**Graduate Executive Committee Standardized Tests in Admissions Statement**

The Graduate College Executive Committee recognizes current discussions among UVM faculty regarding the use of placement and achievement test scores (e.g., SATs, GREs, ACTs, MCATS, etc) for student admissions decisions. Faculty at UVM have raised many important concerns about the extent to which these types of assessment tools are able to accurately and fairly describe student abilities. Of particular concern is growing evidence that these assessments are replete with bias against minority or disadvantaged racial and socioeconomic groups, among others. The bias is not only with regard to the content and assessment tools, but also how their cost and accessibility is prohibitive for some populations who are excellent candidates for graduate school. Thus, by requiring the tests and relying on them for admission, programs may be contributing to inequity in higher education. The issue of accessibility is particularly relevant in the current admission year where the COVID-19 pandemic has severely limited travel and disproportionately impacted some of the most vulnerable populations across the globe.

The Graduate College Executive Committee encourages each University graduate program to carefully assess the evidence for how these testing instruments might lead to bias, inequity and a lack of diversity within their program. In doing so, we recommend also considering the tangible, quantifiable value that these admissions assessments have for their program. Ultimately, the assessments that lead to admissions decisions need to be rooted in evidence-based measures and practices that are in alignment with the University’s commitment to equity and justice.