014.

*Leach, M, **Garcia PP**. "Investigating direct succinate sensing and transport *in vivo* through the utilization of a whole-cell *dctA::gfp* biosensor in the bacteria, *Sinorhizobium meliloti*." Poster presentation at the Vermont Genetics Network Undergraduate Career Day, Burlington, VT and the Castleton State College Research Symposium. Castleton, VT 2014.

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*Villa, C, **Garcia PP**. "Summer Proposal: Investigating the role of crosstalk between *sma0113* and phylogenetically related genes in *Sinorhizobium meliloti*" Poster presentation at the Castleton State College Research Symposium. Castleton, VT 2013.

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T. M. Terry, M. Rosado, **P. Garcia**, and B. Keenan. "Improving Group-based Active Learning Activities in the Microbiology Classroom". Poster presentation at ASM Undergraduate Microbiology Education Conference. Salt Lake City, Utah. May 17-29, 2002.

*L. Terry, **P. Garcia** and M. Forsyth. "The Effects of Autoinducer-2 on Gene Expression in *Helicobacter pylori*" Poster presentation at the 102nd ASM General Meeting. Salt Lake City, Utah. May 19-23, 2002

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

DRAFT REVISION APRIL 24, 2025

INITIAL PROPOSAL: Summary Information

1. Institution:
2. Title and brief (1-paragraph) description of new program:
3. What modalities are required to ensure accessibility and flexibility for all students (e.g. online, in-person, hybrid, low-residency)?
4. Expected outcomes:
Note specific student, educational and/ or employment need(s) to be addressed, and, if appropriate, indicate specific benefits to the State of Vermont.
5. Preliminary data on market demand, market competition, and impact on existing program enrollments:
Briefly summarize information obtained from external or internal sources including admissions and enrollment data, professional organizations, feedback from corporate partners, or market research.
6. Initial budget estimates:
Note assumptions about starting enrollments and any initial expenses or one-time revenues.

Projected expenses for the proposed program:

	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Faculty/Instruction			
Administration/Other Staff			
Facilities/Equipment			
Library/Other Materials			
Other Costs (e.g. accreditation/licensure expenses)			
TOTAL COSTS:			

Projected revenues for the proposed program:

	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Tuition			
Institutional investment			
Other Sources (grants, specific appropriations)			

TOTAL REVENUES:			
------------------------	--	--	--

7. Consultation with subject matter experts:

Identify relevant subject matter experts involved during program development. This may include faculty, external industry professionals, or other experts with specialized knowledge pertinent to the proposed program.

FINAL PROPOSAL:

Include Summary Information and Detailed Program Description

1. Specific program objectives, including career and learning outcomes for students:
2. How will the program integrate professional, liberal and career study?
3. What peer programs or model curricula served as a basis for the proposal?
4. How will the program assess its effectiveness in achieving student learning outcomes?
5. How does the program incorporate current standards and/or emerging directions in the field, and what will the program require to maintain licensure, certification, or accreditation standards with external entities, if any?
6. Program outline:

Course Name & Number	Credits	New or Existing Course?

7. TOTAL CREDITS in proposed program: _____
8. TOTAL GENERAL EDUCATION CREDITS beyond those in the program: _____
9. TOTAL CREDITS for the degree: _____



Manual of Policy and Procedures

Title	Number	Page
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APPROVAL OF NEW DEGREES AND MAJORS		Date 4/24/2025

PURPOSE

The overall purpose of the policy is to support the mission of the VSC: for the benefit of Vermont, to provide affordable, high quality, student-centered and accessible education, fully integrating professional, liberal, and career study consistent with student aspirations and local, state, regional, national, and global needs. In addition, the policy:

1. links the development of new programs directly to institutional and system priorities and strategic planning,
2. encourages early program planning collaboration across VSC ~~colleges~~ institutions,
3. requires proposed new programs to identify student learning outcomes and begin to plan for their assessment,
4. maintains flexibility for colleges to respond to market demands, and
5. streamlines and accelerates the program approval process.

The VSC supports the development of new academic programs that meet the changing educational needs of students and the State. This policy affects proposals for new degrees and new majors, ~~and new fully online, distance delivery, or low residency programs.~~

CRITERIA FOR REVIEW

At a minimum, a new academic program will:

1. align with and support the mission of the VSC and the ~~college~~ institution,
2. support institutional and system strategic planning directions,
3. assist in meeting State needs and/ or serve a new student market,
4. provide a clear and viable career path for program completers, and
5. strengthen the fiscal stability/ health of the ~~college~~ institution.
6. Demonstrate the ability to be offered in multiple modalities (e.g., online, in-person, hybrid) to meet the accessibility and flexibility needs of students.
7. Complement, extend, and/or diversify the educational offerings of the VSC.

~~In addition, a new academic program will complement, extend and/ or diversify the educational offerings of the VSC, as well as contribute to the fiscal stability of the system.~~

PROPOSAL AND REVIEW PROCESS

Step 1: Preliminary Review

- ~~The President of the college initiating the program idea sends an electronic message to the Council of Presidents.~~
- ~~The message provides a brief summary of the program planning idea, an initial assessment based on the Policy 102 Step 1 Rubric, and an invitation to collaborate across colleges.~~
- ~~The message also provides an opportunity for other VSC presidents and/or the Chancellor's Office to voice reservations or endorse the program idea.~~
- ~~The Chancellor, in collaboration with the presidents, will use the Policy 102 Step 1 Rubric to determine whether or not the proposal is endorsed for further development.~~
- Before proceeding with a full proposal, institutions are encouraged to pilot the concept as a concentration, certificate, or minor. This approach allows testing of market demand, viability, and alignment with state and regional needs before a larger commitment is made.
- At the time that a full proposal is deemed appropriate, the President of the institution initiating the program idea requests that the program idea is added to the agenda of the Chancellor's Cabinet.
- If the Chancellor's Cabinet agrees that further pursuit is warranted, then the Chancellor's Cabinet requests that the President provides an Initial Program Proposal following the Policy 102: New Program Proposal Template.

Step 2: Proposal Development

- ~~Proposals for the delivery of existing degree programs via new online, low-residency, or telepresence models, if approved by the Chancellor, will be presented to EPSL in a summary update by the President.~~
- ~~For all other new program proposals, the President will inform the Board via electronic message or informational update with the anticipated submission date of the completed New Program Proposal (see attached template) to the EPSL Committee for review.~~
- Initial Submission: Institutions submit a preliminary proposal to the Chancellor's Cabinet for review. This proposal should include:
 - Program Description
 - Preliminary Data on Market Demand
 - Required Modalities: Programs must be prepared to be offered in all relevant modalities (e.g., online, in-person, hybrid) to ensure accessibility and flexibility for all students.
 - Expected Outcomes
 - Budget Considerations (initial draft)
 - Consultation with Subject Matter Experts: Institutions must involve relevant subject matter experts during program development. This may include faculty, external industry professionals, or other experts with specialized knowledge pertinent to the proposed program.

- **Iterative Feedback Process:** The Chancellor’s Cabinet provides feedback and may request additional data or revisions before moving forward. The final proposal should continue to be refined based on feedback from the Chancellor’s Cabinet before being formally submitted to EPSL.
- **Submission to EPSL:** Once the Chancellor’s Cabinet approves the proposal, it is submitted to EPSL for review and recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

Step 3: Proposal Review

- The President submits a New Program Proposal to EPSL for review and recommendation to the Board of Trustees.
- EPSL may identify specific issues/questions for the college to address in a proposal revision before considering whether to recommend the proposal for approval by the Board.
- If forwarded by EPSL, the full Board of Trustees reviews the New Program Proposal and makes a final decision about whether or not to approve the new program.

Signed by:

Dr. Elizabeth K. Mauch, Chancellor

Date	Version	Revision	Approved By
10/25/2001	1.0	Adopted	VSCS Board of Trustees
4/17/03	2.0	Revised for Uniform Guidance	VSCS Board of Trustees
4/28/11	3.0	Revised for Uniform Guidance	VSCS Board of Trustees
7/21/16	4.0	Revised for Uniform Guidance	VSCS Board of Trustees
6/20/19	5.0	Revised for Uniform Guidance	VSCS Board of Trustees
	6.0	Revised for system transformation	



Title	Number	Page
TRANSFER OF CREDIT	108	1 of 2
	Date 4/24/25	

PURPOSE

To facilitate students' continuation of their postsecondary education, the VSC has established this policy to clarify the nature of credits within the VSC and for the transfer of credit from colleges outside the VSC.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

Consistent with its single course database, the VSC will have a single official transcript format. Credits earned within the VSC are not considered transfer credits across VSC institutions. Application fees required by any VSC institution are waived for any student who has matriculated at one of the other VSC institutions, or who has successfully earned 12 or more credits within the VSC.

The VSC requires students seeking to transfer into a VSC institution to provide an official transcript from the college(s) previously attended. Each VSC institution includes its transfer policy in the college catalog and identifies student responsibilities related to transfer.

Normally, VSC institutions will grant credit for courses previously taken under the following conditions:

1. Course work is considered to be college-level; in general, courses designated as developmental, pre-college or remedial are not accepted for credit.
2. Course work is completed with the equivalent grade of C- or better.
3. In a sequence of inter-related courses, if the first course is passed with a grade below C-, but the second grade is C- or higher, both courses will be accepted. Colleges reserve the right to determine whether or not courses are sequential for the purpose of this condition.
4. For transfer students who hold a two-year degree, credits applied to that degree will be accepted as transfer credit.
5. Course work is completed at an institution accredited by a regional accreditation association or the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

6. Where all VSC institutions have determined common transfer equivalencies for specific prior coursework, such as credits earned through successful completion of AP and CLEP exams, such credit will be accepted as a direct equivalent to the shared VSC course.
7. The receiving institution determines the extent to which transferred credits fulfill specific major or program requirements.

In addition, VSC institutions grant credit for college-level learning acquired through experience and transcribed through the VSC's ~~Assessment of Prior Learning~~ Prior Learning Assessment program or acquired on the job and formally assessed through the VSC's ETES program.

Signed by:

Dr. Elizabeth K. Mauch, Chancellor

Date	Version	Revision	Approved By
4/25/02	1.0	Adopted	VSCS Board of Trustees
6/4/09	2.0	Revised	VSCS Board of Trustees
6/12/23	3.0	Revised due to system transformation	VSCS Board of Trustees
	4.0	Updated language and revised to include common transfer equivalencies for shared VSC courses	



Title	Number	Page
	111	1 of 10
ACADEMIC DATA MANAGEMENT		Date DRAFT 5-8-25

PURPOSE

The Vermont State Colleges (“VSC”) shall maintain a system of academic data management that allows comprehensive and timely access to data that inform institution and system planning, management and decision-making. The purpose of this policy is to maintain the integrity and effectiveness of the VSC's academic data system.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

The VSC supports transparent, student-centered access to learning opportunities at all institutions. To do so, the VSC shall maintain a single course database, student records system and official transcript. Credits earned within the VSC are not considered transfer credits. Requirements related to graduation, class-level, enrollment status, course repeat and transfer shall be standardized. The VSC shall have a common grade scheme and common standards for academic and graduation honors. The VSC shall have standard definitions related to academic standing—~~probation~~ **academic notice** and dismissal.

To implement this policy, VSC institutions shall follow the procedures below. All academic catalogs and other related documents must reflect this policy and the procedures below. These procedures are subject to change and shall be reviewed annually.

PROCEDURES

1. Maintenance of single course database

A. To maintain the single course database while allowing for the natural development and change of curriculum at each institution over time, on an annual basis the **VSC registrars** shall review those courses defined as equivalent for the purposes of **a transfer pathway** and when appropriate reassign a single course number, title, and single-sentence course description **following the VSC naming and numbering guiding principles enumerated**

below. Such system-level definitions shall not preclude individual institution elaboration of course descriptions and learning objectives in academic catalogs, syllabi, and other related documents.

B. Prior to the adoption of a new course, VSC registrars shall similarly evaluate the new course for potential substantial equivalence, defined as having at least 70% of the course learning outcomes in common, with an existing course. Reassignment of course numbers and titles shall follow the following guiding principles:

VSC Course Naming Guiding Principles

- a. Courses may not share titles. Courses with repeated or similar titles create confusion for students as they move between institutions. A CCV student who takes a 200 level course at CCV called Criminology would be justifiably confused about why they need to take another course called Criminology at VTSU. Additionally, that student would then have two transcribed courses called Criminology. Finally, similarly named courses beg the question of whether the learning in the two courses is sufficiently different to warrant awarding credit twice to a student who takes both courses. Note: this principle applies even if the course is offered by a different department and/or has a different subject designator.
- b. For the same reasons that courses may not share titles, courses should generally not share similar titles. For example, the titles “Poetry” and “Poetry I” would likely not be adequately differentiated to avoid confusion on the part of students.
- c. Courses that offer sequenced learning in the same category (such as Anatomy & Physiology I and II) should be titled with sequential numbers starting at one.
- d. Courses that serve as the only offering in that category (such as Organic Chemistry) should be titled as “Introduction to X” or simply “X” as appropriate. Note: In cases where one institution teaches the second level and another institution does not, this may result in an institution offering Subject I without having a Subject II offering to follow.
- e. In the event that one institution proposes a course with a title that already exists in the system, the existing course will retain its title and number, and the institution proposing the new course must designate a different title.
- f. When there is a question about the course level (1000, 2000, 3000, etc.) that is not resolved by the VSC Course Numbering Guiding Principles articulated below, the level should be set at the 1000 or 2000 level. This allows the course to potentially be part of a ~~Direct Admissions or other~~ 60 plus 60 credit **transfer** pathway for a student from CCV to VTSU. As CCV cannot teach courses above the 2000 level, any VTSU program that includes more than 60 credits at the 3000 level or above would not be a candidate for a 60 plus 60 credit pathway.

- g. In general, prerequisite courses should be at a lower level than the course requiring it as a prerequisite. This is particularly important with course sequences.

VSC Course Numbering Guiding Principles

Designating course levels (ie, 1000, 2000, etc.) is important in maintaining integrity of the curriculum and providing the most transparent student experience. VSCS registrars shall use the following primary considerations when determining a course number for a proposed new course:

1000-Level Courses

These are typically introductory courses having no university-level prerequisites, often presenting basic concepts and terminology. Students in such courses are expected to operate largely at the “knowledge” and “comprehension” levels, but should be provided opportunities to develop at the “application” and “analysis” levels.

2000-Level Courses

Such courses are at an intermediate level of difficulty, and sometimes survey a subfield within a discipline. They often have a prerequisite at the 100-level. Students taking such courses should solidify their abilities at the knowledge and comprehension levels, and be provided ample opportunity to develop their application and analysis skills, and/or demonstrate synthesis within a focused scope as appropriate for a culminating experience in an associate degree program.

3000-Level and 4000-Level Courses

Such courses are at an advanced-undergraduate level of difficulty, and are generally taken by majors, minors, and other students with a well-defined interest and demonstrated ability in a particular subject area. While continuing to develop proficiency at the lower cognitive levels, 3000-level courses are expected to provide students with the opportunity to operate at the “synthesis”, “evaluation”, and “creation” levels. Courses at the 4000-level operate mostly at the synthesis”, “evaluation”, and “creation” levels. They are often of a “seminar” nature, with the students taking significant responsibility for the course agenda. In particular, courses which provide students with the opportunity to perform directed research are usually at the 4000-level.

Supplemental Considerations for designating course levels shall include:

- i. Course levels an institution is authorized to teach (ie, CCV is not eligible to teach anything above a 2000-level course and therefore may not propose a 3000-level course)
- ii. Standards as determined by accreditors
- iii. Transparency to students
- iv. Ease of student pathway between VSCS institutions
- v. Standards and practices at other institutions
- vi. Class level alignment (ie, generally 1000-level courses are appropriate for first year students, 2000-level courses for sophomores, etc.)

2. Transcripts

Consistent with its single course database and its vision of student-friendly academic policies and procedures, for courses taken since and including summer 2002, the VSC shall have a single official transcript format with these characteristics:

- a. Credits earned within the VSC are not considered transfer credits.
- b. All VSC courses taken and grades received shall be listed.
- c. All VSC courses count in the determination of quality points and in the determination of cumulative Grade Point Average (“GPA”).
- d. The transcript shall clearly identify the institution where each course was taken, and the institution from which the transcript was issued.
- e. Institutions shall maintain institutional amelioration policies, whereby students may request to remove certain grades from their GPA calculation. In all cases, grades cannot be ameliorated if they've already been included in calculations for awarding a degree. Grade history shall be removed from cumulative totals only; no courses or grades shall be deleted from the transcript.
- f. For students attempting to ameliorate grades at a different VSC institution than the VSC institution at which the grades were awarded:
 - amelioration requires one semester and at least 6 credits of satisfactory academic progress (2.0 GPA or better) following the semester for which amelioration is requested.
 - amelioration is allowed only once in a student's career.
 - approval must be granted by the chief academic officer at the home institution in consultation with the chief academic officer at the other institution.

3. Graduation requirements for undergraduate programs

- a. Each institution shall determine which courses must be taken by its matriculated students to fulfill specific degree program requirements.
- b. For a bachelor's degree 30 credits, including substantial advanced work in the major or concentration must be taken at the institution conferring the degree. For an associate's degree, at least 15 credits must be taken at the institution conferring the degree; institutions may require more than 15 credits at their institution for an associate's degrees.
- c. Students must complete major program and earn a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA.
- d. Students must complete all other graduation requirements, as detailed in institution catalogs.

4. Class level

The class level of a student is determined system-wide for standard two and four-year programs as follows:

First Year:	0-29.9 credits
Sophomore:	30-59.9 (all students in all two-year programs remain at sophomore level after 60 credits)
Junior:	60-89.9
Senior:	90 and above

5. Course Repeat

Students may repeat a course once without permission. For repeated courses the initial grade remains on record and does not count towards GPA. Only the most recent grade and credits count for GPA.

6. Transfer Credits

- a. Courses taken outside of the VSC must have grades of C- or better to be accepted.
- b. In a sequence of inter-related courses, if the first course is passed with a grade below C-, but the second grade is C- or higher, both courses shall be accepted.
- c. For transfer students who hold a two-year degree, credits applied to that degree shall be accepted as transfer credit.

Note: See also VSC Policy 108: Transfer of Credit.

7. Full-time/Part-time and Overload Status

Full-time, part-time and overload status per semester are defined as follows:

Undergraduate

Less than half-time:	0-5.9 credits
Half-time:	6-8.9 credits
3/4 time:	9-11.9 credits
Full-time:	12-18 credits
Overload for CCV:	over 18 credits
Overload for VTSU:	over 19 credits

Graduate

Half-time:

3-5.9 credits

Full-time:

6 or more credits

7. Grade scheme

The VSC shall have a common grade scheme and quality points at the undergraduate and graduate levels for all institutions (see below).

8. Good standing

Defined as 2.0 GPA, except 1.75 GPA for students with fewer than 30 earned or GPA credits, whichever is higher.

9. ~~Probation~~ Academic notice

- a. ~~Probationary status~~ Academic notice takes effect when cumulative GPA falls below “good standing” level.
- b. A student already on ~~probation~~ academic notice whose cumulative GPA remains below “good standing” level is subject to dismissal.
- c. Students subject to academic dismissal or who leave an institution while on ~~probation~~ academic notice shall remain on ~~probation~~ academic notice upon their return.

10. Dismissal

- a. The following requirements apply to students dismissed from one VSC institution with respect to enrollment at another VSC institution (all are subject to institutional exception/waiver):
 - generally, students dismissed from one VSC institution for academic reasons, if admitted, may take courses at another VSC institution.
 - students must reapply to the VSC institution from which they've been dismissed if they wish to re-enroll.
 - institutions shall maintain all other/ current processes related to dismissal.
- b. Students may be dismissed for disciplinary reasons.

11. Auditing

- a. The choice to audit a course must be made prior to the end of the Add/Drop period.
- b. An audited course does not count toward a student’s credit load.

12. Academic honors

Honors apply to full-time, matriculated undergraduate students with no incomplete or failing grades. Criteria are:

- a. GPA of 3.5-3.9: Dean’s List
- b. GPA of 4.0: President’s List

Semester honors are based on 12 or more letter graded credits per semester, with the exception that full-time nursing students are eligible for semester honors. Honors shall not be awarded if an incomplete is outstanding when grades are formally reported for the term or if grades are changed.

Part-time students may be eligible to receive semester honors, in accordance with individual institution policy.

