

# Fulfilling the Promise of *Our Common Ground*: Transforming UVM's Culture

HHMI Driving Change Grant Awarded to UVM

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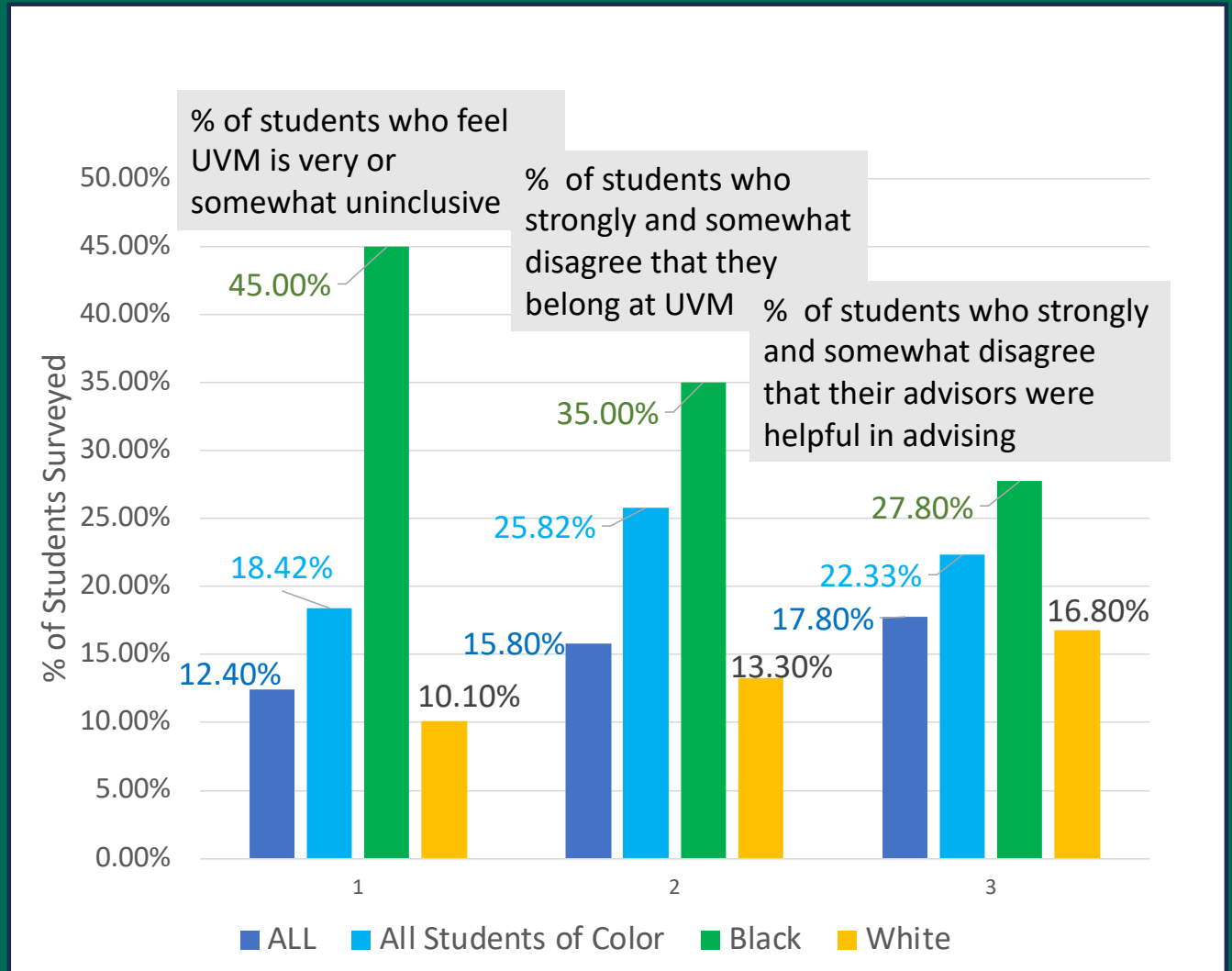
Faculty Senate, 1/22/24



The University of Vermont

# Why UVM? Why now?

UVM was chosen as only one of six institutions to receive a Driving Change grant this year. One reason we were chosen is so that we can become a model for other Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs) with our efforts to create an inclusive and welcoming climate on campus.



# Our Hopeful Outcomes

- A vision of UVM as a welcoming academic and social environment
- Parity in retention / graduation rates for BIPOC and white students
- An earned reputation as welcoming to all students leads to improved recruiting outcomes
- Improved faculty recruiting results in greater faculty diversity
- Better sense of community and inclusion reported by students, faculty and staff in our 2025 and 2028 climate surveys



## Barriers

- Overwhelmingly white demographics
- White students' weak intercultural competency
- Lack of connected community for BIPOC students
- Classrooms that are not inclusive
- Advising that is not inclusive
- Shortfall in faculty & staff resources to invest in making change
- Policy barriers

## Key Actions

- Well resourced faculty & staff communities of practice focused on inclusive teaching and advising
- Intercultural competency education for all students
- **OCG Leadership Program**
- Support for development of community that supports students underrepresented in STEM

# Faculty and Staff Communities of Practice

- Groups of 8-10 Faculty or Staff led by DEI Fellows (n = 40-50 per year)
- DEI Fellows receive training in:
  - Intergroup dialogue (be able to lead difficult discussions)
  - Inclusive pedagogy and/or advising (help their Community of Practice develop self reflection and continuous improvement strategies)
  - Intercultural competencies
  - Help their Community of Practice identify connections between culture/identity and research/teaching/advising and apply insights to their work
- DEI STEM Faculty are paid for 3-week summer training and receive a course release; staff get modified duties to create room for training and to organize CoPs.
- STEM Faculty participants in a Community of Practice can apply to get a course release or summer salary to build an inclusive classroom
- Initial focus – transforming our first-year high DFW STEM courses

