

**EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT AND STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE**

A meeting of the Educational Policy and Institutional Resources (EPIR) Committee of the Board of Trustees of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College was held on Friday, October 20, 2023 at 1:15 p.m. in the Silver Maple Ballroom, Room 401 at the Dudley H. Davis Center.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Carolyn Dwyer, Vice Chair Jodi Goldstein, Cynthia Barnhart, Otto Berkes, Katelynn Briere, President Suresh Garimella, Stephanie Jerome, Carol Ode, Kristina Pisanelli, Lucy Rogers, and Samuel Young

OTHER TRUSTEES PRESENT: Board Chair Ron Lumbra, Sue Brengle, Frank Cioffi, Kevin Christie, John Dineen, Kenny Nguyen, Shap Smith, Catherine Toll

REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT: Faculty Representative Colby Kervick, Staff Representatives Sarah Heath and Jay LaShombe, Alumni Representative Susan Wertheimer, Student Representatives Ayden Carpenter and Matt Sorensen, and Graduate Student Representative Cara Simone

ABSENT: Trustee Monique Priestley, Faculty Representatives Mary Cushman and Evan Eyler, Student Representative Massi Khodaverdi and Foundation Representative (vacant)

PERSONS ALSO PARTICIPATING: Provost & Senior Vice President Patricia Prelock, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Student Success Jennifer Dickinson, Vice President for Research Kirk Dombrowski, Vice President for Legal Affairs & General Counsel Trent Klingerman and Chief of Staff to the President Jonathan D'Amore

Chair Carolyn Dwyer called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m. and welcomed new Graduate Student Representatives Cara Simone and Massi Khodaverdi to the committee.

Approval of minutes

The minutes from the May 19, 2023 meeting were presented for approval. A motion was made, seconded and voted to approve the minutes as presented.

Provost's report

Provost Patricia Prelock began her report by acknowledging the situation in the Middle East in the last two weeks and its impact on the UVM and broader community. She echoed the thoughts and words expressed by both Board Chair Ron Lumbra and President Suresh Garimella at the Committee of the Whole meeting. The Provost and the President have communicated with the community denouncing acts of terror and recognizing many in the UVM community have personal connections to the region.

Continuing her report, Provost Prelock informed the trustees that the Admissions team had been preparing for the possibility of the Supreme Court ruling on race-based admissions for some time and has responded to ensure compliance with the law. Vice Provost for Enrollment Management Jay Jacobs and the Admissions team have been developing a more holistic applicant review process and have implemented race-neutral admissions practices.

Provost Prelock shared the most recent census data showing an increase in diversity, the number of Vermonters and international students, and the 4- and 6-year graduation rates. Of the 2,896 new first-time, first-year students, the BIPOC student population increased by 14% since Fall 2022, Vermonters increased by 10%, and the male student population increased by 7%. The 4-year graduation rate of 72% was the highest in the university's history (the national average for public institutions is 47%). Also highest in the university's history was the 6-year graduation rate which was 78% whereas nationally it's 65%.

The inaugural UVM GO trips were a great success thanks to the faculty and staff who invested time, talent, and energy into this new program that helps first-year students develop intercultural skills and build community. The goal is to provide UVM GO opportunities for 700 students next August, with opportunities for as many 1,500 students by August 2026.

The Provost reported that for the past year, discussions have taken place with a variety of faculty groups concerning the concept of a Planetary Health initiative. This initiative would further engage faculty, staff, and students in thinking about the ways UVM creates healthy communities, establishes sustainable systems, and builds resilient communities in rural and global contexts. Planetary Health is a broad interdisciplinary theme and organizing and leverage activities around this theme will further distinguish UVM and will position the university for continued success, as well as help UVM to reach and sustain the R1 research goal. Plans are to launch the initiative more formally during the Spring semester.