13. Graduation honors

Effective for the graduating classes of spring 2006, criteria for graduation honors are:

- a. Of total credits required for graduation, at least 30 graded credits for a two-year degree and 60 graded credits for a four-year degree must be earned at the VSC.
- b. Graduation honors for two and four-year programs require final, cumulative GPA as follows:
 - Cum laude: 3.5-3.6
 - Magna cum laude: 3.7-3.8
 - Summa cum laude: 3.9-4.0
- c. Graduation honors for certificate programs require final, cumulative GPA as follows:
 - Honors: 3.0-3.49
 - High Honors: 3.5 or above

Note: credits earned before 2002 are not used in this calculation.
- d. Students in the final two years of a “2+2” degree program may petition to receive graduation honors provided they have earned a minimum of 30 graded credits at the VSC.

14. Transcript charge

Institutions may charge for transcripts and shall have uniform policies for transcript, grade, and diploma holds.

15. VSC undergraduate grading scheme

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Point Value</i>	<i>Credit Earned</i>	<i>P/NP Equivalent</i>
A+	4.00	Y	P
A	4.00	Y	P
A-	3.70	Y	P
B+	3.30	Y	P
B	3.00	Y	P
B-	2.70	Y	P
C+	2.30	Y	P
C	2.00	Y	P

C-	1.70	Y	P
D+	1.30	Y	P
D	1.00	Y	P
D-	0.70	Y	P
F	0.00	N	NP

16. VSC transcript notations for undergraduate student work receiving other than letter grades

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Legend</i>	<i>Point Value</i>	<i>Credit Earned</i>
P	Pass	0.00	Y
NP	No Pass	0.00	N
AU	Audit	0.00	N
TR	Transfer Credit	0.00	Y
CR	Credit Granted (non-course work)	0.00	Y
I	Incomplete	0.00	N
NG	No grade has yet been submitted	0.00	N
W	Withdrawn	0.00	N

17. Miscellaneous Undergraduate Grading Provisions

1. Comments on Midterm Grade Reports:

Instructors shall be able to add comments to grades at midterm that will be printed on the grade report. Comments must be selected from one or more "notes" that have been set up in the system such as "please see instructor", "student never attended", "student missed midterm exam", or "poor attendance". Additions to the notes may be made upon request by a institution registrar, on an ongoing basis, provided that the notes apply to situations that are encountered by a significant number of instructors at various VSC institutions as determined by the VSC registrars.

2. The Effects of Dropping or Withdrawing From a Course on Grading:

The standard VSC add/ drop period is 2 weeks. If a student drops or withdraws from a course:

- during the Add/Drop period, the course is not listed on the student's transcript.

- after the Add/Drop period and up until 60% of the course is completed, the course is listed with a grade of W (there is always an ability to award a W at any point in the semester).
- after the ninth week of classes, the student receives the earned grade determined at the end of the semester unless a special course withdrawal is granted with approval of the Academic Dean. A special course withdrawal from a course taken outside the home institution can be approved only by the Academic Dean of the institution offering the course, following consultation with the Academic Dean of the home institution.

3. Incomplete Grades (I):

Grades of “Incomplete” automatically revert to an F at the end of the 7th week of the semester immediately following award of the I, unless otherwise determined by the instructor. Instructors have the option of assigning a default grade other than F. Courses carried through an I to the following semester do not count toward the student’s credit load for tuition billing purposes or for additional credit toward graduation.

4. Credit Granted (CR) for Non-Course Work:

Students who are granted credit on the basis of College Level Examination Program (“CLEP”) examinations, military credit, lifetime experience portfolios, AP courses or other similar circumstances (as determined by the institution where the student is matriculated) shall receive a CR in the grade field. CR distinguishes the credit from TR, which is used for credits that are transferred in from another college or university.

Students who demonstrate success in meeting the learning objectives of an existing course at an institution via a “Course Challenge” or “Challenge by Exam” (as determined by the institution where the student is matriculated) shall have the course recorded as institutional credit with a CR in the grade field.

~~5. Not Graded (NG):~~

~~Where a student’s grade is submitted after the deadline for grades, or where the instructor is permitting a student to continue the course into the next semester (such as with a thesis), a student shall receive an NG for the course until such time as the final grade is submitted.~~

~~Coursework carried into a second semester with a grade of NG does not count towards a student’s credit load for tuition billing purposes or for additional credit toward graduation in the second semester.~~

18. VSC Graduate Grading Scheme

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Point Value</i>	<i>Credit Earned</i>	<i>P/NP Equivalent</i>
A	4.00	Y	P
A-	3.70	Y	P
B+	3.30	Y	P
B	3.00	Y	P
B-	2.70	Y	P
C+	2.30	Y	NP
F	0.00	N	NP

Signed by:

Dr. Elizabeth K. Mauch, Chancellor

Date	Version	Revision	Approved By
10/29/02	1.0	Adopted	VSCS Board of Trustees
12/12/03	2.0	Revised	VSCS Board of Trustees
6/11/04	3.0	Revised	VSCS Board of Trustees
4/24/08	4.0	Revised	VSCS Board of Trustees
5/26/16	5.0	Revised	VSCS Board of Trustees
6/21/18	6.0	Revised	VSCS Board of Trustees
6/12/23	7.0	Revised due to system transformation	VSCS Board of Trustees
	8.0	Updated to clarify procedures for determining course equivalence and change in academic standing language.	



<p><u>PREVENTION OF NON-DISCRIMINATION AND PREVENTION OF HARASSMENT AND RELATED UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT</u></p>	Number 311	Page 1 of 132
	Date <u>9/19/236/14/25</u>	

I. NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The Vermont State Colleges and its ~~m~~Member Institutions prohibit discrimination and harassment on the basis of a person’s race, color, ancestry, ethnicity, national origin, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or related conditions, parental status, creed, religion, crime victim status, disability, age, veteran status, marital status, genetic information, positive HIV-related blood test results, physical or mental condition, or any other status protected by state or federal law, pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendments, the Equal Pay Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Older Workers Benefit Protection Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act, the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, Title IV of the Higher Education Act, the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Vermont’s State Employees Labor Relations Act, Vermont’s Public Accommodations Act, Vermont’s statutory provisions on harassment applicable to postsecondary schools, Vermont’s statutory provisions relating to HIV-discrimination and testing, Vermont’s Fair Employment Practices Act, and any other applicable state or federal non-discrimination and harassment prevention law, regulation, or policy.¹

As a recipient of federal funds, the Vermont State Colleges and each ~~m~~Member Institution of the Vermont State Colleges is required to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”). In accordance with Title IX, as well as other applicable state and federal law, the VSC and its ~~m~~Member Institutions prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, pregnancy or related conditions, and parental status, in its education programs and activities, admission, and employment. Sexual harassment, which includes acts of sexual violence, is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX. Title IX also prohibits gender-based harassment, which

¹ In the event the applicable laws change, the Board of Trustees (“the Board”) recognizes the VSC Chancellor’s authority to comply through revised Procedures until the Board has an opportunity to revise the relevant Policy.

may include acts of verbal, non-verbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping, even if those acts do not involve acts of a sexual nature.

Inquiries concerning the application of Title IX may be referred to the VSC's Title IX Coordinators or to the United States Department of Education for the Office of Civil Rights. Inquiries concerning discrimination on the basis of other protected categories may be referred to the VSC's Policy 311 Coordinators, the Vermont Human Rights Commission, the Vermont Attorney General's Office – Civil Rights Unit, or to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Contact information for the Coordinators is located in Appendix A and contact information for these state and federal agencies is located in Appendix C to the *Chancellor's Procedures for Implementation of Policy 311: ~~Prevention of Non-Discrimination and Prevention of Harassment and Related Unprofessional Conduct.~~*

II. POLICY STATEMENT

The Vermont State Colleges and its ~~m~~Member Institutions (collectively the “VSC”) are committed to maintaining an educational and working environment free from discrimination, harassment and related unprofessional conduct. The VSC prohibits discrimination on the basis of a person's race, color, ancestry, ethnicity, national origin, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or related conditions, parental status, creed, religion, crime victim status, disability, age, veteran status, marital status, genetic information, positive HIV-related blood test results, physical or mental condition, or any other status protected by state or federal law (collectively “protected categories”). Sexual harassment, racial harassment, and harassment based upon a person's status in a protected category are forms of discrimination and will not be tolerated. In addition, inappropriate sexual relationships between VSC employees and students, including those that may not otherwise rise to the level of sexual harassment, are prohibited.

III. POLICY COVERAGE

In accordance with Title IX, as well as applicable state and federal law, neither the VSC nor any ~~m~~Member Institution shall discriminate on the basis of the above-listed protected categories in the application processes for admissions or employment, in academic and residential programs, in employment policies and practices, in scholarship and loan programs, in athletic programs, or in any other academic, extra-curricular or VSC-sponsored programs, activities, or facilities. The prohibitions set forth in this Policy also apply to all members of the VSC community, including students, employees, and third parties who come on to campus (such as parents, visitors, independent contractors, and vendors). This Policy covers conduct that occurs off-campus, or through the use of online, electronic or digital technologies, and that has a reasonable nexus to any VSC education program or activity, for example by creating a hostile environment on

campus or representing a threat to the safety of members of the VSC community or to the continuance of normal VSC operations.²

IV. POLICY INTENT AND OVERVIEW

This Policy is intended to be read consistently with, and unless otherwise expressly stated, no broader than, Vermont and federal non-discrimination and harassment prevention laws, regulations and policies. Laws prohibiting discrimination and harassment are many and varied at both the state and federal level and apply with some differing standards and consequences to employees, students and visitors. Because harassment is a form of discrimination, it is the intent of the VSC to address all prohibitions related to non-discrimination and prevention of harassment under one comprehensive policy for ease of access and use, consistent with federal law. Certain acts of sexual harassment (including, but not limited to, sexual assault and sexual exploitation), domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking are addressed separately in VSC Policy 311-A, ~~*Prevention of Sexual Misconduct Sexual Harassment, Sexual Exploitation, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking*~~. Sexually harassing behavior that is deemed to meet the definitions of Title IX Sexual Harassment or Non-Title IX Prohibited Conduct under Policy 311-A and the accompanying Chancellor's Procedures for Implementation of Policy 311-A must be addressed under Policy 311-A.

V. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy, unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the following definitions apply. The specific definitions contained in an employee benefit plan will control with respect to any claim arising out of that plan.

A. Discrimination

“Discrimination” means the unlawful refusal of, withholding from, exclusion from participation in, or denial of any accommodations, advantages, benefits, facilities, privileges, or services of the VSC or its ~~m~~Member Institutions on the basis of a person’s race, color, ancestry, ethnicity, national origin, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or related conditions, parental status, creed, religion, crime victim status, disability, age, veteran status, marital status, genetic information, positive HIV-related blood test results, physical or mental condition, or any other status protected by state or federal law; and the unlawful denial of pay on the basis of race, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability, or any other status protected by state or federal law.

² Policy 311 and the Chancellor’s Implementing Procedures apply to reports of sexual harassment that do not fall within the scope of Title IX Sexual Harassment or Non-Title IX Prohibited Conduct as defined in Policy 311-A and the accompanying Chancellor's Procedures for Implementation of Policy 311-A.

B. Harassment

Under Vermont law, “harassment” means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct or communication, including any incident conducted by electronic means, based on or motivated by a person's or person’s family member’s, actual or perceived race, color, ancestry, ethnicity, national origin, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or related conditions, parental status, creed, religion, crime victim status, disability, age, veteran status, marital status, genetic information, HIV-positive blood test results, physical or mental condition or any other status protected by state or federal law that has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student’s educational performance or access to school resources or the effect of objectively undermining and detracting from or interfering with an employee’s work, or creating an objectively intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Harassment includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, and taunts on manner of speech and negative references to customs related to any of the protected categories.

C. Sexual Harassment

“Sexual harassment” is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature and it includes *quid pro quo* sexual harassment and hostile environment sexual harassment. Sexual harassment includes physical conduct of a sexual nature, such as sexual assault or other acts of sexual violence. Sexual harassment under Title IX, including sexual assault, is addressed separately in VSC Policy 311-A, Prevention of Sexual ~~Misconduct~~Harassment, Sexual Exploitation, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking. Where conduct is not deemed to meet the definitions of Title IX Sexual Harassment or Non-Title IX Prohibited Conduct under Policy 311-A, the following definitions apply:

- “*Quid pro quo* sexual harassment” generally involves a person in a position of power (such as a supervisor over an employee or a faculty member over a student) pressuring a subordinate employee or a student for sexual favors in exchange for an advancement in the workplace or academically, or under the threat of an adverse employment or academic action being taken. *Quid pro quo* sexual harassment includes situations where, for example, a student or employee is rewarded with a higher grade, a stronger evaluation, or an opportunity for advancement for granting a request for sexual favors or is punished with a lower grade, a less favorable evaluation, or denial of an educational or workplace opportunity for refusing to grant a request for sexual favors. In either case, a person uses the position of power as leverage to pressure another person into complying with a request for sexual favors.

- “Non-employee hostile environment sexual harassment” is sexual harassment of a person who is not an employee that creates a hostile educational environment and it is a form of sex discrimination. Examples of sexually harassing behavior that could create a hostile environment under appropriate circumstances include the following where the particular behavior is unwelcome to the person to whom it is directed:

- Sexual advances, including requests for sexual favors and repeated requests for dates;
- Intentional unwanted or offensive touching, including fondling;
- Indecent exposure;
- Sexually-derogatory comments, including sexually explicit comments, sexually suggestive innuendoes, sexually offensive jokes, and sexual taunts;
- Obscene or offensive gestures;
- Images and depictions of a sexual nature, including sexually derogatory or sexually suggestive pin-ups, posters, cartoons, and calendars; and
- Writings of a sexually derogatory or suggestive nature.

This list is not exhaustive and other unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature, if it is severe and pervasive enough, may constitute sexual harassment. *See* Section E, Hostile Environment, below for further elaboration.

- “Employee hostile environment sexual harassment” is sexual harassment of an employee that meets the above definition of “non-employee hostile environment sexual harassment” above except that the unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature creates a hostile employment environment and it need not be severe or pervasive in order to constitute sexual harassment.

Conduct is “**unwelcome**” if the person subjected to the alleged sexually harassing behavior did not request or invite it and regards the conduct as undesirable or offensive. The fact that a person willingly participated in conduct on one occasion does not prevent that person from indicating that the same or similar conduct has become unwelcome on a subsequent occasion.

Sexual harassment may be committed by a stranger, an acquaintance, a colleague, a co-worker, a student, or someone with whom the subject of the harassment has a social, romantic or intimate relationship. Sexual harassment may be committed by or against any individual, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

1. Sexual Harassment of a Student

Under Vermont law, “sexual harassment of a student” means:

- (a) An incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct or communication, including any incident conducted by electronic means, based on or motivated by the student’s sex, that has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student's

educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment; or

- (b) Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when one or both of the following occur:
 - (1) Submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education.
 - (2) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as a component of the basis for decisions affecting that student.

2. Sexual Harassment of an Employee

Under Vermont law, “sexual harassment of an employee” means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- (a) Submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment; or
- (b) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a component of the basis for employment decisions affecting that individual; or
- (c) The conduct has the purpose or effect of objectively interfering with an individual's work or creating an objectively intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

D. Related Unprofessional Conduct

“Related unprofessional conduct” on the part of a VSC employee means the initiation of or participation in an amorous or sexual relationship with a VSC student when the employee is, or may reasonably be perceived to be, in a position of power and authority over the student, even if the conduct does not otherwise constitute sexual harassment. Examples include, but are not limited to, situations where the VSC employee is an administrator, instructor, coach, advisor, work study supervisor or counselor for the student, or a member of a committee having responsibility for decisions that affect students.

E. Hostile Environment Due to Protected Status

- A “non-employee hostile educational environment” is one in which the alleged discriminatory conduct is sufficiently serious as to limit or deny the ability of the person

subjected to the harassment to participate in or benefit from the educational environment. The severity and pervasiveness of the alleged harassing conduct is evaluated using common sense and reasonable judgment to determine whether it created an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. The determination is made from the perspective of a reasonable person, in the position of the person subjected to the alleged harassment, considering all of the relevant circumstances. Factors that may be considered include:

- The degree to which the conduct affected the student's education;
- The type(s) of harassment (for example, whether it was verbal and/or physical);
- The frequency and duration of the harassing conduct;
- The identity of, and relationship between, the alleged harasser and the subject of the harassment;
- The number of individuals engaged in the harassing conduct (for example, a group of students targeting a single student); and
- The setting(s) and context(s) in which the harassing conduct occurred.

Generally, the more severe the conduct, the less need there is to show a repetitive series of incidents to establish a hostile environment, particularly if the harassment was physical. Harassing conduct may violate this Policy if, for multiple instances of conduct, it is so pervasive that when viewed from an objective standard of a similarly-situated reasonable person, it substantially and adversely affected the targeted student's educational opportunities or benefits. A single incident of harassing conduct may violate this Policy if the conduct is so severe that, when viewed from an objective standard of a similarly-situated reasonable person, it substantially and adversely affected the targeted student's equal access to educational opportunities or benefits.

• An "employee hostile work environment" is one in which the alleged discriminatory conduct is sufficiently serious as to limit or deny the ability of the employee subjected to the harassment to participate in or benefit from the employment environment. The seriousness of the alleged harassing conduct is evaluated using common sense and reasonable judgment to determine whether it created an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. The determination is made from the perspective of a reasonable person, in the position of the person subjected to the alleged harassment, considering all of the relevant circumstances. Factors that may be considered include:

- The degree to which the conduct affected the employee's work;
- The type(s) of harassment (for example, whether it was verbal and/or physical);
- The frequency and duration of the harassing conduct;
- The identity of, and relationship between, the alleged harasser and the subject of the harassment;
- The number of individuals engaged in the harassing conduct (for example, a group of employees targeting a single employee); and

- The setting(s) and context(s) in which the harassing conduct occurred.

Harassing conduct may violate this Policy if, it is sufficiently serious that when viewed from an objective standard of a similarly-situated reasonable person, it adversely affected the targeted employee's employment opportunities or benefits. Behavior that a reasonable employee with the same protected characteristic would consider to be a petty slight or trivial inconvenience shall not constitute unlawful harassment or discrimination.

F. Retaliation

“Retaliation” against any person for reporting a violation of this Policy, for filing a complaint pursuant to this Policy, or for cooperating in an investigation under this Policy includes, but is not limited to: (1) pressuring a person to drop or not support a complaint; (2) encouraging a person to provide false or misleading information; (3) engaging in conduct that may reasonably be perceived to affect adversely that person’s educational, living or work environment; (4) threatening, intimidating or coercing the person; or (5) otherwise discriminating against any person for exercising their rights and responsibilities under this Policy.

VI. FREEDOM OF SPEECH

The VSC recognizes that the protection of free and open speech and the open exchange of ideas are essential to any academic or artistic community, and crucial for the activity of scholars and artists. The VSC also recognizes its obligation under policy and collective bargaining agreements to respect the academic freedom of faculty members. This Policy is meant neither to proscribe nor to inhibit discussions, in or out of the classroom, of complex, controversial, or sensitive matters, including race, color, ancestry, ethnicity, national origin, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or related conditions, parental status, creed, religion, crime victim status, disability, age, veteran status, marital status, genetic information, physical or mental condition, or HIV-positive status, when in the judgment of a reasonable person such discussions arise appropriately and with respect for the dignity of others. The VSC is a community of learners and as such recognizes and affirms that free, honest intellectual inquiry, debate, and constructive dialogue are vital to the academic mission of the VSC and must be protected even when the views expressed are unpopular or controversial.

The VSC also recognizes, however, that verbal conduct can be used specifically to intimidate or coerce and to inhibit genuine discourse, free inquiry, and learning. Such abuses are unacceptable. If someone believes that another's speech or writing is offensive, wrong, or hurtful, ~~he or she~~ isthey are encouraged to express that judgment in the exercise of ~~his or her~~ their own freedom of speech or to seek redress when appropriate.

VII. PROHIBITIONS

A. Discrimination and Harassment

All members of the VSC community are expressly prohibited from:

- (1) Discriminating against a student or employee on the basis of a protected category;
- (2) Harassing a student or employee on the basis of a protected category; or
- (3) Sexually harassing a student or employee.

B. Related Unprofessional Conduct

Employees of the VSC are expressly prohibited from engaging in related unprofessional conduct with students.

C. HIV-related Blood Test

Under Vermont law, it is unlawful for the VSC or any ~~an~~ Member Institution to request or require any applicant, prospective student, or current student to have an HIV-related blood test or to discriminate against an applicant, prospective student, or current student on the basis of a person's having a positive test result from an HIV-related blood test.

Under Vermont law, it is unlawful for employers and labor organizations to discriminate against, indicate a preference or limitation, refuse properly to classify or refer, or to limit or segregate membership on the basis of a person's having a positive test result from an HIV-related blood test or to require an applicant, prospective employee, employee, prospective member, or member to have an HIV-related blood test as a condition of employment or membership, classification, placement, or referral.