# Student Body Intercultural Competency

- Online bias training module
- UVM GO pre-matriculation experiences
- Orientation discussions on Our Common Ground values and what that means for an inclusive environment
- Transformation of Learning Community Programming/DEI coordinator
- Required Coursework in the Catamount Core (Diversity, Global Citizenship)
- Intercultural Competency / Humility included in 1 credit first year STEM Courses
- Admissions essay option focused on equity and belonging

# Brand New Idea From the Reviewers' Comments

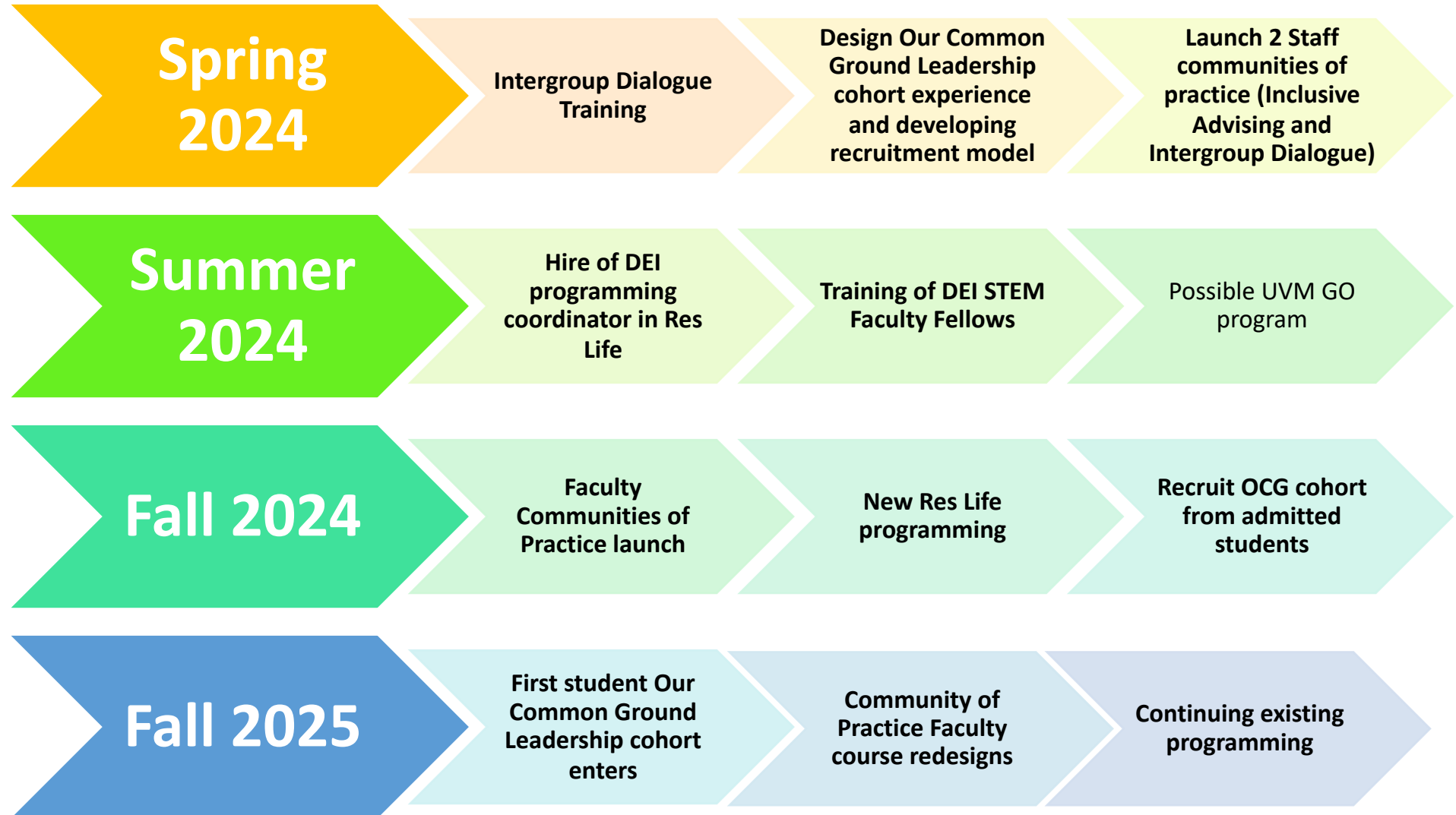
## *OUR COMMON GROUND LEADERSHIP PROGRAM*

- 15 BIPOC students, 15 White students per year (n=120)
- Housed together, potentially in U. Heights South
- Create an action team of students and staff to plan the program

## **Potential components include:**

- Bridge Program with Race and Dialogue Course
- Students develop towards peer leadership in learning communities and Student Life activities
- Additional programming and support for program participants

# First two years





# How can you get involved?

- **DEI STEM Fellows** application is now live:  
<https://forms.microsoft.com/r/KkuVJ3eDaq>
- Interested in participating in a Community of Practice? There will be a call for participants early next Fall (STEM faculty)



**DEI STEM Fellow application**

## ***All faculty:***

- Consider getting involved in UVM GO or a Learning Community as a faculty affiliate
- Participate in Inclusive Pedagogy workshops from CTL
- Explore and look for ways to contribute to reaching the goals of your unit's Inclusive Excellence Plan.