Provost Prelock announced a new peer educator program, PIVOT (Preventing Interpersonal Violence via Outreach and Training), developed by Dr. Jennifer Demers who joined UVM this Fall as a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Biomedical and Health Sciences Department. The program consists of a series of two courses over two semesters, beginning in the Spring. The first course will focus on building students' knowledge of research, theory, and practice related to sexual violence, intimate partner violence, and stalking. The second course will teach students how to apply their new knowledge in meaningful ways to prevent violence in their communities. To inform the content of these courses and to ensure that they are aligned with the unique needs of the UVM community, a needs assessment will be conducted this semester. In addition, in a related and collaborative project, the Clinical Simulation Lab, the Sexual Violence Prevention and Education Coordinator, and the UVM CARE team have launched a pilot training program for campus-based professionals to improve communication skills in response to disclosures of sexual violence by students. The plan is to provide training to more professionals across campus to establish a "stand of care" for any professional responsible for receiving disclosures of sexual violence, which includes identifying immediate student needs and making referrals as appropriate to campus services.

The Provost announced that plans are underway for a solar eclipse integrative learning day on April 8, 2024. The university is leveraging the educational nature of this rare celestial event by developing a day of engaging and informational experiences about the role of solar eclipses in the evolution of cultures and science. More information will be shared at the February meeting.

Provost Prelock concluded her report by informing the trustees that the Academic Success Goals (ASGs) established in 2020 are now in the process of being “refreshed” to see what needed refinement and to determine whether anything was missing. This process should conclude in December and will be shared at the February meeting.

Faculty Senate Curricular Affairs Committee Chair’s report

Chair Dwyer reminded the committee that they are asked to review and approve the creation, elimination, or substantial revision of an academic unit, curriculum, research, or service endeavor. This is consistent with the committee’s responsibility and authority as a board and reflects the careful stewardship of the university’s educational resources to ensure that students are provided with a comprehensive, vital, and transformative educational experience. Faculty members and academic leaders across the institution contribute to this extensive stewardship process, which culminates in the report the committee receives from the Chair of the Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate.

Faculty Senate Curricular Affairs Committee (CAC) Co-Chair Colby Kervick and Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Student Success Jennifer Dickinson presented the proposal for the creation of an undergraduate academic co-major credential. The key elements that define the co-major credential are that a credentialed course of study is focused on a particular area/topic and is for matriculated undergraduate students only. Students pursue two majors in different degree-granting units without having to complete two full sets of degree requirements and must successfully complete a major in their home unit in order to graduate with a co-major in another unit. CAC Co-Chair Kervick explained the differences between a double-major, a co-major, and a dual degree. Benefits of adding co-majors include lowering barriers to cross-college work resulting in greater access to UVM’s academic offerings. Benefits also include encouraging interdisciplinary exploration, enabling students to pursue the deep study of a second area of academic interest, and supporting timely degree completion while allowing cross-college work. CAC Co-Chair Kervick concluded with the review and approval process for proposed co-majors:

- Units will submit a co-major proposal that will route through the traditional curricular review process culminating with a vote at the CAC
- Included in the proposal will be a comprehensive MOU signed by Associate Deans
 - This process will remain in place for the pilot/initial assessment period
- The Board of Trustees will approve the co-major credential; the CAC will approve proposals for new co-majors.

Following an opportunity for comments and questions, President Suresh Garimella thanked CAC Co-Chair Kervick and Vice Provost Dickinson for the work that was completed in order to bring this proposal forward.

Curricular action items

Chair Dwyer presented the following resolution:

Resolution approving the creation of an undergraduate academic co-major credential

WHEREAS, co-majors will broaden and enrich learning opportunities for undergraduate students without impeding students' ability to complete their degree requirements in a timely manner; will engage students in academic offerings available outside their home unit; and will expand interdisciplinary learning options at the University of Vermont;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees approves the creation of a co-major curricular credential for undergraduate students, as approved and advanced by the Provost on September 20, 2023, and President on September 21, 2023.

An opportunity for discussion was offered. There being none, a motion was made, seconded and it was unanimously voted to refer the resolution to the board for approval.

UVM's entrepreneurial ecosystem

Provost Prelock and the Vice President for Research Kirk Dombrowski gave a presentation on the UVM Entrepreneurial Ecosystem and related engagement opportunities for students. Examples included the successful RISE Summit held last June, Maker Spaces, and two new pitch competitions, the Joy and Jerry Meyers Cup and the Vermont Pitch Challenge, which are designed to engage students in experiential learning. In addition, a new entrepreneurship coordinator has been hired to expand and support student engagement.

Other business

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Dwyer, Chair