D. Retaliation

Retaliation against any person for reporting a violation of this Policy, filing a complaint, or cooperating with an investigation into an alleged violation of this Policy is prohibited and will be considered a violation of this Policy. Retaliation under this Policy may be found whether or not the underlying complaint is ultimately found to have merit. A complaint of retaliation should be reported, and will be investigated and adjudicated, using the procedures implementing this Policy.

E. False Information

Providing false information in connection with a complaint under this Policy or intentionally misleading officials in the investigation or resolution of such a complaint is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action.

VIII. DUTY TO COOPERATE

All students and employees have a duty to cooperate in investigations undertaken pursuant to this Policy and are expected to provide complete, accurate, and truthful information. They may be asked to sign statements or other documents memorializing the information they provide, and may be asked to keep the substance of any interview confidential, to the extent permitted by law. Failure to cooperate fully with an investigation may subject the individual to the full range of disciplinary actions, up to and including expulsion or termination.

All actions taken to investigate and resolve complaints through this procedure shall be conducted with as much privacy, discretion and confidentiality as possible without compromising the thoroughness and fairness of the investigation. All persons involved are expected to treat the situation under investigation with respect. To conduct a thorough investigation, the investigator(s) may discuss the complaint with witnesses and those persons involved in or affected by the complaint, and those persons necessary to assist in the investigation or to implement appropriate disciplinary actions. Nothing herein shall be deemed to limit the procedural rights of unionized and other employees with regard to such investigations.

IX. SANCTIONS

Violation of the prohibitions set forth in this Policy is grounds for discipline up to and including the dismissal/expulsion of students or the termination of employees. Generally, the range of sanctions for **students** includes verbal and written warnings, written reprimands, counseling, loss of privileges, probationary status, removal from ~~Institution-campus~~ housing, suspension, dismissal/expulsion, revocation of degree, and/or withholding of transcript or other action determined to be appropriate under the circumstances. Generally, the range of sanctions for **employees** includes verbal warnings, written warnings, written reprimands, probation, suspension, termination of employment, non-renewal of a contract, or other action determined to be appropriate under the circumstances.

The VSC may also impose certain non-disciplinary remedial actions where appropriate, such as required counseling or training for the respondent and/or a group of students or employees, to stop the misconduct, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects. Additional non-disciplinary outcomes, such as extending and modifying no contact orders, room changes, class changes, work schedule changes, building restrictions, and extracurricular activity restrictions may also be imposed, regardless of the finding, to maintain an environment free from discrimination and harassment.

Conduct that violates this Policy may also be unlawful and expose a person engaging in such conduct to civil and/or criminal sanctions.

Misconduct that does not violate this Policy may violate other VSC policies, student handbooks, codes of conduct, or collective bargaining agreements and, if so, shall be handled as set forth in such other documents.

X. PROCEDURES

The Chancellor shall establish and periodically update the procedures for handling complaints alleging violations of this Policy and for developing educational programs designed to prevent such conduct. Such procedures shall be consistent with Vermont and federal legal requirements, other VSC policies, and any collective bargaining agreements governing the rights and responsibilities of the VSC, its ~~m~~Member Institutions and employees. The procedures shall ensure that the VSC and any ~~m~~Member Institution, upon receiving notice of conduct that allegedly violates this Policy, promptly and impartially investigates such complaints and, where complaints are substantiated, takes prompt and appropriate remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the misconduct, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects, if necessary.

The procedures established by the Chancellor may be modified as necessary to comply with federal and state law and to ensure that complaints of discrimination and harassment are promptly and impartially investigated and adjudicated.

Students who have concerns about perceived discrimination, harassment, related unprofessional conduct, or retaliation are encouraged to report their concerns as soon as possible. Employees who learn of an incident of discrimination, harassment, related unprofessional conduct, or retaliation are required to report this information as soon as possible, as set forth in the accompanying procedures.

The VSC's primary goals in responding to violations of this Policy are to promote the safety of the VSC community, to address discrimination and harassment, and to prevent discrimination and harassment from recurring. Individuals should not be deterred from reporting a violation of this Policy because alcohol, drugs, or violations of other VSC's policies were involved in the incident. VSC officials may, in their discretion and on a case-by-case basis, decide not to pursue relatively minor drug, alcohol, or other policy violations related to alleged violations of this Policy or, if they do pursue such violations, to handle them separately from complaints brought under this Policy.

A. Standard of Proof

The standard of proof applicable to the investigation and adjudication of complaints under this Policy shall be “by a preponderance of the evidence,” meaning that it is more likely than not (*i.e.* there is more than a 50% likelihood) that the alleged actions or behavior in violation of the Policy occurred.

B. Coordinators

The Chancellor (for the Office of the Chancellor) and the President of each ~~m~~Member Institution (for each Institution) shall appoint individuals to coordinate efforts to carry out and comply with: (1) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the other federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and harassment on the basis of a protected category; and (2) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Contact information for the coordinators shall be attached to the Chancellor’s Procedures.

XI. POLICY DISTRIBUTION AND EDUCATION

The Institutions and the Office of the Chancellor shall distribute or make available annually copies of the Policy and related procedures for all students and employees. The Institutions and the Office of the Chancellor will make available appropriate educational materials and programs to facilitate understanding and implementation of this Policy for all students and employees.

Date adopted by the Board of Trustees: ~~September 19, 2023~~ June 14, 2025

Signed by:



~~Sophie E. Zdatny~~ Elizabeth K. Mauch,
Chancellor

Date	Version	Revision	Approved By
2006	1.0	Adopted	VSCS Board of Trustees
2/19/15	2.0	Updated	VSCS Board of Trustees

8/12/20	3.0	Updated per 2020 Title IX regulations	VSCS Board of Trustees
9/19/23	4.0	Updated per 2023 VT Fair Employment Practices Act	VSCS Board of Trustees
<u>8/12/24</u>	<u>5.0</u>	<u>Updated per 2024 TIX regulations; rescinded by operation of law</u>	<u>VSCS Board of Trustees</u>
<u>6/14/25</u>	<u>6.0</u>	<u>Updated</u>	<u>VSCS Board of Trustees</u>

Relevant Legal Authorities

Federal

- 20 U.S.C. § 1681 *et seq.*, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
- 34 C.F.R. Part 106 (Title IX regulations)
- 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)
- 34 C.F.R. Part 99 (FERPA regulations)
- 29 U.S.C. § 602(d), Equal Pay Act of 1963
- 29 U.S.C. § 621 *et seq.*, Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as amended by the Older Workers Benefit Protection Act of 1990
- 29 U.S.C. § 701 *et seq.*, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended
- 38 U.S.C. § 4212, Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as amended
- 38 U.S.C. § 4301 *et seq.*, Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994
- 42 U.S.C. § 2000d, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- 42 U.S.C. § 2000e *et seq.*, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 and the Civil Rights Act of 1991
- 42 U.S.C. § 2000ff-1 *et seq.*, Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008
- 42 U.S.C. § 12101 *et seq.*, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended by the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act of 2008

State

- 3 V.S.A. § 961(6)-(8), State Employees Labor Relations Act
- 9 V.S.A. §§ 4500 *et seq.*, Vermont Public Accommodations Act
- 16 V.S.A. § 11(a)(26), Classifications and Definitions, Harassment
- 16 V.S.A. § 178, Harassment and Hazing Prevention Policies; Postsecondary Schools
- 16 V.S.A. § 570f, Harassment; Notice and Response
- 18 V.S.A. § 1127, HIV Discrimination and Testing
- 21 V.S.A. § 495, Fair Employment Practices Act
- 21 V.S.A. § 495d(5)-(12), Definitions, Disability
- 21 V.S.A. § 495d(13), Definitions, Sexual Harassment
- 21 V.S.A. § 495h, Fair Employment Practices Act – Sexual Harassment

Cross References

- *Chancellor's Procedures for Implementation of Policy 311*
- VSC Policy 311-A, ~~*Prevention of Sexual Misconduct Harassment, Sexual Exploitation, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking*~~
- *Chancellor's Procedures for Implementation of Policy 311-A*
- VSC Policy 312, *Compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)*



<u>PREVENTION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT HARASSMENT, SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, AND STALKING</u>	Number 311-A	Page 1 of 17
	Date <u>8/12/2020</u>6/14/2025	

I. NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

As a recipient of federal funds, each ~~m~~Member ~~College Institution~~ of the Vermont State Colleges (collectively “the VSC”) is required to comply with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments Act of 1972, and implementing regulations issued by the Department of Education in May 2020 (“Title IX”). In accordance with Title IX, as well as applicable state and federal law, the VSC prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in its education programs and activities, admission, and employment. Prohibited sex discrimination includes sexual harassment, as defined in VSC Policy 311, *Prevention of Non-Discrimination and Prevention of Harassment and Related Unprofessional Conduct*. Prohibited sex discrimination also includes sexual harassment as defined in this policy.¹

Inquiries concerning the application of Title IX may be referred to VSC’s Title IX Coordinators or to the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. Contact information for the Title IX Coordinators and the Office for Civil Rights is located in Appendix A to the Chancellor’s Procedures for Implementation of Policy 311-A: *Prevention of Sexual Harassment Misconduct, Sexual Exploitation, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking* (“Chancellor’s Procedures”).

II. POLICY STATEMENT

The VSC is committed to maintaining an educational and working environment free from all forms of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment as defined below. The VSC is also committed to maintaining an educational and working environment free from sexual exploitation, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Such misconduct

¹ In the event the applicable laws change, the Board of Trustees (“the Board”) recognizes the VSC Chancellor’s authority to comply through revised Procedures until the Board has an opportunity to revise the relevant Policy.

will not be tolerated. These acts not only violate a person's feelings of trust and safety but can also substantially interfere with a person's education or employment.

III. POLICY SUMMARY

It is the policy of the VSC that, upon determining that an act of sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking has occurred, prompt and appropriate remedial action reasonably calculated to address the misconduct and restore or preserve equal access to VSC education programs or activities will be taken. Disciplinary sanctions for any member of the VSC community engaging in conduct prohibited under this policy may include the suspension or dismissal/expulsion of students, the suspension or termination of employment or other appropriate disciplinary action such as warnings, reprimands and educational sanctions, as well as possible referral for criminal investigation and prosecution under Vermont law.

Reporting: The VSC encourages, and in the case of its employees requires, the prompt and accurate reporting of sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking ("Prohibited Conduct" defined further, below). This allows the VSC to respond quickly to allegations and offer supportive measures to individuals who may have been subjected to such misconduct. The VSC is committed to protecting the confidentiality of complainants,² wherever possible, and will work closely with individuals seeking confidential assistance regarding misconduct under this policy. Certain professionals are permitted by law to offer confidentiality. Those who do not have the privilege of offering confidentiality are expected to handle reports discreetly to the extent permitted or required under the law and VSC policy. All allegations will be investigated promptly and thoroughly as provided in the Chancellor's Procedures, and all parties will be afforded equal rights during the investigatory and adjudicatory process.

Prevention and Education: It is the collective responsibility of all members of the VSC community to foster a safe and secure campus environment. In an effort to promote this environment and prevent acts of Prohibited Conduct from occurring, the VSC provides ongoing prevention and awareness programs. Incoming students and employees are expected to participate, and other members of the VSC community are encouraged to participate, in these programs.

Retaliation: Retaliation related to matters addressed by this policy, as defined below, is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, expulsion/dismissal or termination of employment. Retaliation may be found whether or not the underlying complaint is ultimately found to have merit. A complaint of retaliation should be reported, and will be investigated and adjudicated, as provided in the Chancellor's Procedures.

Amnesty: Disciplinary action is prohibited against a student reporting, or otherwise participating in a sexual misconduct resolution process, for alleged ancillary policy violation(s) related to the

² As noted in the definitions below, for ease of reference, individuals who report that they have been subjected to misconduct prohibited by this policy, or who are reported by others to have been subjected to such misconduct, will be referred to throughout this policy as "complainants", regardless of whether or not they choose to request supportive measures and/or participate in an adaptive or formal resolution process.

sexual misconduct incident at issue. However, disciplinary action may be taken if it is determined that the conduct giving rise to the alleged ancillary policy violation(s) placed, or threatened to place, the health and safety of another person at risk. This shall not be construed to limit a counter-complaint made in good faith or to prohibit action as to a report made in good faith.

False Information: Knowingly providing false information in connection with a complaint of misconduct covered by this policy or intentionally misleading officials in the investigation or resolution of such a complaint is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, expulsion/dismissal or termination of employment.

Academic Freedom: This policy shall not be construed or applied to restrict academic freedom at the VSC, nor shall it be construed to restrict constitutionally-protected expression, even though such expression may be offensive, unpleasant or even hateful.

Interpretation: This policy is to be read consistent with federal and state law. If there is any conflict between this policy and federal or state law, this policy will be interpreted consistent with federal or state law.

IV. SCOPE OF COVERAGE

Who: This policy applies to all members of the VSC community, including students, employees, and other third parties who come on to campus (such as parents, visitors, independent contractors, and vendors), who are involved in an incident of Prohibited Conduct (including those who witness an incident or report an incident on behalf of another). It covers misconduct between individuals in different types of relationships. These include, but are not limited to, student to student, employee to employee, faculty member to faculty member, visitor/contracted employee to employee/student, faculty member to student, employee to student, supervisor to subordinate, coach to student athlete, and student to employee/faculty member. Misconduct under this policy may consist of acts committed by an individual, or collective actions committed by members of a group or organization. These acts may be committed against an individual or against a group or organization. These acts may be committed by a stranger, an acquaintance, or someone with whom the complainant has a social, romantic, or intimate relationship. These acts may be committed by or against any individual, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

What: This policy prohibits Prohibited Conduct as defined herein, in the VSC's educational, extracurricular, athletic, and other programs and activities, as well as in the employment setting. These terms are further defined in the Definitions section below. Other forms of sexual harassment that do not meet the Title IX Sexual Harassment or Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct definitions provided in this policy are also prohibited by the VSC, and are addressed separately in VSC Policy 311, *Prevention of Non-Discrimination and Prevention of Harassment and Related Unprofessional Conduct*, or other applicable policy or code of conduct.

Where: This policy covers conduct that takes place on VSC campuses and in any building or property owned or controlled by the VSC and used in direct support of, or in a manner related to, the VSC's mission. This includes public property within or immediately adjacent to and

accessible from VSC property, as well as any building or property not within the same reasonably contiguous geographic area of VSC that supports or relates to VSC's educational purposes and is used frequently by students. This policy also covers conduct that takes place off-campus, or through the use of online, electronic or digital technologies, that may have a nexus to any VSC education program or activity, for example by creating a hostile environment on campus or representing a threat to the safety of a member or members of the VSC community or to the efficient continuance of normal VSC operations.

When: The length of time between an incident and making a report of misconduct under this policy will not affect the willingness of the VSC to investigate the allegations or provide support and other services to the individual reporting the conduct. However, a prompt report will enhance the VSC's ability to conduct an investigation, and will enhance the effectiveness of any criminal or VSC adjudicatory process. Therefore, the VSC strongly encourages individuals to report incidents of misconduct immediately following their occurrence.

V. RESOURCES FOR COMPLAINANTS

Written information on existing counseling, health, mental health, victim advocacy, legal assistance, visa and immigration assistance, student financial aid, and other services available for individuals who report that they have been subjected to misconduct in violation of this policy, both on campus and in the local community, is available from the Office of the Chancellor and each of the ~~m~~Member ~~College~~Institutions. The VSC will provide written notification about options for, available assistance in, and how to request changes to academic, living, transportation, and working situations or other supportive measures. The VSC will make such accommodations or provide such supportive measures if requested and if they are reasonably available, regardless of whether the complainant chooses to report the misconduct to campus public safety or local law enforcement.

Further information about supportive measures available to both parties is provided in the Chancellor's Procedures. Requests for supportive measures and accommodations should be made to the Title IX Coordinator.

VI. CLERY ACT

The Jeanne Clery ~~Disclosure of Campus~~ Safety Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics-Act ("Clery Act") requires all colleges and universities that participate in federal financial aid programs to keep and report information about crime on or near their campuses. Employees who are designated as Campus Security Authorities under the Clery Act are required to report certain crimes to their campus Office of Public Safety for the purpose of compliance with the Clery Act. The Offices of Public Safety for the ~~m~~Member ~~College~~Institutions will include any reported incidents of dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking, along with other crimes, in the campus daily crime log and annual security report, as required by the Clery Act. Public Safety will issue a timely warning when a Clery Act crime which is considered to pose a serious or continuing threat to the VSC community is reported to Public Safety or to local law enforcement (if local law enforcement makes Public Safety aware of such reports). No personally identifying information will be included in the public reports required by the Clery Act.

VII. CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

The VSC is committed to maintaining the privacy of all individuals involved in a report of sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking to the extent it reasonably can do so. While the VSC encourages individuals to report incidents of misconduct in violation of this policy, the VSC understands that it can be difficult for individuals to come forward to report such misconduct. The following resources have differing obligations to maintain confidentiality and to report incidents.

A. Confidential Off-Campus Resources

Crisis services and off-campus healthcare providers will generally maintain confidentiality, to the extent permissible under applicable law.

B. Counselors and Health Services Professionals

The VSC's licensed professional counselors and health services staff respect and protect confidential communications from students and employees to the extent permissible under applicable law. They may have the responsibility to disclose otherwise-privileged information in the event they perceive an immediate and/or serious threat to any person or property. In addition, medical and mental health professionals are required by law to report any allegation of sexual assault of a person under age 18. These professionals will report incidents, without any identifying information, to the Title IX Coordinator so VSC is aware that an incident of alleged misconduct under this policy has occurred. If the incident is a crime covered by the Clery Act, these professionals will report it, without any identifying information, to the appropriate Office of Public Safety for Clery Act purposes. The non-identifying information to be reported includes the nature, date, time and general location of the incident.

In accordance with ~~May 2020~~current Title IX regulations, the University will not access, consider, disclose, or otherwise use a party's privileged records or require, allow, rely upon, or otherwise use questions or evidence that constitute, or seek disclosure of, information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privilege has waived the privilege.

C. Employees

Employees of the VSC, other than those employed by the VSC in their capacity as licensed professional counselors and health services staff, are not able to guarantee confidentiality. General inquiries or questions about policies and procedures do not have to be reported. Employees who learn of an incident of sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking are required to report this information to the Title IX Coordinator, the Dean of Students, or the President. Employees who are Campus Security Authorities are also required to report certain sex offenses and other crimes to the campus Office of Public Safety for the purpose of the VSC's compliance with the Clery Act. All information will be kept securely and, even if an individual does not request confidentiality, the information will be shared on a "need to know" basis only with those assisting in any review,

investigation or adjudication of the report, or who otherwise need to know the information to perform the duties of their position. Although not bound by confidentiality, these individuals should be discreet and respect the privacy interests of all individuals involved in the process.

The ~~May 2020~~current Title IX regulations contemplate that certain information will generally be treated confidentially, except as qualified by statements in those regulations. For example, the regulations provide that colleges and universities must maintain as confidential any supportive measures provided to a complainant or respondent,³ to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality would not impair the ability of the institution to provide the supportive measures. The regulations also provide that institutions must keep confidential the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of sex discrimination, including any individual who has made a report or filed a formal complaint of sexual harassment, any complainant, any individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of sex discrimination, any respondent, and any witness, except as may be permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”), 20 U.S.C. 1232g, or FERPA regulations, 34 CFR part 99, or as required by law, or to carry out the purposes of the Title IX regulations, including the conduct of any investigation, hearing, or judicial proceeding arising under those regulations.

The VSC will strive to protect the privacy interests of individuals to the extent it can while fulfilling its obligations to uphold relevant policies and regulations, to conform to any legal requirements, and to take reasonable steps to promote the safety of members of the VSC community. The VSC has an obligation to investigate complaints of sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking, and to take reasonable steps to prevent recurrence of such behavior. Therefore, in some circumstances, the VSC may report an incident of misconduct under this policy to law enforcement or investigate and pursue disciplinary action against a respondent, even if an individual requests confidentiality or chooses not to file a complaint. For this reason, absolute or strict confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. The VSC will evaluate requests for confidentiality on a case-by-case basis, within the context of its desire to provide a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for all students, employees and third parties, and to promote the health, safety, and wellbeing of the VSC community.

If an individual filing a report insists that ~~his or her~~ their name or other identifiable information not be revealed and the VSC is able to respect that request, the VSC’s ability to respond fully to the report may be limited. For example, if a grievance process is commenced against a member of the campus community, that person will be informed as provided in the Chancellor’s Procedures of the name of the complainant and information regarding the nature of the allegations in order to defend against the allegations in that process. Thus, the VSC may not be able to maintain a request for confidentiality and also adjudicate a complaint. If an individual insists on confidentiality, the VSC may be able to take action to limit the effects of the alleged Prohibited Conduct and prevent its recurrence to the extent warranted and practicable.

