From: Tom Sullivan, President

To: UVM Faculty and Staff

Re: First-Year Summer Reading for Class of 2022

I am pleased to announce that in June we will ask all incoming first-year students to read Ta-Nehisi Coates’s *Between the World and Me*.

Written in the form of a letter to his son, Ta-Nehisi Coates’s *Between the World and Me* is a deeply personal account of what it means to be black in America, and the role race plays in society. It is a timely book for us all, particularly as we work together on campus for understanding and addressing race-related issues in society.

Hailed as one of the best books of 2015 by newspapers and magazines across the country, *Between the World and Me* won the National Book Award and the NAACP Image Award, and was a finalist for both the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award. Coates’s book offers a timely exploration of both the lived experience of race and the structural consequences of racism, weaving together individual experiences and broad insights. As such, the book models critical inquiry, offering students and all of us at UVM an example of what it means to pursue ideas and their consequences, drawing on multiple disciplinary perspectives.

We encourage faculty, particularly those teaching first-year students, to use this important book in their Fall 2018 courses, assigning it as reading as appropriate, and to incorporate aspects of its themes into their syllabi for the 2018-2019 academic year. We invite all campus community members to read *Between the World and Me* with the hope that the experience of sharing this text will generate meaningful discussions related to the book both inside and outside of the classroom.

Additional information regarding academic and co-curricular programming associated with this selection will be forthcoming—we plan to have a rich set of offerings. The First-Year Read Committee invites collaborations and suggestions for programming from those interested in sponsoring events or programs. Please reach out to the committee in care of Lisa Schnell (Lisa.Schnell@uvm.edu).

I would like to thank the First-Year Read Committee for their excellent selection. I look forward to engaging with the campus in thoughtful conversation around the issues Coates raises in this book.