D. Law Enforcement

³ As noted in the definitions below, a “respondent” is an individual who has been reported to have engaged in conduct in violation of this policy and whose alleged conduct is being investigated to determine if it is in violation of VSC’s policies.

If a crime of sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking appears to have occurred, the VSC encourages accurate and prompt reporting of these crimes to the Office of Public Safety and/or to state or local law enforcement. Individuals subjected to such misconduct have the option to notify law enforcement, to be assisted by VSC officials in notifying law enforcement, or to decline to notify law enforcement. Individuals may inform law enforcement of an incident of sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking without making a formal criminal complaint. Individuals may choose to pursue a criminal complaint, a complaint through the VSC's disciplinary process, or both simultaneously. Individuals who choose not to notify law enforcement immediately have the option to notify law enforcement at a later time. Completing a forensic exam is important to preserve evidence and does not require the examinee to file a police report. Reports to law enforcement are not confidential.

VIII. DEFINITIONS

A. Prohibited Conduct⁴

This Policy 311-A prohibits the following forms of misconduct, collectively referred to throughout the policy as "Prohibited Conduct":

Title IX Sexual Harassment (i.e., Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment, Severe, Pervasive and Objectively Offensive Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence and sex-based Stalking within the scope of Title IX); and

Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct (i.e., Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking outside the scope of Title IX, Sexual Exploitation as defined below, and Retaliation).

Specifically, Title IX Sexual Harassment and Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct are defined as follows for purposes of this Policy 311-A:

1. *Title IX Sexual Harassment*

⁴ The definitions of dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking used in this policy are consistent with the Clery Act, as amended effective 2014, and Title IX and its ~~May 2020~~current regulations. In its primary prevention and awareness programs for incoming students and new employees, as well as in its primary prevention and awareness programs for students and employees, the VSC will include the definitions of dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking under the criminal law of Vermont. However, the VSC utilizes its own definitions of these prohibited behaviors, which are consistent with the Clery Act and Title IX and its ~~May 2020~~current regulations as set forth below, for purposes of this policy, and determines responsibility for violations of this policy through its own procedures and standards of proof (i.e., by a preponderance of the evidence standard), not through the procedures or standards of proof employed in the criminal justice system.

“Title IX Sexual Harassment” is a subset of Prohibited Conduct. Under Department of Education regulations (see 34 C.F.R., Part 106) issued in May 2020 to implement Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq., VSC is required to prohibit certain forms of sexual harassment as defined in those regulations. Title IX Sexual Harassment is Prohibited Conduct of the following types committed by or against students and/or employees in an education program or activity of VSC, in the United States. Further, in order for VSC to consider a Formal Complaint of such misconduct as falling within its Title IX Sexual Harassment policy and procedures, the complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in a VSC program or activity at the time the complaint is filed.

Conduct takes place within VSC’s “programs and activities” when that conduct occurs: (1) in a location, at an event, or in a circumstance where VSC exercises substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the conduct occurs; or (2) in any building owned or controlled by a student organization recognized by VSC. Conduct that occurs off campus in locations or at events with no connection to VSC is unlikely to have occurred in a program or activity of VSC.

A complaint about conduct that does not meet this strict definition for Title IX Sexual Harassment is still prohibited by this policy if it otherwise constitutes Prohibited Conduct within the definition of Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct as defined below.

The following Prohibited Conduct definitions apply for purposes of the definition of Title IX Sexual Harassment:

a. *Title IX Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment*

Quid pro quo sexual harassment for purposes of the Title IX Sexual Harassment definition is conduct on the basis of sex committed in an education program or activity of VSC in the United States by which an employee of VSC conditions the provision of an educational or employment aid, benefit, or service of VSC on a student’s or employee’s participation in unwelcome sexual conduct.

b. *Title IX Severe, Pervasive and Objectively Offensive Sexual Harassment*

Severe, pervasive and objectively offensive sexual harassment for purposes of the Title IX Sexual Harassment definition is conduct on the basis of sex committed in an education program or activity of VSC in the United States that constitutes unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a student or employee equal access to a VSC education program or activity, whether in the employment or educational context.

c. *Title IX Sexual Assault*

As required by the ~~May 2020~~current Title IX regulations, Title IX Sexual Assault incorporates the definitions of the FBI’s Uniform Crime Reporting (NIBRS) program, and is defined as follows:

- **Rape:**⁵
 - The carnal knowledge of a person (i.e., penile-vaginal penetration), without the consent of that person, including instances where the person is incapable of giving consent because of their age or because of their temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity (it should be noted that either females or males could be complainants under this definition);
 - Oral or anal sexual intercourse (i.e., penile penetration) with another person, without the consent of that person, including instances where the person is incapable of giving consent because of their age or because of their temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity;
 - To use an object or instrument (e.g., an inanimate object or body part other than a penis) to unlawfully penetrate, however slightly, the genital or anal opening of the body of another person, without the consent of that person, including instances where the person is incapable of giving consent because of their age or because of their temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity;
- **Fondling:** The touching of the private body parts of another person for the purpose of sexual gratification, without the consent of that person, including instances where the person is incapable of giving consent because of their age or because of their temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity (for purposes of this definition, “private body parts” includes breasts, buttocks, or genitals, whether clothed or unclothed);
- **Incest:** Sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by law; or
- **Statutory Rape:** Sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent.

Sexual assault can be committed by any person against any other person, regardless of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or past or current relationship status. Sexual assault may occur with or without physical resistance or violence.

Any incident meeting this definition is considered a crime for the purposes of Clery Act reporting. It is also a violation of VSC policy and is prohibited.

d. *Title IX Dating Violence*

⁵ Both completed rape and attempted rape is prohibited by this policy.

Title IX dating violence for purposes of the Title IX Sexual Harassment definition is conduct on the basis of sex committed in an education program or activity of VSC in the United States that constitutes “[v]iolence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim.

(i) The existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on the reporting party’s statement and with consideration of the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

(ii) For the purposes of this definition— (A) Dating violence includes, but is not limited to, sexual or physical abuse or the threat of such abuse. (B) Dating violence does not include acts covered under the definition of domestic violence.”⁶

Any incident meeting this definition is considered a crime for the purposes of Clery Act reporting. It is also a violation of VSC policy and is prohibited.

e. *Title IX Domestic Violence*

Title IX domestic violence for purposes of the Title IX Sexual Harassment definition is conduct on the basis of sex committed in an education program or activity of VSC in the United States that constitutes a “felony or misdemeanor crime of violence committed—

(A) By a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim;

(B) By a person with whom the victim shares a child in common;

(C) By a person who is cohabiting with, or has cohabited with, the victim as a spouse or intimate partner;

(D) By a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime of violence occurred; or

(E) By any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person’s acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime of violence occurred.”⁷

Any incident meeting this definition is considered a crime for the purposes of Clery Act reporting. It is also a violation of VSC policy and is prohibited.

f. *Title IX Stalking*

Title IX stalking for purposes of the Title IX Sexual Harassment definition is conduct on the basis of sex committed in an education program or activity of VSC in the United States that

⁶ 34 C.F.R. § 106.30(a); 34 C.F.R. § 668.46(a).

⁷ 34 C.F.R. § 106.30(a); 34 C.F.R. § 668.46(a).

constitutes “[e]ngaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to—

(A) Fear for the person’s safety or the safety of others; or

(B) Suffer substantial emotional distress.

(ii) For purposes of this definition—

(A) Course of conduct means two or more acts, including, but not limited to, acts in which the stalker directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, method, device, or means, follows, monitors, observes, surveils, threatens, or communicates to or about a person, or interferes with a person’s property.

(B) Reasonable person means a reasonable person under similar circumstances and with similar identities to the victim.

(C) Substantial emotional distress means significant mental suffering or anguish that may, but does not necessarily, require medical or other professional treatment or counseling.”⁸

Any incident(s) meeting this definition is/are considered a crime for the purposes of Clery Act reporting. It is also a violation of VSC policy and is prohibited.

Examples of stalking behaviors or activities include, but are not limited to the following, if they occur in the context of stalking as defined above (i.e., the behaviors or activities that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or the safety of others, or to suffer substantial emotional distress): (1) non-consensual communication, including face-to-face communication, telephone calls, voice messages, e-mails, text messages, written letters, gifts, or any other communications that are unwelcome; (2) use of online, electronic or digital technologies, such as posting pictures or text in chat rooms or on websites, sending unwanted or unsolicited e-mail or talk requests, posting private or public messages on Internet sites, social networks, and/or school bulletin boards, installing spyware on a person’s computer, or using Global Positioning Systems (GPS) or similar technology to monitor a person; (3) pursuing, following, waiting for, or showing up uninvited at or near a residence, workplace, classroom, or other places frequented by the person; (4) surveillance or other types of observation, including staring and voyeurism; (5) trespassing; (6) vandalism; (7) non-consensual touching; (8) direct verbal or physical threats against a person or a person’s family member, pet or personal property; (9) gathering information about a person from friends, family, or co-workers; (10) accessing private information through unauthorized means; (11) threats to harm self or others; (12) defamation and/or lying to others about the person; and (13) using a third party or parties to accomplish any of the above.

Engaging in such stalking behaviors or activities is a violation of VSC policy and is prohibited.

⁸ 34 C.F.R. § 668.46(a).

2. *Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct*

Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct is Prohibited Conduct that falls within the scope of this policy and the definitions below but that does not fall within the definition of Title IX Sexual Harassment, either due to the nature of the conduct or because it did not reportedly occur within a program or activity of VSC in the United States.⁹ Such conduct is defined for purposes of this policy as:

a. *Non-Title IX Sexual Assault*

Sexual Assault (i.e., rape, fondling, incest or statutory rape) as defined in the Title IX Sexual Assault definition above that did not reportedly occur in a program or activity of VSC in the United States, and attempts to commit such misconduct.

Any incident meeting this definition is considered a crime for the purposes of Clery Act reporting. It is also a violation of VSC policy and is prohibited

b. *Non-Title IX Domestic Violence*

Domestic violence as defined in the Title IX Domestic Violence definition above that did not reportedly occur in a program or activity of VSC in the United States.

Any incident meeting this definition is considered a crime for the purposes of Clery Act reporting. It is also a violation of VSC policy and is prohibited

c. *Non-Title IX Dating Violence*

Dating violence as defined in the Title IX Dating Violence definition above that did not reportedly occur in a program or activity of VSC in the United States.

Any incident meeting this definition is considered a crime for the purposes of Clery Act reporting. It is also a violation of VSC policy and is prohibited

d. *Non-Title IX Stalking*

⁹ Misconduct that does not fall within either the definitions below or the definition of Title IX Sexual Harassment, but that does fall within the scope of Policy 311: *Prevention of Non-Discrimination and Prevention of Harassment and Related Unprofessional Conduct*, which prohibits among other things certain types of discrimination and harassment on the basis of sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation, will be addressed through the Chancellor's Procedures for the Implementation of Policy 311: *Prevention of Non-Discrimination and Prevention of Harassment and Related Unprofessional Conduct*.

Stalking as defined in the Title IX Stalking definition above that did not reportedly occur in a program or activity of VSC in the United States, or that otherwise fits within the definition of stalking but does not fall within the Title IX Stalking definition because the reported conduct is not directed at the complainant on the basis of sex.

Any incident(s) meeting this definition is/are considered a crime for the purposes of Clery Act reporting. It is also a violation of VSC policy and is prohibited.

e. *Non-Title IX Sexual Exploitation*

Non-Title IX Sexual Exploitation occurs when a person takes sexual advantage of another person for the benefit of anyone other than that other person without that other person's consent, and attempted sexual exploitation. Examples of sexually exploitative behavior include, but are not limited to: (1) prostituting another person; (2) recording or capturing (through any means) images, video or audio of another person's sexual activity, intimate body parts, or nudity without that person's consent, and/or sharing or distributing this material without the other person's consent; (3) viewing or allowing or aiding others to view another person's sexual activity, intimate body parts, or nudity without the person's consent; and (4) sexual exhibitionism or exposure of one's genitalia in the presence of others without their consent.

Exception: The VSC's prohibition of sexual exploitation is not intended to prohibit the use of sexually-explicit materials that are reasonably related to the VSC's academic mission. Specifically, this section is not intended to proscribe or inhibit the use of sexually-explicit materials, in or out of the classroom, when in the judgment of a reasonable person the use of such materials appropriately promotes genuine discourse, inquiry and learning.

Sexual exploitation as defined here violates VSC policy and is prohibited.

B. Additional Definitions Applicable to This Policy

Coercion: The act of compelling or forcing someone to act based on harassment, threats, or intimidation.

Complainant: A complainant is an individual who is reported to have experienced conduct that could constitute Prohibited Conduct, regardless of whether the individual makes a report or seeks disciplinary action. In some cases (such as, e.g., cases in which a person involved in an incident of alleged Prohibited Conduct does not wish to participate in the process but VSC decides that the alleged misconduct needs to be investigated), VSC may pursue an investigation and adjudication under this policy without a designated complainant, in accordance with the Chancellor's Procedures. In these cases, VSC may extend some or all of the rights of a complainant as defined in this policy to affected parties as deemed appropriate by VSC and/or as required by law.

For ease of reference, the term "complainant" is also used throughout this policy to refer generally to an individual who was reported by another to have been subjected to Prohibited Conduct, even if they do not participate in any related process.

Consent: For purposes of this policy, effective consent means words or actions that demonstrate to a reasonable person a knowing and voluntary agreement to engage in mutually agreed-upon sexual activity. Effective consent cannot be gained by threat, force, coercion or intimidation or by ignoring words or actions that indicate a lack of consent or objection to the activity. Consent to one form of sexual activity does not imply consent to other forms of sexual activity. Consent can be rescinded at any time. It is the responsibility of a person who wants to engage in sexual activity to ensure that they have effective consent from any other person involved. Silence, lack of protest, or lack of resistance are not sufficient standing alone to establish consent. The actions of the individuals involved and the context in which those actions occurred will be considered in determining whether or not there was consent. The existence of a dating relationship or a past sexual relationship between the persons involved is not a sufficient basis to assume consent. Past consent between two individuals does not imply present or future consent to sexual activity.

Consent is not valid when a person is incapable of giving consent: (1) due to the person's use or consumption of drugs or alcohol; (2) when intimidation, threats, physical force, or other actions that are coercive are applied; (3) when a physical or mental condition is present such that the person cannot knowingly or voluntarily give consent; or (4) when a person is under the age of 16.

Alcohol-related incapacity results from a level of alcohol ingestion that is more severe than mere impairment, being under the influence, drunkenness or intoxication. Consumption of alcohol or other drugs alone is insufficient to establish incapacitation. The question of incapacitation is determined on a case-by-case basis using both objective and subjective standards and includes by way of example but not limitation an analysis of the objective behaviors of the person alleging Prohibited Conduct, whether the accused person knew or reasonably should have known that the person was incapacitated, and whether the accused person played a role in creating the circumstances of incapacity. Whether the respondent knew or reasonably should have known the complainant was incapacitated will be assessed in light of all relevant circumstances. Objective physical indications of incapacity include slurred speech, difficulty walking or standing, vomiting, and losing consciousness.

The use of alcohol or other drugs does not make a complainant at fault for Prohibited Conduct. The use of alcohol or other drugs does not minimize or excuse a person's responsibility for committing Prohibited Conduct. Nor does the use of alcohol or other drugs minimize or excuse a person's responsibility for determining whether another person is capable of giving consent, as described above.

Officials With Authority: Officials with authority to institute corrective measures regarding matters involving Prohibited Conduct include the Title IX Coordinator at each VSC campus, any Deputy Title IX Coordinators on campus, the Dean of Students, the Academic Dean or Provost, and the President or their designee. As outlined in more detail in the Chancellor's Procedures, an Official With Authority will, upon receipt of a Formal Complaint of Title IX Sexual Harassment, take action on such a complaint in accordance with the Chancellor's Procedures.

Respondent: A respondent is an individual who has been reported to have engaged in conduct that could constitute Prohibited Conduct and whose alleged conduct is being investigated to determine if it is in violation of VSC's policies.

Retaliation: Retaliation (that is, intimidating, threatening, coercing, or discriminating against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX or its implementing regulations or this policy, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing regarding Prohibited Conduct (including both Title IX Sexual Harassment and Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct)) is strictly prohibited. Intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination, including charges against an individual for code of conduct violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX or its implementing regulations, may constitute retaliation, as does any adverse action taken against a person for making a good faith report of Prohibited Conduct or participating in any proceeding under this Policy. Retaliation may include intimidation, threats, coercion, harassment, or adverse employment or educational actions that would discourage a reasonable person from engaging in activity protected under this policy. Charging an individual with a code of conduct violation for making a materially false statement in bad faith in the course of a grievance process under this policy does not constitute prohibited retaliation, provided, however, that a determination regarding responsibility is not alone sufficient to establish that any party made a materially false statement.

VSC will not engage in, and will investigate and address, reports of retaliatory conduct. Retaliation under this policy may be found whether or not the underlying complaint is ultimately found to have merit. Complaints of retaliation should be reported, and will be addressed, through the procedures for Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct outlined in the Chancellor's Procedures.

Depending on the particular circumstances, retaliation may also be unlawful. Retaliation as defined here violates VSC policy and is prohibited.

IX. PROCEDURES

The Chancellor shall establish and periodically update the procedures for handling complaints of Prohibited Conduct to ensure that the process is prompt, fair and impartial.

The standard of proof applicable in investigating and resolving complaints under this policy shall be "by a preponderance of the evidence," meaning that it is more likely than not (i.e., there is more than a 50% likelihood) that the alleged actions or behavior in violation of the policy occurred.

The procedures established by the Chancellor may be modified as necessary to comply with federal and state law so that the VSC may respond promptly and effectively to incidents of Prohibited Conduct.

X. COOPERATION WITH INVESTIGATIONS AND PROCEEDINGS

All students and employees are strongly encouraged to cooperate in investigations undertaken pursuant to this policy and are expected to provide complete, accurate, and truthful information when they do so. They may be asked to sign statements or other documents memorializing the

information they provide, and non-party witnesses may be asked to keep the substance of any interview confidential.

All actions taken to investigate and resolve complaints pursuant to this policy shall be conducted with as much privacy and discretion as practicable without compromising the thoroughness and fairness of the investigation. All persons involved are expected to treat the situation under investigation with respect. To conduct a thorough investigation, the investigator(s) may discuss the complaint with witnesses and those persons involved in or affected by the complaint, and those persons necessary to assist in the investigation or to implement appropriate disciplinary actions. Nothing herein shall be deemed to limit the procedural rights of unionized and other employees with regard to such investigations.

XI. SANCTIONS

Violation of the prohibitions set forth in this policy is grounds for discipline up to and including the dismissal/expulsion of students or the termination of employees. Generally, the range of sanctions for **students** includes verbal and written warnings, written reprimands, counseling, loss of privileges, probationary status, removal from ~~College-campus~~ housing, suspension, dismissal/expulsion, revocation of degree, and/or withholding of transcript or other action determined to be appropriate under the circumstances. Generally, the range of sanctions for **employees** includes verbal warnings, written warnings, written reprimands, probation, suspension, termination of employment, non-renewal of a contract, or other action determined to be appropriate under the circumstances.

The VSC may also impose certain non-disciplinary remedial actions where appropriate, such as required counseling or training for the respondent and/or a group of students or employees, to stop the misconduct, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects. Additional non-disciplinary outcomes, such as extending and modifying no contact orders, room changes, class changes, work schedule changes, building restrictions, and extracurricular activity restrictions may also be imposed, regardless of the finding, to maintain an environment free from Prohibited Conduct and/or retaliation.

XII. OTHER POLICY VIOLATIONS

The VSC's primary goals in responding to complaints of Prohibited Conduct are to promote the safety of the VSC community, to address the misconduct, to prevent it from recurring, and/or to restore or preserve the complainant's access to VSC's educational programs or activities. A person (whether a complainant or another reporting person) should not be deterred from reporting a violation of this policy because alcohol, drugs, or other violations of VSC's policies were involved in the incident. VSC officials may, in their discretion and on a case-by-case basis, decide not to pursue relatively minor drug, alcohol or other policy violations related to incidents of misconduct under this policy or, if they do pursue such violations, to handle them separately from complaints brought under this policy. No such violations will be handled by the VSC in a manner that violates the anti-retaliation policy stated above.

Misconduct that does not meet the definition of Prohibited Conduct may violate other VSC policies, student handbooks, codes of conduct, or collective bargaining agreements and, if so,

may be handled as set forth in such other documents or, at the discretion of the VSC, where related misconduct involves reported Prohibited Conduct and misconduct prohibited by such other policies, it may be handled under the procedures for Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct that are outlined in the Chancellor's Procedures.

Signed by:



Sophie E. Zdatny
Chancellor

Date	Version	Revision	Approved By
9/24/14	1.0	Adopted	VSCS Board of Trustees
7/23/15	2.0	Updated	VSCS Board of Trustees
8/12/20	3.0	Updated per 2020 Title IX regulations	VSCS Board of Trustees
<u>8/12/2024</u>	<u>4.0</u>	<u>Updated per 2024 TIX regulations; rescinded by operation of law</u>	<u>VSCS Board of Trustees</u>
<u>6/14/2025</u>	<u>5.0</u>	<u>Updated</u>	<u>VSCS Board of Trustees</u>

Relevant Legal Authorities

- 20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq., Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972
- 34 C.F.R. Part 106 (Title IX regulations)
- 20 U.S.C. § 1092(f), the Jeanne Clery ~~Disclosure of Campus~~ Safety Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, Section 485(f) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (as amended)
- 34 C.F.R. § 668.46 (Clery Act regulations)
- 42 U.S.C. § 13925(a)(20), Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (as amended) (definition of personally identifying information)
- 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)
- 34 C.F.R. Part 99 (FERPA regulations)
- 13 V.S.A. § 3251(3), Sexual Assault - Definitions
- 13 V.S.A. § 3252, Sexual Assault

- 13 V.S.A. § 1042, Domestic Assault
- 15 V.S.A. § 1101(2), Domestic Relations, Abuse Prevention - Definitions
- 13 V.S.A. § 1061, Stalking – Definitions
- 16 V.S.A. § 178, Harassment and Hazing Prevention Policies; Postsecondary Schools
- 16 V.S.A. § 14, Harassment; Notice and Response
- 16 V.S.A. § 11(a)(26), Classifications and Definitions, Harassment
- 16 V.S.A. § 184, Student Access to Confidential Sexual Misconduct Support Services

Cross Reference

- VSC Policy 311, Prevention of ~~Non-Discrimination~~ and ~~Prevention of Harassment and Related Unprofessional Conduct~~
- Chancellor's Procedures for Implementation of Policy 311-A: Prevention of Sexual Misconduct
Sexual Harassment, Sexual Exploitation, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault,
and Stalking



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I. POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Vermont State Colleges (VSC) that no member of the VSC community may participate or be involved in hazing. A student or employee will be subject to disciplinary action for: (1) engaging in hazing; (2) soliciting, directing, aiding or abetting, or attempting to aid or abet another person engaged in hazing; and (3) knowingly failing to take reasonable measures within the scope of the person's authority to prevent hazing. It is not a valid defense against charges of hazing that the student against whom the hazing was directed consented to or acquiesced in the hazing activity.

II. DEFINITION

"Hazing" means any act committed by a person, whether individually or in concert with others, against a student in connection with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with the Vermont State Colleges or any member ~~College~~ Institution thereof; and which is intended to

have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of, humiliating, intimidating or demeaning the student or endangering the mental or physical health of a student. Hazing also includes soliciting, directing, aiding, or otherwise participating actively or passively in the above acts. Hazing occurs regardless of the consent or willingness of a person to participate in the activity. Hazing may occur on or off the campus of a member ~~College~~ Institution of the Vermont State Colleges. Hazing shall not include

any activity or conduct that furthers legitimate curricular, extracurricular, or military training program goals, provided that:

- (1) the goals are approved by the member ~~Institution~~ College; and
- (2) the activity or conduct furthers the goals in a manner that is appropriate, contemplated by the member ~~Institution~~ College, and normal and customary for similar programs at other educational institutions.

“Organization” means an athletic team, association, corporation, order, society, corps, cooperative, club, or other similar group, whose members primarily are students at a member Institution College, and which is affiliated with the Institution College.

“Pledging” means any action or activity related to becoming a member of an organization.

“Student” means any person who:

- (A) is registered in or in attendance at a member Institution College;
- (B) has been accepted for admission at a member Institution College where the hazing incident occurs; or
- (C) intends to attend a member Institution College during any of its regular sessions after an official academic break.

III. INTERPRETATION OF POLICY

This policy is to be interpreted consistent with Vermont and Federal laws.

IV. REPORTS OF HAZING; ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSE; SANCTIONS

- (1) Reports of Hazing. Member Institution College employees are required to report possible hazing incidents in a prompt and effective manner. Students and other members of the VSC community are strongly encouraged to report possible hazing incidents. All reports of hazing should first be directed to the member Institution’s College Dean of Students (hereinafter “Dean”), or ~~his or her~~ their equivalent, or, in the absence of the Dean, to the public safety or security office. Where the public safety or security office is notified in the absence of the Dean, the office shall notify the Dean at its earliest convenience. An investigation pursuant to the applicable Code of Conduct, or applicable employee agreement, handbook or policy if employee related, shall be initiated immediately and, if the report is substantiated, the Dean shall take necessary steps to stop the hazing. If the Dean or the public safety or security office believes a crime may have been or is about to be committed, and such reporting is consistent with state and federal law regarding confidentiality of student information, a report also shall be made to state or local law enforcement agencies.

- (2) Administrative Response. If after completion of the investigation the Dean concludes a violation of this policy has occurred, the student, ~~or employee, or organization~~ discipline process, as the case may be, shall be initiated.
- (3) Sanctions. Students may face discipline up to and including expulsion for hazing. Employees may face discipline up to and including dismissal for hazing. Organizations found to have knowingly permitted, authorized, or condoned hazing may face sanctions up to and including suspension or revocation.

V. HAZING PREVENTION AND AWARENESS PROGRAMS

- (1) Programs which include research-informed campus-wide prevention and primary prevention strategies shall be delivered by the member Institution
- (2) Programs which include the Hazing Policy shall be delivered by the member Institution.

VI. DISTRIBUTION OF POLICY SUMMARY

A summary of this policy shall be placed in the Student Handbook of each member Institution ~~College~~ that is distributed to students.

Legal Authority: 178(b); and 20 U.S.C. 1092(f) ~~16 V.S.A. §2182(b)~~

Legal References: 16 V.S.A. §11(a)(30) (Definition); and 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)
16 V.S.A. § 570k and 570l ~~16 V.S.A. §140a-140d~~ (Civil and Criminal
Penalties)

Cross References: Collective Bargaining Agreements

Date Adopted by the Board of Trustees: 6/1/06 June 14, 2025

Signed by: Robert G. Clarke
Chancellor

Signed by:

Elizabeth K. Mauch, Chancellor

Date	Version	Revision	Approved By
6/1/06	1.0	Adopted	VSCS Board of Trustees
<u>6/14/25</u>	<u>2.0</u>	<u>Adopted</u>	<u>VSCS Board of Trustees</u>

ITEM 3: Finance & Facilities Committee Items in Detail

ANNUAL BANKING AND INVESTMENT RESOLUTION

The Vermont State Colleges System's *Banking and Investment Resolution* is reviewed and approved annually by the Board of Trustees. As the fiduciary for the corporation that is the Vermont State Colleges, the Board must periodically document the financial authorities they have delegated and to whom. This resolution is provided to banks and other financial institutions to support the banking and investment transactions of the corporation.

The *Banking and Investment Resolution* on the following page documents the authorities the board as delegated.

While the resolution wording is in necessary legal language, it provides for the following:

1. Empowers the Chancellor and/or Chief Financial Officer to take the following actions:
 - a. Establish and administer bank or other accounts for System operations;
 - b. Perform System cash management and investment activities;
 - c. Secure financing consistent with applicable Board or legislative authority;
 - d. Pledge collateral as may be necessary for certain financing;
 - e. Handle virtually all other aspects relevant to financial matters of the System; and
2. Empowers Institution Presidents and/or Institution Chief Business Officers, however so named, to take the following actions:
 - a. Administer bank or other accounts for Institutional operations; and,
 - b. Perform Institution cash management activities.

VERMONT STATE COLLEGES SYSTEM

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

RESOLUTION 2025-006

Banking and Investment

- WHEREAS, The conduct of the business affairs of the Vermont State Colleges System and each of its constituent member Institutions requires the establishment of banking relations and investment of funds; and
- WHEREAS, Selected officials of the System should be empowered to conduct banking and investment affairs in keeping with the organization of System; and
- WHEREAS, The term “bank” throughout this resolution also refers to credit unions and other depository or lending institutions that are licensed by the state of Vermont or the federal government; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED, That the Chancellor and/or Chief Financial Officer are authorized to do the following:
1. Establish accounts with banks and authorized brokers/dealers (safekeeping, trust, checking, savings, money market, time or demand deposit) through which to transact the cash management and investment business of the System, and delegate authority for initiation of related wire transfers;
 2. Borrow money and obtain credit from banks, authorized brokers/dealers, or other lending agencies in conformity with Board of Trustees approved budgets: and execute and deliver notes, draft acceptances, instruments of guaranty, and any other legal obligations of System, therefore, in form satisfactory to the lending agency;
 3. Pledge or assign and deliver, as security for money borrowed or credit obtained, stocks, bonds, bills receivable, accounts, mortgages, merchandise, bills of lading or other shipping documents, warehouse receipts, insurance policies, certificates and any other property held by, or belonging to, this corporation, with full authority to endorse, assign, transfer or guarantee the same in the name of this corporation, except as restricted by Vermont Statute;

4. Discount any bills receivable or any paper held by this corporation, with full authority to endorse the same in the name of this corporation;
5. Withdraw from banks or authorized brokers/dealers and give receipt for, or authorize banks or authorized brokers/dealers to deliver to bearer or to one or more designated persons, all or any documents and securities or other property held by it, whether held as collateral security or for safekeeping or for any other purpose;
6. Invest funds of System in legal investments as established by Board of Trustees policy;
7. Sell or authorize and request banks, or authorized brokers/dealers to purchase or sell, for the account of this corporation, foreign exchange, stocks, bonds, and other securities;
8. Apply for and receive letters of credit, and execute and deliver all necessary or proper documents for that purpose;
9. Execute and deliver all instruments and documents required in connection with any of the foregoing matters, and to affix the seal of this corporation; and, be it further

RESOLVED,

That the President and/or Chief Business Officer, howsoever named (e.g. Vice President of Business Operations, Dean of Administration of each Institution of the System are authorized to do the following:

1. Administer bank or accounts (safekeeping, trust, checking, savings, money market, time or demand deposit) through which to transact the banking business of the Institution in which they are officers.

Approved: _____

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

POLICY 408 GRANTS AND EXTERNAL FUNDING

From time-to-time Vermont State Colleges policies must be updated to comport with state and federal regulations. One such area that requires regular updates is the policy related to Grants and External Funding. Recent changes to federal regulations require updates to this important policy.

The redlined policy includes the following changes:

Section III.C.7 on Supplanting

- We do not currently have anything in our written grant policies about supplanting, which would be if grant funding is used to pay for something that was previously institutionally funded.
- It is a question that state agencies ask when we fill out grant risk assessment questionnaires, and we've always had to say that we didn't have a policy on supplanting, hence the addition of this section.

Section III.K. on Externally Funding Equipment

- The revised Uniform Guidance, which went into effect in October 2024, raised the equipment threshold to \$10,000, so the policy reflects this change. (2CFR 200.439)

Section III.N on Use of External Funds for Additional Compensation

- We do not currently have anything in our written grant policies that clarifies when employees can receive grant pay outside their normal contracted workload.
- To make sure that this is handled consistently and in compliance with Uniform Guidance 2CFR 200.430, the policy now clearly spells out the three types of additional compensation and the conditions for when additional grant pay is allowable.
- Extra service pay – this would be for additional assignments (ie, overload or stipend) beyond the typical workload for both faculty and staff. It must be allowed by the sponsor, the rate of pay must be based on the employee's annual contracted salary, and the work must be demonstrated to be beyond a person's contract.
- Summer pay – this is applicable to faculty only; pay must be based on the employee's annual contracted salary.
- Incidental activities – this is for infrequent, short-term, and irregular activities, such as faculty being given a stipend to attend a grant-funded workshop. In these cases, the

faculty could all receive the same amount, and it would not be based on their annual contracted salary rate.

Section III.O on Sabbatical Leave

- We do not currently have anything in our written grant policies that stipulates how much faculty can receive in supplemental grant pay while on sabbatical.
- To align with Uniform Guidance 2CFR, the policy now clarifies that grant pay in combination with sabbatical pay can't exceed the faculty member's regular salary.



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POLICY ON GRANTS AND EXTERNAL FUNDING

PURPOSE

Consistent with the Board of Trustees' responsibility for oversight of all VSC finances, the purpose of this policy is to define and establish application, approval, acceptance, and monitoring processes for sponsored projects.

DEFINITION

A sponsored project is an activity with a specific scope of work that is funded externally by public or private sources. These include grants, sponsored contracts, and cooperative agreements.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Board of Trustees encourages the submission of proposals that are expected to be of benefit to the VSC and/or the member Institutions. All use of sponsored projects funding shall be in accordance with VSC policies, the terms of the award, and any applicable state or federal laws. Any activity or expense related to federal grants or contracts must comply with 2 CFR 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. This Policy is to be read consistent with federal and state law. If there is any conflict between this Policy and federal or state law, this Policy is to be interpreted consistent with federal or state law.

I. APPROVAL AND SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Any employee of a VSC Institution or the VSC Chancellor's Office may apply for grants provided that all provisions of the grant are in conformance with this and other VSC policies. Student organizations may apply for grants under the supervision of an advisor.

Prior to submission, all proposals for external funding, regardless of size, require approval of the President (or delegated authority) for member Institutions and of the Chancellor (or delegated authority) for system-wide requests. Each Institution's Office of Sponsored Programs, or

equivalent office, must also perform a budget and compliance review before any proposals can be submitted.

A proposal shall require review and approval by the Finance and Facilities Committee and the Board of Trustees if it:

1. Requests \$1,500,000 or more per fiscal year, or
2. Involves annual matching or cost sharing of \$375,000 or more.

Prior to submitting a proposal for external funding, applicants are required to disclose any potential conflicts of interest to their appropriate administrator, following the procedures outlined in VSC Policy 207: *Trustee and Executive Conflict of Interest* and VSC Policy 210: *Employee Conflict of Interest*. If the proposal involves federal funds, the administrator shall disclose this potential conflict of interest, in writing, to the awarding agency or, in the case of pass-through funds, to the entity that is providing the federal sub-award.

Proposals that involve research require additional approvals prior to submission. To comply with 42 CFR Part 50, Subpart F – Responsibility of Applicants for Promoting Objectivity in Research, applicants proposing to conduct research using federal funding are required to identify significant financial interests. (See VSC Policy 435: *Externally Funded Research*).

II. ACCEPTANCE OF EXTERNAL AWARDS

All agreements for externally funded awards shall be signed by an authorized organizational representative (AOR). Presidents or a delegated AOR shall sign on behalf of their institutions. The Chancellor or a delegated AOR shall sign agreements for awards to the Chancellor's Office. Authorizing officials bear responsibility for reviewing the terms and conditions of awards before they are accepted.

After the President, Chancellor, or delegated AOR has signed an agreement, it must be forwarded to the VSC [Shared Services](#) Finance Department along with any applicable forms. Work may not begin on an externally funded project until the VSC Finance Department has received the fully executed agreement and the accounts for the project have been set up.

Any proposals that involve research on human subjects must receive Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval before any expenses can be charged to the award. Each VSC institution maintains a process for reviewing and approving research requests that involve human subjects.

III. MONITORING, REPORTING, AND COMPLIANCE

To ensure that awarded funds are spent according to the requirements of the funding organization, the VSC maintains and follows documented procedures for the areas outlined below.

A. Internal Controls

In accordance with VSC Policy 431: *Internal Controls*, the VSC shall implement internal controls over all sponsored projects so as to provide reasonable assurance that the VSC is compliant with conditions and requirements of each award. The VSC shall follow an established system to evaluate and monitor its compliance with award requirements and will take prompt action when instances of noncompliance are identified in audit findings. The VSC shall take reasonable measures to safeguard personally identifiable information and other information designated as sensitive. (See VSC Policy 312: *Compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* and VSC Policy 627: *VSC Information Sensitivity*.)

B. Procurement Standards

The VSC shall follow VSC Policy 429's *Standards and Procedures: Contracting for Purchases or Leases of Goods, Services and Equipment* for procuring goods and services, in accordance with federal requirements. Additionally, the VSC shall avoid conflicts of interest for employees engaged in selecting, awarding, and administering contracts.

C. Financial Management for Federal Awards

The VSC shall expend and account for federal awards in compliance with federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the award. Financial management procedures shall ensure that the following requirements are met for monitoring federal funds, as outlined in 2 CFR 200.302(b):

1. Identification: The VSC financial management system will identify in its accounts all federal awards received and expended and the federal programs under which they were received. This includes the assistance listing title and number, the federal award identification number and year, name of the federal agency, and the name of the pass-through entity, if applicable.
2. Reporting: The financial management system will provide accurate, current, and complete disclosure of the financial results of each federal award.
3. Financial Records: The VSC shall maintain records that identify the source and application of funds for federally funded activities.

4. Accountability: The VSC shall provide effective control over, and accountability for, all federal funds, property, and other assets to ensure funds are used solely for authorized purposes. Accounting records shall be supported by documentation.
5. Budget Control: The VSC shall compare actual expenditures with budgeted amounts for each federal award.
6. Cash Management: The VSC shall follow a reimbursement method of payment for federal awards, unless specifically directed otherwise by the granting agency. Whenever advance payment procedures are required, the VSC shall minimize the time elapsing between the transfer of funds from the U.S. Treasury and disbursement. Cash advances shall be limited to the minimum amounts needed and be timed to be in accordance with the actual, immediate cash requirements of the VSC in carrying out the purpose of the approved program or project. The timing and amount of advance payments shall be as close as administratively feasible to the actual disbursements by the VSC for direct program costs and the proportionate share of any allowable indirect costs.

7. Prohibition of Supplanting: Supplanting occurs when new funds are used to replace existing funds that were previously allocated for a specific purpose. Unless explicitly approved by prior written approval from the funder, funds are strictly prohibited from being used for general expenses not associated with the details or goals of the awarded funds. Federal funds must be used for their intended purpose, as detailed in the award notification letter or as regulated by federal, state and local policy. Grant budgets will be assigned specific GL accounts to avoid co-mingling of funds.

7.8.Mandatory Disclosures: The VSC shall maintain procedures to identify and disclose in writing, in a timely manner, to the federal awarding agency or pass-through agency any violations of federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity.

D. Determining Direct and Indirect (F & A) Costs for Federal Awards

Direct costs are costs that can be identified specifically with a particular cost objective for a sponsored project or that can be directly assigned to such activities with a high degree of accuracy. Indirect costs (also referred to as Facilities & Administrative costs or F&A) are costs that are incurred for common objectives and can't clearly be identified with a particular project or activity. Examples include rent, utilities, administrative support, and accounting services. Direct and indirect costs shall be determined in compliance with federal regulations, the terms and conditions of the award, and each VSC institution's federally negotiated indirect rate. Costs incurred for the same purpose in like circumstances shall be treated consistently as either direct or indirect.

Recovered indirect funds will, in general, be assumed to compensate the institution for facilities and administrative support, though each VSC Institution may develop its own procedures for allocating these funds internally.

E. Allowability of Costs for Federal Awards:

To ensure that expenses charged to federal awards are allowable, the VSC shall follow the standards outlined in 2 CFR 200, Subpart E.

1. Factors Affecting Allowability: To be considered allowable, costs that involve federal funding must:
 - a) Be necessary and reasonable for the performance of the federal award. This means the purchase must meet an important program objective and that sound business practices are followed in expending the funds. A cost is reasonable if, in its nature and amount, it does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the cost.
 - b) Be allocable to the federal award. A cost is allocable to the federal award if the goods or services involved are chargeable to the federal award in accordance with the relative benefits received.
 - c) Conform to any limitations or exclusions set forth as cost principles in CFR Part 200, Subpart E or in the terms and conditions of the award.
 - d) Be consistent with policies and procedures that apply uniformly to both federally financed and other funded activities.
 - e) Be accorded consistent treatment. A cost may not be assigned to a federal award as a direct cost if any other cost incurred for the same purpose in like circumstances has been allocated as an indirect cost under another award.
 - f) Be determined in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.
 - g) Not be included as a match or cost-share for other federally financed programs, unless the specific federal program authorizes federal costs to be treated as such.
 - h) Be adequately documented.
2. Allowability of Selected Items of Cost: 2 CFR Sections 200.421 through 200.475 establish principles to be applied in determining allowability. These principles are in addition to the other general allowability standards and apply whether or not a particular item of cost is properly treated as a direct or indirect cost. Principal

investigators are required to be familiar with these selected items of cost. (See *Appendix A: Allowability of Selected Items of Cost* at the end of this policy.)

The reasonableness and allocability of certain items of cost may be difficult to determine in some cases. To avoid subsequent disallowance or dispute based on unreasonableness or non-allocability, the VSC may require principal investigators to seek written approval from the federal awarding agency in advance of the incurrence of special or unusual costs. Prior written approval should include the time frame, justification of the costs or change in scope of the agreement.

F. Time and Effort Documentation

Employees paid with external funds shall document the time they spend working on sponsored activities, as required by 2 CFR 200.430(i). All salaries and wages charged to an award must be calculated using the employee's Institutional Base Salary. As defined by 2 CFR 200.430(h)(2), Institutional Base Salary means the annual compensation paid by an institution of higher education for an individual's appointment, whether that individual's time is spent on research, instruction, administration, or other activities. The Institutional Base Salary may not be increased as a result of replacing Institutional funds with sponsored projects funds.

Charges for salaries and wages shall be based on records that accurately reflect the work performed. The VSC maintains a system of internal control which provides reasonable after-the-fact assurance that personnel charges to an award are accurate, allowable, and properly allocated. Record of this is incorporated into the official records of the VSC system.

G. Subrecipient Management and Monitoring

When a VSC Institution passes federal funds through to another institution or organization, the Institution shall comply with 2 CFR 200.330 and make a case-by-case determination whether a party receiving pass-through funds is a subrecipient or a contractor, and whether the agreement is a sub-award or a procurement contract. The VSC will retain records to support decisions made about subrecipients and contractors.

VSC Institutions shall perform risk assessments of subrecipients and monitor subrecipients to ensure their compliance with federal, state, and local laws and VSC Board of Trustees' policies and procedures. Subrecipient agreements shall clearly identify the funding as a sub-award and include information required by the funder.

H. Contract Provisions

Contracts issued by the VSC that involve external funding will contain applicable provisions as described in Appendix II to Part 200 – Contract Provisions for Non-Federal Entity Contracts Under Federal Awards.

I. Record Retention

Records relating to federal awards shall be maintained for three years from the final expenditure report's submission date or according to other retention requirement(s) placed by the external sponsor. (See VSC Policy 209: *Records Retention*.)

J. Externally Funded Research

In addition to following the requirements of this policy, individuals conducting research with external funds are required to comply with VSC Policy 435: *Externally Funded Research*.

K. Externally Funded Equipment

Federal regulations (2 CFR 200.331) define equipment as tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the recipient or subrecipient for financial statement purposes, or of \$510,000-or more. Equipment funded by grants or other sponsored projects must be used and managed according to the requirements of the funder. The primary person associated with the implementation of the grant, such as the principal investigator or grant manager, shall manage the equipment. All equipment purchases must follow the established procurement procedures of the VSC as outlined in Policy 429 and its accompanying procedures.

Any hardware or software purchases must follow the approval process outlined in the VSC Hardware and Software Acquisition and Review Policy. If grant funds will be used to purchase technological equipment that is beyond the scope of what is typically supported by institutional Information Technology (IT) departments, the grant manager is required to discuss the supportability of the equipment with the institution's director of IT before purchasing the equipment. (See *Chancellor's Procedures for Implementing Policy 408: Externally Funded Equipment*.)

L. Compensation for Participants Funded by Sponsored Projects

When compensating participants in a sponsored activity, the VSC will ensure the following: it is an allowable cost within the scope of the award; IRS regulations on taxable income are followed; and confidentiality of the participants is maintained. This process is outlined in the accompanying procedures. (See *Chancellor's Procedures for Implementing Policy 408: Participant Compensation*.)

M. Eligibility to Receive Federal Awards

VSC Institutions will maintain their eligibility to receive federal awards by annually updating their registration in the federal System for Award Management (SAM).

N. Use of External Funds for Additional Compensation

If allowed by the funder, external funds may be used to compensate employees outside of their normal, contracted workload. Employee workload is defined by each bargaining unit's agreement, or, if applicable, by the non-bargaining unit personnel handbook. The VSC does not make contributions to the employee's retirement plan for any compensation resulting from additional work beyond the employee's main contract.

1. Extra Service Pay: Full-time faculty and staff may be compensated for additional assignments that fall outside their job description and usual workload if all the following conditions are met:

- a) Extra service pay is allowed by the sponsor.
- b) The supplemental amount is commensurate with the employee's Institutional Base Salary rate of pay and the amount of additional work performed.
- c) The additional tasks are reasonable; are performed outside the employee's regularly contracted hours; are clearly beyond the employee's job description; and won't interfere with the employee's regular duties.
- d) The additional work is documented and approved via each institution's established procedures for overload or stipend pay.

2. Summer Pay: Full-time faculty can perform work on sponsored programs outside of their academic year contract. Compensation must be calculated using a faculty member's Institutional Base Salary rate and must not exceed three months of effort, inclusive of all external funding sources. Compensation for work performed by part-time faculty members cannot exceed the regularly paid rate for part-time assignments.

3. Incidental Activities: Supplemental compensation for infrequent, irregular activities beyond an employee's contract are allowable if the activities are specifically provided for in the award, or with prior written approval by the awarding agency. An incidental activity is work that is not part of the employee's regularly compensated activities and is considered too small to warrant effort tracking. Examples include honorariums, eligible professional development, course development, and intra-institution consulting.

O. Sabbatical Leave Costs

Full-time faculty with approved sabbatical pay can receive supplemental pay from a sponsored program. The combination of institutionally-funded sabbatical pay and sponsored program funding can't exceed the employee's regular salary. For example, faculty receiving 75% of their salary as sabbatical pay may have no more than 25% of their salary supplemented by a sponsored program during the term of their approved sabbatical.

The Chancellor shall adopt and from time to time update procedures for the administration of grants. Such procedures shall accompany this policy and shall include the specific forms to be used.

Signed by:

Appendix A: Allowability of Selected Items of Cost for Federal Grants

This chart lists selected items of cost contained in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E. Since many allowable costs have restrictions, VSC personnel responsible for charging expenses to federal grants should refer to the actual regulation for more guidance on whether a cost is allowable or not.

See <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/subpart-E> for full descriptions of these categories.

CFR Citation	Item of Cost	Allowability
421	Advertising and public relations	Allowable with restrictions.
422	Advisory councils	Unallowable unless authorized by statute or the federal awarding agency.
423	Alcoholic beverages	Unallowable.
424	Alumni activities	Unallowable.
425	Audit services	Allowable with restrictions.
426	Bad debts	Unallowable.
427	Bonding costs	Allowable with restrictions.
428	Collection of improper payments	Allowable.
429	Commencement and convocation costs	Unallowable. However, may be charged as indirect costs as provided for in Appendix III paragraph (B) (9).
430	Compensation-personal services	Allowable with restrictions. Special conditions apply.
431	Compensation-fringe benefits	Allowable with restrictions. Special conditions apply.
432	Conferences	Allowable with restrictions.
433	Contingency provisions	Allowable only if contingency provisions are included in award budgets.

434	Contributions and donations	Unallowable. However, value of goods and services donated to a VSC institution may be included as part of cost sharing/matching.
435	Defense and prosecution	Allowable with restrictions.
436	Depreciation	Allowable with restrictions.
437	Employee health and welfare	Allowable with restrictions.
438	Entertainment	Unallowable unless cost has programmatic purpose and is approved by the federal awarding agency.
439	Equipment & other capital expenditures	Allowable as a direct cost based on specific requirements. Prior with prior written approval for direct charge of general purpose equipment for items with a unit cost of over \$510,000 or more.
440	Exchange rates	Allowable with restrictions. Prior approval of federal awarding agency required if change results in need for additional funding.
441	Fines, penalties, damages & other settlements	Unallowable except when incurred as a result of compliance with specific provisions of the award and with prior written approval.
442	Fund raising & investment management costs	Unallowable except for the purpose of meeting federal program objectives. Prior approval must be obtained.
443	Gains and losses on disposition of depreciable assets	Allowable with restrictions.
444	General costs of government	Not specifically addressed for institutions of higher education.
445	Goods or services for personal use	Unallowable, except for housing allowances and personal living expenses with prior approval of federal awarding agency.
446	Idle facilities and idle capacity	Allowable with restrictions.
447	Insurance and indemnification	Allowable with restrictions.
448	Intellectual property	Allowable with restrictions.
449	Interest	Allowable with restrictions.
450	Lobbying	Unallowable unless specifically provided for in the award or prior approval obtained.
451	Losses on other awards or contracts	Unallowable.
452	Maintenance and repair costs	Allowable with restrictions.
453	Materials and supplies cost, including computing devices	Allowable with restrictions.
454	Memberships, subscriptions, & professional activity costs	Allowable with restrictions. Unallowable for lobbying organizations and country club memberships.
455	Organization costs	Unallowable except with prior approval from the federal awarding agency.
456	Participant support costs	Allowable with prior approval from the federal awarding agency.
457	Plant and security costs	Allowable; capital expenditures subject to 200.439.
458	Pre-award costs	Allowable with prior approval from the federal awarding agency.
459	Professional service costs	Allowable with restrictions.
460	Proposal costs	Allowable only as indirect costs.
461	Publication and printing costs	Allowable with restrictions.
462	Rearrangement and reconversion costs	Allowable as indirect costs. If charging as direct, it requires prior approval from the federal awarding agency. Budget justification must explain how facility modifications benefit the project.
463	Recruiting costs	Allowable with restrictions.
464	Relocation costs of employees	Allowable with restrictions.
465	Rental costs of real property and equipment	Allowable with restrictions.
466	Scholarships and student aid costs	Allowable with restrictions.
467	Selling and marketing costs	Unallowable unless prior approval is obtained from the federal awarding agency.
468	Specialized service facilities	Allowable with restrictions.
469	Student activity costs	Unallowable unless specifically provided for in the federal award.
470	Taxes (including Value Added Tax)	Allowable with restrictions.

471	Termination costs	Allowable with restrictions.
472	Training and education costs	Allowable for employee development.
473	Transportation costs	Allowable with restrictions.
474	Travel costs	Allowable with restrictions. Prior approval required for certain types of travel costs.
475	Trustees	Allowable with restrictions.

DRIVER SAFETY POLICY

Policy 419, known as the Driver Safety Policy, was last updated in 2010. The revisions provided here elucidate the purposes of the policy and explicitly state that all individuals driving on behalf of the Vermont State Colleges, irrespective of vehicle ownership, must adhere to the policy standards and procedures.

While the modifications to the policy primarily provide clarification, the procedures have been comprehensively overhauled to enhance clarity and conciseness, addressing any inconsistencies found in the previous procedures.

Management hereby requests the Finance and Facilities Committee to review and provide recommendations on the revised Policy 419 to the Board of Trustees. The updated procedures are included for reference and will be implemented following approval of the policy by the full board at its June meeting.



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PURPOSE

The VSC Driver Safety Policy is designed to manage risk and seeks to help prevent avoidable motor vehicle accidents. The policy and related procedures are designed to minimize potential harm to students, faculty, and staff of the Vermont State Colleges. Through such prevention, employee and student injuries can be avoided and costs can be reduced with a resulting increase in the wellbeing of the VSC.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Vermont State Colleges shall establish and update from time to time a driver safety program procedures that are is intended to ensure safety for all drivers and passengers of VSC vehicles by manage risk, minimize minimizing accidents and injuries; eliminateing the operation of unsafe vehicles; provideing training to all college Vermont State Colleges drivers; and defineing clear lines of responsibility for fleet safety.

All individuals driving on behalf of the Vermont State Colleges must comply with the criteria set forth in the Vermont State Colleges Driver Safety Procedures. This rule is in force for all vehicles including but not limited to In order for individuals to drive Vermont State Colleges owned or leased vehicles, or drive personally owned vehicles driven on on Vermont State Colleges business, rental vehicles, and any other vehicle. it is their responsibility to comply fully with the criteria set forth in the VSC Driver Safety Program.

The Chancellor shall adopt and from time to time update written procedures relating to this policy.

Signed by: Timothy J. Donovan
Elizabeth Mauch
Chancellor

TUITION INCREASE REQUESTS

Community College of Vermont and Vermont State University are proposing adjustments to their tuition and fee structures. CCV seeks a \$10 per credit increase, approximately 3.5%. This marks Community College's first rate adjustment in five years, essential for maintaining its high standard of academic support and services. Vermont State University proposes a 3.5% rise in tuition, fees, and room charges, alongside a 5% increase in board (meal) expenses. Sustained pressure on wages, benefits, and service costs related to meal provisions necessitates this adjustment.

The following pages outline each institution's request.

May 6, 2025

Elizabeth Mauch, Chancellor
Vermont State Colleges System
PO Box 7
Montpelier, VT 05601

CCV's primary sources of revenue are the state appropriation and tuition and fees. Other revenues from grants and gifts do not have a material impact on the budget.

CCV proudly serves 57% of the students in the VSC. In FY26, CCV is expected to receive 25% of the appropriation amount that is distributed to the institutions, or \$10.2m, which represents 31% of our revenue. On average, community colleges across New England report state appropriations comprising 44% of their operating revenue¹. Vermont's appropriation to its community college is the lowest level of state support for public two-year institutions in the region, thus putting increasing pressure on tuition as a major source of revenue for the college.

CCV has held its tuition flat for five years. This is no longer sustainable. Absorbing annual increases in compensation and benefits without a commensurate increase in the appropriation or tuition continues to place pressure on CCV's budget. As a key access point to the VSC system, we believe we should be taking all measures necessary to increase the affordability of Vermont's only community college. However, in the absence of increased state support to reduce the cost of tuition, the College is proposing a \$10/credit tuition increase.

State support for community college in Vermont has been historically very low compared to other states. As a result, we continue to navigate the challenge of finding the right balance of keeping our tuition as low as possible while still being able to deliver high quality educational experiences to students.

We look forward to the Board of Trustees approving this request as it is a critical piece of our revenue budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

Joyce Judy
President
Community College of Vermont

¹ IPEDS, State Appropriations as Percent of Core Revenues, Public, 2-Year Institutions in the New England Region, 2023.

IN-STATE UNDERGRADUATES								
	Tuition Type	/CRED	/SEM	AY 2024-25	/CRED	/SEM	AY 2025-26	Y/Y Variance \$ Y/Y Variance %
Standard Programs	General Tuition	280	3,360		290	3,480		3.57% 3.57%

OUT-OF-STATE UNDERGRADUATES								
	Tuition Type	/CRED	/SEM	AY 2024-25	/CRED	/SEM	AY 2025-26	Y/Y Variance \$ Y/Y Variance %
Standard Programs	General Tuition	560	6,720		580	6,960		3.57% 3.57%

NEBHE UNDERGRADUATES								
	Tuition Type	/CRED	/SEM	AY 2024-25	/CRED	/SEM	AY 2025-26	Y/Y Variance \$ Y/Y Variance %
Standard Programs	General Tuition	280	3,360		290	3,480		3.57%

INSTITUTION I/S RATES	TUITION	FEES	ROOM	BOARD	TOTAL	YEAR
<i>Community College of Vermont AS PROPOSED</i>	<i>3,480</i>	<i>100</i>	-	-	<i>3,580</i>	<i>FY26</i>
Columbia-Greene Community College	2,700	336			3,036	FY25
Clinton Community College	2,760	120			2,880	FY25
NASHUA Community Colleges	2,580	133			2,713	FY25



TO: Chancellor Mauch, Vermont State Colleges
FR: Sarah Truckle, VP Business Operations, Vermont State University
CC: David Bergh, President, Vermont State University;
Sharron Scott, CFO/COO, Vermont State Colleges
RE: Tuition and Fees Proposal for 2026-2027

Vermont State University (VTSU) requests the following increases related to tuition and fees for the upcoming academic year.

- 3.5% tuition increase
- 3.5% room rate increase
- 5% board increase
- \$50 increase for the international student fee

Vermont State University's proposal balances the need to recognize increased operational costs with student affordability and access, with consideration to the competitive marketplace.

The proposed annual rate increases—3.5% for tuition and room, and 5.0% for board—are conservative in light of national economic conditions, where inflation has remained persistently elevated across key sectors affecting university operations. These rates reflect the University's commitment to transparent, responsible budgeting that balances cost containment with the need to sustain high-quality academic and residential experiences.

Operating costs for higher education institutions continue to rise due to inflation in areas such as employee compensation, utilities, technology, facilities maintenance, and food services. These increases are outpacing revenue growth and require careful financial calibration to maintain institutional strength.

VTSU remains committed to access, quality, and affordability, these modest increases help ensure the University can maintain academic excellence, student services, and campus operations without compromising access or support for students. The increases are part of a broader effort to ensure financial sustainability, allowing the University to responsibly plan for future needs while preserving affordability over time.

VTSU has carefully considered its price point against peer institutions, with the proposed adjustments, the University's total cost of attendance remains competitive with peer institutions.

With respect to the increased international student fee, this increase is necessary to sustainably support critical services for incoming international students, including meals, transportation, and expanded orientation programming. Notably, this increase will support the costs associated with meals during orientation, enhanced orientation programming, and transportation support for international students getting to our VTSU campuses.

IN-STATE UNDERGRADUATES									
	Tuition Type	/CRED	/SEM	AY 2024-25	/CRED	/SEM	AY 2025-26	Y/Y Variance \$	Y/Y Variance %
Standard Programs	General Tuition	431	5,172	10,344	446	5,352	10,704	360	3.48%
Program Tuition									
Engineering & Tech	+Program Specific Tuition	177	2,124	4,248	183	2,196	4,392	144	3.39%
Nursing & Resp Therapy	+Program Specific Tuition	206	2,472	4,944	213	2,556	5,112	168	3.40%
Dental & Radiologic	+Program Specific Tuition	310	3,720	7,440	321	3,852	7,704	264	3.55%
Practical Nursing Certificate*	+Program Specific Tuition	206	2,472	4,944	213	2,556	5,112	168	3.40%
Paramedicine Certificate*	+Program Specific Tuition	310	3,720	7,440	321	3,852	7,704	264	3.55%
OUT-OF-STATE UNDERGRADUATES									
	Tuition Type	/CRED	/SEM	AY 2024-25	/CRED	/SEM	AY 2025-26	Y/Y Variance \$	Y/Y Variance %
Standard Programs	General Tuition	862		20,688	892	10,704	21,408	720	3.48%
Program Tuition									
Engineering & Tech	+Program Specific Tuition	221	2,652	5,304	229	2,748	5,496	192	3.62%
Nursing & Resp Therapy	+Program Specific Tuition	250	3,000	6,000	259	3,108	6,216	216	3.60%
Dental & Radiologic	+Program Specific Tuition	353	4,236	8,472	365	4,380	8,760	288	3.40%
Practical Nursing Certificate*	+Program Specific Tuition	250	3,000	6,000	259	3,108	6,216	216	3.60%
Paramedicine Certificate*	+Program Specific Tuition	353	4,236	8,472	365	4,380	8,760	288	3.40%
ONLINE-ONLY UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS									
	Tuition Type	/CRED	/SEM	AY 2024-25	/CRED	/SEM	AY 2025-26	Y/Y Variance \$	Y/Y Variance %
Online-Only Programs	General Tuition	375		9,000	388	4,656	9,312	312	3.47%
GRADUATE PROGRAMS									
	Tuition Type	AY 2024-25			AY 2025-26			Y/Y Variance \$	Y/Y Variance %
Standard Programs	In-State Tuition	661	661 Credit		684	684 Credit		23 Credit	3.48%
	Out-of-State Tuition*	850	850 Credit		880	880 Credit		30 Credit	3.53%
	MA Athletic Training MFA								
	MS School Pshychology								
	MA Education								
	MA Counseling								

GENERAL FEES				GENERAL FEES			
	Per Credit	Semester	AY 2024-25		AY 2025-26		Per Credit
Comprehensive Fee (Campus Based, F2F+)	67	804	1,608	Institutional Fee (F2F, F2F+)	1,656	Institutional Fee (F2F, F2F+)	2.99%
Institutional Fee (Online)	29			Institutional Fee (Online)		Institutional Fee (Online)	3.45%
International Student Fee		104	208	International Student Fee	300	International Student Fee	
Killington Trimester Fee			2,691	Killington Trimester Fee	2,785	Killington Trimester Fee	

OTHER FEES			AY 2024-25	GENERAL FEES		AY 2025-26	GENERAL FEES		Per Credit
Course Fees (per course)		varies	varies per course	Course Fees (per course)		varies per course	Course Fees (per course)		

ROOM PRICING	AY 2024-25	AY 2025-26	Y/Y Variance \$	Y/Y Variance %
Standard Rooms				
Double Room	8,104	8,388	284	3.50%
Single Room	10,228	10,586	358	3.50%
Triple Room	6,394	6,618	224	3.50%
Premium Rooms & Apartments				
Rita Bole	11,190	11,582	392	3.50%
Rutland Apts	10,910	11,292	382	3.50%
Johnson College Apartment Multi	7,080	7,328	248	3.50%
Johnson College Apartment Single	10,228	10,586	358	3.50%
Killington Single	8,490	8,788	298	3.51%
Killington Double	7,336	7,592	256	3.49%
BOARD PRICING	AY 2024-25	AY 2025-26	Y/Y Variance \$	Y/Y Variance %
Standard Dining				
Unlimited Meal Plan	5,244	5,506	262	5.00%
12 Meal Plan	5,052	5,304	252	4.99%
8 Meal Plan	4,854	5,096	242	4.99%
Killington Dining	4,740	4,978	238	5.02%

INSTITUTION I/S RATES	TUITION	FEES	ROOM	BOARD	TOTAL
<i>Vermont State University AS PROPOSED</i>	<i>10,704</i>	<i>1,656</i>	<i>8,388</i>	<i>5,506</i>	<i>26,254</i>
Keene State College	11,754	3,030	10,000	4,432	29,216
Plymouth State University	14,626	-	12,708	-	27,334
Framingham State University	11,920	-	10,600	4,710	27,230
Eastern Connecticut State University	6,998	6,930	9,120	6,866	29,914
SUNY Plattsburgh	7,070	1,965	17,300	-	26,335

FY26 THIRD PASS BUDGET

Overview and Context

As discussed at the February 10, 2025, Finance and Facilities meeting the FY26 budget target is to keep the deficit under \$5 million for all Vermont State Colleges entities. Since FY21, the VSC has made considerable progress in addressing its structural deficit. The transformative activities, including the merger of three colleges and universities into Vermont State University, the revamping of student services, restructuring of academic offerings, and modernization of operations, have been comprehensive and successful. Despite persistent demographic challenges in the Northeast, the small population of Vermont, and a highly competitive market, both Community College of Vermont and Vermont State University are maintaining their positions.

We continue to experience expense pressures in the form of wages, benefits, supplies, and services continue to exert substantial pressure on the system. Under the direction of Chancellor Mauch and in collaboration with our collective bargaining units, the VSC has undertaken an effort to adjust its compensation structure to competitive wages and sustainable benefits. This work will continue over the next several years as we review and align our compensation packages to meet current and future market demands. We will engage in continuous dialogue with our employees, collective bargaining units, and stakeholders to ensure that adjustments are fair and beneficial. Additionally, we plan to engage in an effort to modernize our benefit options to enhance job satisfaction and retention in light of today's workforce needs and benefit environment. Our strategic approach involves regular assessments and feedback loops to refine compensation practices, ensuring they remain dynamic and responsive to changes in the higher education sector.

We anticipate that these changes will enhance the attractiveness of the Vermont State Colleges as an employer and provide our colleagues with greater choice and opportunity. By continuously enhancing our compensation packages and introducing innovative benefits, we aim to foster a more satisfied and productive workforce. Our goal is to improve employee retention rates, reduced turnover costs, and increased institutional knowledge as experienced staff choose to stay longer at our institutions. Additionally, these improvements should make Vermont State Colleges more attractive to prospective high-caliber candidates seeking stable and rewarding career opportunities in higher education.

Furthermore, by implementing these changes thoughtfully, we can ensure that our financial stability remains intact while still making meaningful progress towards becoming a leading employer in the region

Revenue pressures, primarily resulting from demographic trends in Vermont and the Northeast, persist. The traditional college-age demographic (ages 18 to 24) is decreasing in Vermont and the Northeast, with enrollment patterns at Vermont State Colleges reflecting this trend. The average age of students at these institutions is now 27, indicating a shift from traditional student populations. Both the Community College of Vermont and Vermont State University have embraced this challenge by creating certificates and credentials that allow learners to engage in higher education flexibly. Providing in-person, synchronous online, and asynchronous online options is essential, as is developing programs that address the needs of Vermont and its residents.

Budget Process

The Vermont State Colleges provide three progressively detailed budgets from January to June each year. The first pass of the budget, provided to Finance & Facilities at its February 10 meeting, reflected a \$6.7 million budget deficit. The second pass of the budget presented April 14 to Finance & Facilities, reflected a \$4.7 million budget deficit. The third and final version of the budget is being presented at the Committee's May 12, 2025, meeting. Barring substantive changes in the base appropriation or bridge funding, the third pass budget will be the budget brought to the full board on June 16.

3rd Pass Budget

The budget target for FY26 is a deficit under \$5 million, this third pass of the budget reflects a \$4.9 million deficit, which is currently favorable to the system's target. Even though the bottom line has decremented by \$0.2 million since the second pass, all entities made substantial improvements to their budgets to mostly absorb \$1.5 million removed from VTSU's State Appropriation based on recent activities occurring within the Vermont State legislature.

	FY2025 Budget	FY2025 Forecast	FY2026 Budget 1.0	FY2026 Budget 2.0	FY2026 Budget 3.0
TOTAL REVENUES	167,227	180,063	174,224	175,021	176,194
TOTAL EXPENSES	177,578	175,449	180,628	179,754	181,127
	-	-	-	-	-
NET REVENUES/(DEFICIT)	(10,351)	4,613	(6,404)	(4,733)	(4,932)

No doubt the Committee is aware of the many significant changes implemented by the President and his team that may have an impact to higher education. As of the writing of this document, these changes have minimal impact on the Vermont State Colleges finances. However, changes are happening rapidly, and it is difficult to predict what impact further changes will have on our students and institutions. Therefore, the budgets proposed here do not take into consideration further federal changes such as the proposed changes related to the elimination of Trio Grants, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, or the elimination of the Graduate PLUS loan program. In the event changes happen that negatively affect the VSC, the Committee will be informed.

FY26 THIRD PASS REVENUE

Revenue improvements included modest adjustments to tuition and fees, conservative estimates for investment income, and modest improvements in sales and services.

The system is budgeting conservatively for Room and Board, reflecting VTSU's greater trend toward online and part-time students. As mentioned in the opening of this section, today's students are typically older with obligations that extend beyond college attendance. This has limited the number of students considering part-year residential living as these students require year-round housing. As such, the University is reflecting downward pressure on Room and Board.

	FY2025 Budget	FY2025 Forecast	FY2026 Budget 1.0	FY2026 Budget 2.0	FY2026 Budget 3.0
EVENUES					
Tuition and Fees	90,971	89,251	93,128	93,542	95,423
State Appropriation	51,232	62,730	55,745	55,756	54,256
Room and Board	19,011	17,882	18,889	18,379	18,813
Sales and Services	4,238	5,726	4,589	5,125	5,479
Gifts	1,177	774	1,262	1,140	1,140
Other Revenue	598	3,699	611	1,079	1,084
OTAL REVENUES	167,227	180,063	174,224	175,021	176,194

Third, pass revenue is forecasted at \$176 million or approximately 5.4% higher than the current fiscal budget and approximately \$3.9 million less than the current year forecast.

Vermont State University expects an 8% increase in student revenue due to high enrollment forecasts and a proposed 3.5% tuition increase. This rise is largely due to improved enrollment following the institution's merger. CCV anticipates

flat tuition and fee revenue for FY25, with a \$10 per credit hour increase. Both institutions will present their tuition requests at the May 12 Finance & Facilities Committee meeting.

Investment income, a category not normally budgeted, has been budgeted at extremely conservative levels based on the ladder investment strategy the system is using to capitalize on the bond market for the next few years.

FY26 SECOND PASS EXPENSES

System-wide expenses are budgeted at approximately \$2.2 million higher than the current year budget and \$5.3 million higher than the second quarter forecast.

	FY2025 Budget	FY2025 Forecast	FY2026 Budget 1.0	FY2026 Budget 2.0	FY2026 Budget 3.0
EXPENSES					
Salaries and Benefits	103,363	101,636	106,889	106,257	105,964
Retiree Medical Expenses	7,250	6,490	7,250	6,825	6,825
Services, Supplies, Travel	40,477	41,700	40,338	40,645	42,108
Scholarships	9,501	8,815	9,895	9,436	9,436
Utilities	8,056	7,366	8,190	7,754	7,748
Other Expenses	3,608	3,608	3,387	3,387	3,387
Debt Service	8,446	8,445	7,777	7,777	7,727
Shared Services	-	(8)	-	0	0
Other Transfers	(5,083)	(4,562)	(5,120)	(4,350)	(4,091)
Strategic Initiatives (3%)	980	980	1,011	1,011	1,011
Economic Stabilization (2%)	980	980	1,011	1,011	1,011
TOTAL EXPENSES	177,578	175,449	180,628	179,754	181,127

Since the first pass budget, the VSC has made downward adjustments in several categories. The most significant changes were in the categories of Salaries, Benefits and Retiree Medical Expenses. Reflecting the Chancellor's drive for competitive salaries and sustainable benefits, this budget reflects adjustments related to a switchover to 80/20 insurance for all non-represented staff (staff not part of a bargaining unit) as well as adjustments to personnel lines at VTSU, CCV, and Shared Services.

Additionally, VTSU is predicting scholarships lower than the first pass budget, reflecting the graduation of individuals with aid packages related to the former tuition model.

FY26 Third Pass Budget

	Vermont State Colleges System			Community College of Vermont			Vermont State University			Shared Services			Chancellor's Office		
	FY2025 Budget	FY2025 Forecast	FY2026 Budget 3.0	FY2025 Budget	FY2025 Forecast	FY2026 Budget 3.0	FY2025 Budget	FY2025 Forecast	FY2026 Budget 3.0	FY2025 Budget	FY2025 Forecast	FY2026 Budget 3.0	FY2025 Budget	FY2025 Forecast	FY2026 Budget 3.0
REVENUES															
Tuition and Fees	90,971	89,251	95,423	21,899	21,899	22,187	69,072	67,351	73,236	-	-	-	-	1	-
State Appropriation	51,232	62,730	54,256	9,769	9,769	10,191	31,104	31,104	33,921	7,250	7,251	6,825	3,109	14,607	3,319
Room and Board	19,011	17,882	18,813	-	-	-	19,011	17,882	18,813	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sales and Services	4,238	5,726	5,479	1	1	3	4,237	5,725	5,476	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gifts	1,177	774	1,140	80	80	80	1,097	694	1,060	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Revenue	598	3,699	1,084	199	700	430	399	716	654	-	-	-	-	2,283	-
TOTAL REVENUES	167,227	180,063	176,194	31,948	32,449	32,890	124,920	123,472	133,160	7,250	7,251	6,825	3,109	16,891	3,319
EXPENSES															
Salaries and Benefits	103,363	101,636	105,964	22,282	22,282	22,863	73,492	71,765	75,252	6,796	6,796	6,932	793	793	917
Retiree Medical Expenses	7,250	6,490	6,825	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,250	6,490	6,825	-	-	-
Services, Supplies, Travel	40,477	41,700	42,108	5,085	5,085	5,000	27,709	27,139	29,182	7,328	7,328	7,548	355	2,148	378
Scholarships	9,501	8,815	9,436	130	130	192	9,371	8,685	9,244	-	-	-	-	-	-
Utilities	8,056	7,366	7,748	321	323	364	7,723	7,032	7,372	10	10	10	2	1	2
Other Expenses	3,608	3,608	3,387	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,608	3,608	3,387
Debt Service	8,446	8,445	7,727	1,694	1,694	1,663	6,752	6,752	6,064	-	-	-	-	-	-
Shared Services	-	(8)	0	4,192	4,192	4,297	9,942	9,942	10,193	(14,134)	(14,141)	(14,490)	-	-	-
Other Transfers	(5,083)	(4,562)	(4,091)	(1,406)	(1,556)	(1,489)	(69)	903	785	-	-	-	(3,608)	(3,909)	(3,387)
Strategic Initiatives (3%)	980	980	1,011	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	980	980	1,011
Economic Stabilization (2%)	980	980	1,011	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	980	980	1,011
TOTAL EXPENSES	177,578	175,449	181,127	32,298	32,149	32,890	134,920	132,217	138,092	7,250	6,483	6,825	3,110	4,601	3,319
NET REVENUES/(DEFICIT)	(10,351)	4,613	(4,932)	(350)	300	0	(10,000)	(8,744)	(4,932)	-	768	-	(1)	12,290	(0)

COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF VERMONT

How does this budget support the VSCS' strategic priorities?

Our budget is responsive to the five pillars listed in the CCV Strategic Plan and to the VSC's strategic priorities of universal access and lifelong learning for every Vermonter, and workforce alignment and economic development. CCV is continuously working towards keeping tuition affordable while meeting ever increasing expenses. CCV is committed to creating opportunities that include philanthropic partners, and securing grants that support our strategic plan initiatives. We are focused on keeping our offerings current and responsive to the changing demands in the workplace by strengthening existing and developing new programs, certificates, and credentials.

INVESTMENTS & COST CONTAINMENT

- What initiatives is your institution investing in during FY26?

FY26 will see continued growth in our efforts to serve underserved populations that struggle to access higher education. CDS (Congressionally Directed Spending) funding allowed us to launch the Corrections Post-Secondary Education Initiative (CPSEI), which provides free college courses for Department of Corrections staff and Vermonters who are incarcerated. CCV has received approval to use Pell grants to support these courses, which is a significant step forward for the overall sustainability of the program.

CCV is also focusing our efforts on improving programming for multilingual learners. Vermont faces a significant demographic challenge with a rapidly aging workforce and a shrinking pool of young talent. Immigrant and refugee learners represent an untapped resource that can help mitigate this shortage by filling essential roles across various sectors. Thanks to philanthropic funding and a grant from the Chancellor's Innovation Fund, CCV is investing in programs tailored to ensure their unique needs are met through curriculum design, assessment, and community building.

CCV has established a Coordinator of Multilingual Teaching and Learning position, which will work with curriculum committees and others to develop and implement curriculum and enhance programmatic support within the College for multilingual learners. The individual in this position will also collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to ensure that multilingual learners have access to the breadth of CCV's education and workforce opportunities. CCV has also established a Multilingual Learner Working Group with cross-functional, cross-college representation to ensure this position has support from and impact on all aspects of the work we do.

FY26 will also see the continuation of a grant-funded initiative that was launched last year. The Career Pathways Entry Program (CPEP) is a training and employment program designed to support both career seekers and our business community by creating accessible on-ramps to high growth industries including healthcare, human services, and manufacturing. It starts with a 6-week, no-cost exploration of these career paths, combining college credit, industry-recognized credentials, and hands-on job shadowing. Participants work directly with a career coach who provides continuous support including resume development, interviewing skills, and employer referrals. After completing the pre-employment component, participants identify their long-term career goals and target employer, at which they are hired into entry-level positions and continue learning on the job through registered apprenticeship or earn-and-learn agreements that stack into degrees which align with their long-term career goals.

Finally, thanks to generous philanthropic support the College will be continuing the Early Childhood Education Portfolio scholarship. This scholarship covers the full cost of tuition and fees for a portfolio course and is

intended for early childhood educators with at least one year of experience in the field who are pursuing the CCV associate of arts in Early Childhood Education. Upon successful completion of the portfolio course, scholarship recipients are eligible for additional scholarship funding for three academic years, or 6 semesters. Of the 45 students who started cohorts (not counting two for the current semester), 35 have completed a credit award, receiving 670 credits. That translates to \$187,600 of tuition savings for those students just from their prior learning portfolio.

- What initiatives is your institution *considering* for cost containment in during FY25?

CCV continuously calibrates its staffing and facility footprint to respond to changes in student enrollment. CCV's course cancellation policy uses a transparent process for adding and cancelling course sections before a semester starts. This carefully managed process allows the college to maintain a class-size average consistent with our budget projections. Decisions to run or cancel classes are based on several factors, including enrollment in the course section, core course and program requirements for students, alternatives available to students, and the college's overall enrollment. This process allows CCV to manage costs as enrollment fluctuates.

CCV has 12 strategically located centers throughout the state. The College owns 3 centers and rents 9 other locations. In recent years, CCV has shifted from long-term to shorter leases to evaluate and adjust our physical footprint across all 12 centers more regularly. As stewards of student tuition dollars, we need to ensure we are spending those dollars in support of students and not unused buildings. Between 2019 and 2024, CCV reduced its physical footprint by 23,000 square feet by adjusting our leases in Morrisville, St. Johnsbury, Bennington and Middlebury.

No significant footprint changes are anticipated for FY26 due to the timing of our leases. CCV has rented space in the Winooski Center to Vermont Adult Learning, a partnership that has generated modest revenue for the College and provided opportunities for deeper collaboration between the two organizations in how to better serve multilingual learners. We also welcomed Vermont Public as a tenant in our Upper Valley Center this year. We are continuing to explore opportunities to share space with organizations that are aligned with the College's mission.

CCV will continue to engage with the Chancellor's Office and Shared Services to achieve efficiencies in a variety of cost centers while also maintaining CCV's ability to be nimble and responsive to evolving educational needs and enrollment fluctuations.

REVENUE FORECAST

CCV's primary sources of revenue are the state appropriation and tuition and fees. Other revenues from grants and gifts do not have a material impact on the budget.

CCV proudly serves 57% of the students in the VSC. In FY26, CCV is expected to receive 25% of the appropriation amount that is distributed to the institutions, or \$10.2m, which represents 31% of our revenue. On average, community colleges across New England report state appropriations comprising 44% of their operating revenue¹. Vermont's appropriation to its community college is the lowest level of state support for public two-year institutions in the region, thus putting increasing pressure on tuition as a major source of revenue for the college.

¹ IPEDS, State Appropriations as Percent of Core Revenues, Public, 2-Year Institutions in the New England Region, 2023.

CCV has held its tuition flat for five years. This is no longer sustainable. Absorbing annual increases in compensation and benefits without a commensurate increase in the appropriation or tuition continues to place pressure on CCV's budget. As a key access point to the VSC system, we believe we should be taking all measures necessary to increase the affordability of Vermont's only community college. However, in the absence of increased state support to reduce the cost of tuition, the College is proposing a \$10/credit tuition increase.

With Vermont's changing demographic projections as well as a 22% decline in enrollment in K-12 in the last ten years, CCV continues to be mindful of these trends as we developed our enrollment projections for the FY 2026 budget. Given Vermont's current population trends, CCV's FY26 budget reflects a 5% decline in enrollment over four years of actuals and one year of budget.

- Pressures / Challenges related to achieving these targets:

Last year we reported a growing trend of unpaid student tuition bills at CCV. This is a trend seen across the country and coincides with the cessation of COVID funds that provided tuition assistance and debt forgiveness. To respond to this concerning trend, CCV implemented a comprehensive, college-wide response during the current academic year by modifying our add/drop policy, instituting procedures to administratively withdraw students who do not attend courses and providing direction and guidance to advisors and financial aid counselors to help students establish payment plans.

The results of our efforts so far are positive. In the Fall 2024 semester, we saw a 54% decrease in the amount of unpaid bills from the previous fall semester, and a 78% decrease between FA24 and FA22. While tuition revenue declined by 11% as the College initiated these procedures, the actual net revenue (tuition & fees less unpaid bills at end of term) collected by CCV was down less than 1 percent between FA24 and FA22. This illustrates the importance of not only registering students in courses, but in implementing strategies to support students in paying their bills or withdrawing from courses they do not plan to attend.

The percentage of students enrolled in payment plans increased from 4% of unpaid bills enrolled in payment plans in FA22 to 22% enrolled in payment plans in FA24. We will be continuing to monitor the implementation of these strategies over the coming fiscal year to see whether the trend continues in the right direction. It is unclear what impact a tuition increase will have on the effectiveness of these strategies moving forward.

- Opportunities

CCV is committed to creating opportunities that include philanthropic partners, and securing grants that support our strategic plan initiatives. We are focused on keeping our offerings responsive to the changing demands in the workplace by strengthening existing and developing new programs, certificates, and credentials.

EXPENSE FORECAST

- Descriptions of the key expense drivers including:

Faculty and staff represent approximately 70% of CCV's annual expenses. CCV does not have a significant number of vacancies at the time of budget preparation, so the budget reflects actual staffing levels. CCV is a very lean organization. During the current fiscal year, the College's student-to-full time staff ratio is 58:1². Like all employers, CCV is under pressure to offer a competitive wage and benefit package in order to attract and retain highly qualified personnel.

² VSC Fact Sheet 2024

This budget reflects a VSCS decision to recalibrate total compensation (wages and benefits) for benefits-eligible staff. In anticipation of transitioning from the current sliding scale premium contribution to a standard 80/20 share of medical and dental insurance premiums, many staff received an increase in their take-home pay. These pay adjustments took effect in FY25 and increased the base salaries that will see an across-the-board cost-of-living raise of 4% in the FY26 budget.

Despite these adjustments to employee premium contributions, health care costs are still escalating, which adds pressure to the budget. Inflationary pressures have added to the cost of services, supplies and travel as well.

FY2027 – FY2029 OUTLOOK

CCV expects the trend of declining enrollment impacting educational institutions statewide to continue to persist. As discussed in the cost containment section, CCV has several tools at its disposal to adapt to declines in enrollment (course cancellation policy, expandable/contractable enrollment/budget model, e.g.), but if the distribution of the state appropriation remains at current levels, these tools alone will not be sufficient to respond to continued declines in enrollment.

We are hopeful that Shared Services will result in more efficiencies and lower costs for CCV, while delivering high quality services to the institutions. We anticipate the need to absorb increases in staff compensation to remain competitive in the marketplace, we expect more challenging budget years for the FY27-29 period.

State support for community colleges in Vermont has been historically very low compared to other states. As a result, we continue to navigate the challenge of finding the right balance of keeping our tuition as low as possible while still being able to deliver high quality educational experiences to students.

VERMONT STATE UNIVERSITY

FY2026 OUTLOOK

The University's budget proposal requests authority to draw a \$4.9M deficit during FY2026. This deficit will be funded through current year and prior year state-provided bridge funding, and follows VTSU's multi-year plan to financial sustainability, which began with the FY2023 budgetary deficit of \$22.7M and most recently included a \$10.0M budgetary deficit in FY2025. If implemented, the plan aims for a balanced budget (deficit target of \$0) by FY2027.

The two largest variables in this budget—as in any VTSU (Vermont State University) budget—are Net Student Revenue and Salary and Wages, which comprise 67% of our unrestricted revenue and 58% of our unrestricted expense, respectively. In FY2026, as in past years, tuition rate increases have failed to keep up with anticipated wage and health care increases, representing the single most consistent challenge to achieving long-term balance & sustainability. In other words, under the pressure of out-of-sync inflationary factors, significant budgetary action is required each year to avoid losing ground. Nonetheless, great strides have been made in this area towards the goal of sustainability, with FY2026 aggregate salary increases capped at 4%. This represents a significant step towards balance.

ALIGNMENT TO BOARD STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

How does this budget support the Board of Trustees' strategic priorities of affordability, accessibility, quality, relevance?

The FY2026 budget proposal is based on a modest 3.5% tuition rate increase, as requested by the University. Despite rising costs and inflationary rates that outpace tuition rate growth, VTSU has tried to prioritize student affordability, favoring cost containment to close budgetary gaps over passing cost along to students.

REVENUE

VTSU's budget proposal projects an 8% increase in net student revenue based on a significant rebound in new student enrollment, following post pandemic and transformation lows, along with the resumption of a 3rd party contract of a significant magnitude.

Incoming Class & Retention. With early funnel reports indicating strong enrollment signals, we have modeled our AY25-26 enrollment with the assumption of a 12% increase in Standard Undergraduate incoming class, and a 25% increase in VTSU Online incoming class. Incoming classes at other price points are projected to remain consistent with the prior years' experience, and retention has been modeled according to recent year average experience. Combining these factors, we anticipate an aggregate expected enrollment increase of 2.994% for the coming year. With the 3.5% tuition rate the University has requested, we anticipate a 6.6% increase in net student revenue. We plan to monitor the admissions funnel closely throughout the rest of the recruitment cycle,

recalculating our enrollment projections bi-weekly between now and fall add-drop period, and reacting to new information accordingly.

Kingdom County Productions. The VTSU budget includes \$1.7M in revenue (this will be entirely balanced by an equivalent expense on the “Supplies & Services” line) through our partnership with Kingdom County Production. This contract was last active during FY2024.

Other Revenue. Base appropriation is budgeted at \$33.5M as calculated according to the VSCS Allocation Formula. This represents a significant (9.2%) funding increase over prior year.

EXPENSE

Salary, Wage, & Benefits. Salary, wages, and benefits represent 58% of VTSU’s annual unrestricted expense. Workforce levels are set position-by-position based on anticipated FY2026 staffing needs. The University enters FY2026 with a considerable number of positions under recruitment and anticipates a modest amount of turnover in the coming year.

Non-personnel expenses. At the aggregate level, operational budgets—supplies, services, travel—have been level-funded to FY2025 amounts. Within that framework, the finance team has worked with budget managers to review all individual expenditure lines, looking for efficiencies where possible, and moving funds between lines according to need. VTSU’s budget proposal includes the result: an aggregation of thousands of individual lines of budgetary detail, each scrutinized, reviewed, discussed, and reconsidered by the Finance team and our dozens of budget managers over the past two months. Utility expense budgets assume a 5% rate of inflation with consumption levels consistent with FY2025.

SHARED SERVICES

The FY2026 budget is the third Shared Services budget for the Vermont State Colleges. Created in accordance with the recommendations of the Select Committee on the Future of Public Higher Education in Vermont and many strategic conversations with the Board of Trustees, the Shared Services model is intended to provide high-quality, cost-effective services that meet the needs of the institutions of the Vermont State Colleges. Shared Services oversee legal and regulatory compliance, finance, information technology services and security of the system, and offer equitable services across the institutions and locations.

REVENUE FORECAST

The Shared Services budget is not a revenue generating division. However, because it manages retiree healthcare costs, the corresponding state appropriation is assigned to this unit. For FY2026, the estimated cost of retiree healthcare is \$6.8M.

EXPENSE FORECAST

The Shared Services budget holds the expense for all retiree healthcare. The remainder of the budget is comprised of Finance, Legal, and Information Technology. The total budget for Shared Services is \$14.5M, approximately \$0.3M higher than in FY2025.

The largest overall category of spending is wages and benefits, followed by supplies and services, then equipment, and consulting. It is no surprise that wages and benefits are the largest component of spending in Shared Services as higher education is a people-intensive business. The chief driver of the wages and benefits category is the number of full-time, benefits eligible, staff within each unit. Information Technology is the largest unit within Shared Services and therefore has the highest overall cost.

FY2027 – FY2028 OUTLOOK

The Shared Services budget, exclusive of retiree healthcare, is budgeted at \$14.5M or 8.0% of the total budgeted unrestricted expenses for the Vermont State Colleges. As noted earlier, the Shared Services Division will continue to seek creative means to contain costs while maintaining high quality services. These ideas will be presented to the Institutions for their consideration, and implemented where practicable and feasible.

CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE BUDGET NARRATIVE

For the third year, the FY2026 budget for the Chancellor's Office is comprised solely of Corporate Functions, debt service support, and line items for strategic initiatives and economic stabilization. The purpose of the Chancellor's Office is to lead corporate functions of the Vermont State Colleges. These include the chief executive of the corporation, external affairs, board support, and academic affairs. The Chancellor's Office charges are expensed directly against the State Appropriation before allocation.

REVENUE FORECAST

As with Shared Services, the Chancellor's Office is not a revenue generating organization. However, as the Chief Executive for the System, this budget holds the funded reserves for strategic initiatives and economic stabilization. Therefore, an amount of \$2.022M is allocated from the state appropriation to cover these charges. In addition, \$1.297M is set aside from the state appropriation to cover the charges related to corporate functions.

EXPENSE FORECAST

The Chancellor's Office budget is comprised of four key service areas: Board Support, Chancellor, External Affairs, and Facilities.

The Board Support category includes all support for the Board of Trustees including administrative and logistical support, travel, membership in the Association of Governing Boards and related activities. The Chancellor's budget includes the Chancellor and administrative support, as well as academic affairs, the funding for subscriptions and memberships that serve the Vermont State Colleges, and a small amount of funding for consulting and ad hoc projects. External Affairs includes the government affairs and external relations staff along with the travel and consulting necessary to support their work. The facilities budget includes the annual lease for 575 Stone Cutter's Way and associated utilities.

FY2027 – FY2028 OUTLOOK

A well-functioning executive branch of the Vermont State Colleges is vital to its success. However, the Chancellor recognizes the need for the office to be as cost-effective and as efficient as possible and continues to explore ways to trim staffing where practicable and effective without jeopardizing the work of the system.

VERMONT STATE COLLEGES SYSTEM

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

RESOLUTION 2025-004

FY2025 VERMONT STATE COLLEGES SYSTEM ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET

- WHEREAS, The Finance and Facilities Committee of the Board of Trustees has reviewed the FY2026 budget information presented for the Vermont State Colleges System; and,
- WHEREAS, The Committee has discussed individual aspects of the proposals with the Chancellor, Chief Financial Officer, and Presidents of the individual institutions; and,
- WHEREAS, The Finance and Facility Committee endorses approval of the Chancellor's recommendation by the full board; therefore be it
- RESOLVED, That the Board of Trustees of the Vermont State Colleges System hereby approves the System Annual Operating Budget of \$181.127 million, including the projected operating deficit of \$4.932 million, consistent with the attached materials.

Approved:

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

ITEM 4: Minutes of April 14, 2025

**Minutes of the VSC Board of Trustees' meeting held Monday, April 14, 2025 at 2:15 p.m.
at Community College of Vermont, Montpelier - Room 113 and via Zoom UNAPPROVED**

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

The VSC Board of Trustees met on Monday, April 14, 2025 at Community College of Vermont, Montpelier and via Zoom.

Committee Members present: Lynn Dickinson (Chair), Megan Cluver (Vice Chair), Gwen Bailey-Rowe, Coleen Condon (position approved at 2:46) David Durfee, Shirley Jefferson, Jim Masland, Marc Mihaly, Jason Musal, David Silverman, Sue Zeller

Absent: Betsy Ide Bloomer, Janette Bombardier, Bob Flint

Chancellor: Elizabeth Mauch

Presidents: David Bergh, VTSU President
Joyce Judy, CCV President

Other Attendees: Nolan Atkins, VTSU Provost
Kelley Beckwith, VTSU VP of Student Success
Kayla Dewey, Executive Assistant
Jason Kaiser, Learning Spaces Technology Specialist
Nicole Mace, CCV Dean of Administration
Maurice Ouimet, VP for Admissions and Enrollment Services
Hannah Reid, Associate Vice President
Sharron Scott, Chief Financial and Operating Officer
Toby Stewart, Controller
Patty Turley, General Counsel
Heather Weinstein, CCV Dean of Strat. Initiatives & Stndnt Affairs
Yasmine Ziesler, Special Assistant to the Chancellor

1. Call to Order

Chair Dickinson called the meeting to order at 2:27 p.m. and welcomed new trustee Gwen Bailey-Rowe.

Chair Dickinson announced that they would not be taking up discussion on an agenda item: Relinquishment of WJSC Radio Station FCC License

2. Comments from the Public

There was no public comment.

3. Approval of Minutes of October 28, 2024; December 16, 2024; and January 13, 2025

At 2:31 p.m. Trustee Cluver moved and Trustee Jefferson seconded the motion to approve the minutes of October 28, 2024; December 16, 2024; and January 13, 2025. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. Vote on Resolution 2025-004 Honoring the Service of Trustee Jason Musal; 2025-003 Honoring the Service of Trustee Shawn Tester; and 2025-002 Honoring the Service of Trustee Karen Handy Luneau

Chair Dickinson read resolutions to honor the services of former trustees Shawn Tester and Karen Luneau, whose terms recently ended, and of Jason Musal, whose term as a student trustee will end after he graduates this spring. She thanked each of them for their dedication to Vermont State Colleges.

At 2:44 p.m. Trustee Silverman moved and Trustee Zeller seconded the motion to approve Board Resolutions 2025-004 Honoring the Service of Jason Musal; 2025-003 Honoring the Service of Shawn Tester; and 2025-002 Honoring the Service of Karen Handy Luneau. The motion was approved unanimously.

5. Report from the Nominating Committee

Chair Dickinson provided an update from the April 14, 2025 committee meeting and described the recommended action items from the committee.

At 2:46 p.m. Trustee Zeller moved and Trustee Durfee seconded the motion to reappoint Trustee Janette Bombardier for a new term as board-elected trustee ending March 1, 2029 and Coleen Condon as board-elected trustee for a term ending March 1, 2029. The motion was approved unanimously.

At 2:48 p.m. Trustee Masland moved and Trustee Jefferson seconded the motion to elect Trustee Mihaly to serve as the VSC Board Secretary. The motion was approved unanimously.

Chair Dickinson welcomed the new trustees and the new officer. Trustee Bailey-Howe who was appointed by the Governor for a term ending March 1, 2029 introduced herself. Trustee Condon also introduced herself.

6. Appoint Nominating Committee members

At 2:49 p.m. Trustee Zeller moved and Trustee Durfee seconded the motion to appoint Trustee Bombardier, Trustee Dickinson, and Trustee Mihaly to the Nominating Committee. The motion was approved unanimously.

7. Report from Finance & Facilities Committee

Chair Dickinson turned the meeting over the Trustee Silverman to provide an update from the recent committee meetings.

The Finance & Facilities Committee held two meetings since the last board meeting in January. During the February 10, 2025 meeting they reviewed and voted to recommend to the full board endowment requests for Vermont State University, received an update on second quarter financial results, reviewed the first pass of the budget, and discussed the VSC's composite financial index.

At their April 14 meeting they reviewed and voted to recommend to the full board a grant request for CCV, a carry forward request for VTSU, and a management recommendation to maintain the status quo on Policies 403-A and 403-B. Additionally, they received updates on the second pass of the budget and the Workday project.

At 2:51 p.m. Trustee Silverman moved and Trustee Cluver seconded the motion to approve the recommended modification to The Richardson Endowment, and approval of the Brown Scholarship, the Lyndon Promise Scholarship, the Lyndon Faculty Federation Scholarship, and the Streeter Scholarship. The motion was approved unanimously.

At 2:52 p.m. Trustee Silverman moved and Trustee Cluver seconded the motion to approve the CCV Northern Lights Grant as recommended by the Finance & Facilities Committee. The motion was approved unanimously.

At 2:53 p.m. Trustee Silverman moved and Trustee Musal seconded the motion to approve VTSU's FY24 carry forward request as recommended by the Finance & Facilities Committee. The motion was approved unanimously.

At 2:54 p.m. Trustee Silverman moved and Trustee Zeller seconded the motion to approve management's recommendation to maintain the status quo on the methodology to proportion shared service expenses and state appropriation through FY27 with reinstatement of the existing policy, or a revised policy if warranted, for FY28 as recommended by the Finance & Facilities Committee. The motion was approved unanimously.

8. Report from Audit & Risk Management Committee

Chair Dickinson called upon Trustee Zeller who provided an update from the February 10, 2025 committee meeting. Trustee Zeller shared that the Audit & Risk Management Committee reviewed and approved management's recommendation to audit the system's use of and compliance with its chart of accounts. This project would inform the system's work related to implementation of the Workday finance system later this year. The Committee also received an update on the FY24 uniform guidance single audit as well as last year's internal audit.

9. Report from Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee

Chair Dickinson called upon Trustee Jefferson to provide an update from the March 6, 2025 committee meeting. Trustee Jefferson shared that the Committee received an educational presentation from Rodney Smolla, President of Vermont Law and Graduate School, on the Impact of Federal Executive Orders on Higher Education. In part, President Smolla shared a four-pronged ladder approach that can be applied to assess actions by the current administration.

Following President Smolla's presentation, the Trustees and staff engaged in a question-and-answer period. The presentation can be found on the VSC YouTube channel.

10. Report from Education, Personnel Life Committee

Chair Dickinson called upon Trustee Cluver to provide an update from the February 10, 2025 committee meeting. Trustee Cluver shared that the board revised Policy 109 on receiving annual enrollment and cost effectiveness updates on all academic programs to include new program monitoring and workforce alignment. The February EPSL meeting was the first time that the board received final reports and data from each institution following these revisions.

They heard how CCV focuses on building meta majors with stackable credentials and transfer pathways to remain flexible and responsive to industry. From VTSU, the committee heard that programs are continuing efforts to improve delivery efficiency, enhance differentiation with competitive programs, and reduce complexity for students. They also heard a presentation on CCV's work on student success and a status update from VTSU about the NECHE visit last fall; at the time NECHE was expected to review the final report of the visit at its April meeting.

Chair Dickinson invited President Bergh to share more information on the NECHE report. President Bergh and the Provost will meet with the NECHE commission in Massachusetts on April 24 to finalize the process. They will then receive the final formal report within 30 days. Informally, NECHE recognizes that VTSU has had to handle incredible challenges and there should be no surprises in the report. NECHE has been impressed with VTSU's professionalism and how it has moved forward with care.

11. Updates from the Presidents

Chair Dickinson invited President Bergh to share an update on VTSU. He shared that commencement speakers have been announced and he hopes members of the board will be able to join the upcoming VTSU commencement ceremonies. The federal environment has been challenging and President Bergh expressed his appreciation to VSC General Counsel's office for guidance. Admissions data is projecting strong enrollment for fall.

Chair Dickinson invited President Judy to provide an update. She shared that CCV hosted its 22nd Annual International Foods Day the prior week. CCV is expecting a visit from NECHE regarding their programs with corrections. Summer enrollment is looking strong.

12. Report from Executive Committee

Chair Dickinson provided an update from the committee meetings of February 14 and 24, 2025. There were no actions taken in those meetings. .

13. Legislative Update from the Chancellor

Chair Dickinson invited Chancellor Mauch to provide a legislative update. Chancellor Mauch shared that she and Sharron Scott have been testifying in the legislature this session. Her testimony is anchored by the mission and vision statements particularly the phrase "for the benefit of Vermont." They thank the legislature for their support to help strengthen their

financial health, plans which are on track. Chancellor Mauch shared how VSC needs to adapt the model to meet the needs of current students by offering more flexibility, housing opportunities, and paid learning opportunities, while remaining flexible and responsive to shifting workforce demands.

14. Additional Business

There was no additional business.

15. Executive session

At 3:35 p.m. Trustee Dickinson moved and Trustee Silverman seconded the motion for the VSC Board of Trustees to enter executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(F) to receive confidential attorney-client communications; 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(6) for discussion of records exempt from the Public Records Act; and 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) to discuss employment of a public employee. Along with the members of the Board present at this meeting, in its discretion, the Board invited the VSC Chancellor, the Presidents of Community College of Vermont and Vermont State University, the Chief Financial and Operating Officer, the VSC General Counsel, and the VTSU Associate Vice President of Communications, Alumni, and External Affairs. The motion was approved unanimously.

The board exited executive session at 5:32 p.m. and took no action.

Chair Dickinson adjourned the meeting at 5:32 p.m.

ITEM 5: 2025-2026 Board of Trustees and Committee Meetings Schedule

Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees

2025 - 2026 Meeting Schedule

All meetings conducted remotely unless otherwise noted

Friday, June 13, 2025

9:00 a.m. Education, Personnel &
Student Life

Saturday, June 14, 2025 Annual Meeting

9:00 a.m. Board of Trustees

Monday, August 25, 2025

9:00 a.m. Education, Personnel &
Student Life

10:00 a.m. Finance & Facilities

Monday, October 27, 2025

9:00 a.m. Education, Personnel &
Student Life

10:00 a.m. Audit & Risk Management

**Monday & Tuesday, November 3 & 4,
2025 @ Woodstock Inn & Resort**

Finance & Facilities

Board of Trustees Retreat

Monday, January 12, 2026

9:00 a.m. Nominating

10:00 a.m. Board of Trustees

Monday, February 16, 2026

9:00 a.m. Education, Personnel &
Student Life Committee

10:00 a.m. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

11:00 a.m. Audit & Risk Management

12:00 p.m. Finance & Facilities

Monday, March 9, 2026 @ CCV Winooski

10:00 a.m. Board of Trustees

Monday, April 13, 2026

9:00 a.m. Board of Trustees (if needed)

10:00 a.m. Finance & Facilities

Monday, April 20, 2026

9:00 a.m. Board of Trustees (if needed)

Monday, May 4, 2026

9:00 a.m. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

10:00 a.m. Education, Personnel &
Student Life

12:00 pm. Nominating

Monday, May 11, 2026

9:00 a.m. Audit & Risk Management

10:00 a.m. Finance & Facilities

**Monday, June 8, 2026 Annual Meeting @
VTSU Castleton**

9:00 a.m. Board of Trustees Annual
Meeting

Monday, August 17, 2026

9:00 a.m. Finance & Facilities

10:30 a.m. Board of Trustees

Monday, October 19, 2026

9:00 a.m. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

10:00 a.m. Education, Personnel &
Student Life

Monday, October 26, 2026

9:00 a.m. Audit & Risk Management

**Monday - Tuesday, November 2 – 3, 2026
@ a Vermont Conference Venue**

Finance & Facilities

Board of Trustees Retreat